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Clarion

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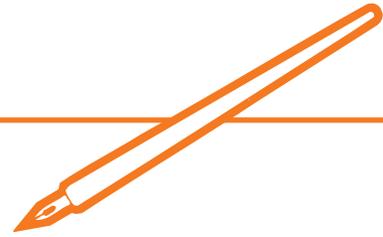
*Synod delegates of the IRB 2002
(see CCCA Report on Brazil)*

INSIDE:

- *Gay Marriage*
- *"It actually works!"*



By R. Aasman



Gay Marriage

One would think our country had enough important things to think about. SARS and West Nile Virus, mad cow disease, closed borders, massive power outages, uncontrolled forest fires, troops in Bosnia and Afghanistan, and an upset neighbour to the south – our politicians and civil servants have enough to keep them occupied! Nevertheless, our federal and provincial governments are busying themselves with laws regarding homosexual marriage and hate crime against homosexuals. Never mind that according to the last census, gay couples living in a common-law relationship make up less than 0.5% of the entire population. And never mind that homosexuals are well protected under the present laws of the country and can live as they please. It has suddenly become a matter of critical and pressing importance to grant homosexuals the privilege of marriage and protection from any kind of dialogue which is critical of their practices.

Two matters of concern

There are two things unfolding. First, there is the well-known Bill C-250 sponsored by homosexual NDP MP Svend Robinson. If this bill is passed, religious groups and anyone else who opposes or speaks against special rights for homosexuals will be subject to the threat of criminal prosecution on the basis of “hatred” against homosexuals. In other words, even a minister who declares on the basis of Scripture that the gay lifestyle and gay marriage is against the will of God, could be charged with hatred and receive criminal prosecution. The House of Commons is to resume sitting on Monday, September 15, 2003. A vote on Bill C-250 could occur as early as September 17. All indications are that our Prime Minister will support this bill.

Our federal government has already allowed an Ontario court to set a precedent that any two people can be married.

The second thing that is unfolding – closely related to the preceding – is the amending of the Marriage Act to include homosexual couples. In other words, with such an amendment, two women could marry each other, or two men could marry each other, and be recognized as a legal marriage in the eyes of this country, with all the privileges that any mar-

ried couple would have. Our federal government has already allowed an Ontario court to set a precedent that any two people can be married. Apparently the courts will set the agenda for legalizing same-sex marriage.

Role of the church

I trust that our readers who hold a very high view of Scripture do not need to be convinced that Scripture forbids and condemns homosexual practice. Moreover, marriage is designed for a man and woman who are to remain together until death do them part. This is not to say that as Christians we are permitted to hate homosexuals or to oppress them. Look at how we conduct ourselves as communion of saints. How do we act toward a brother or sister who has fallen into adultery and such things as pornography? We behave in a brotherly fashion and in love call that person to repentance. The same would be true for someone who is a homosexual. I have had opportunity myself to counsel homosexuals – both as an inclination and a practice – and felt no hatred toward them nor had a desire to hurt them. I dealt with them in brotherly love and concern.

Our Lord Jesus Christ called on his church to be a salt and a light to the world.

At the same time, as churches we have a role to speak up about recent developments in our country. As you know, the Roman Catholic Church has taken a lashing in the press for entering into the debate. A bishop was vilified for warning the Prime Minister that he was risking his eternal salvation. The rhetoric offered by many is that there must be a separation between church and state! One wonders whether people really know what they are talking about. Is this country not a democracy? Does a democracy not depend upon and treasure freedom of speech? Is there no place for the church to make her views and opinions known to society as a whole? As Christians we both know our government is answerable to God, and society as a whole develops morals and values on the basis of the Word of God. But even if society no longer believes this – and it certainly doesn't in this post-modern age – still it is absurd to deny Christians and the church a voice in matters of family and

sexuality. When that is no longer allowed, then the downward spiral of moral decay will go out of control.

Salt and light

Our Lord Jesus Christ called on his church to be a salt and a light to the world. No doubt many prayers and sermons have identified our concerns and have cried out to the King of kings to bring repentance to our country and freedom of religion. But we need to speak up beyond church walls. Thankfully many have spoken up clearly and boldly. There are organizations like Real Women of Canada and Canada Family Action Coalition who are at the front lines of this important struggle. Members of Parliament are feeling unprecedented pressure as letters, e-mails, faxes and phone calls flood their offices. Some are saying there has never been an issue in recent memory which has caused so many to stand up and call on our government to stand down. Letters to the editor and columnists are writing in secular newspapers boldly declaring their opposition to Bill C-250 and same-sex marriage. Such boldness and insistence, and such an abundance of protestors can make a difference. In a recent secular publication, it was stated that as much as half of the Liberal caucus is ready to break with the government on this matter. This is encouraging.

Is your voice added to the cry of concern in this country? We are called to pray for our governing authorities. Prayer goes hand-in-hand with work. The time is short. There are ways of adding your voice. In a sidebar some suggestions are made.

What's inside?

Soon after you receive this issue, the House of Commons is to resume sitting. A vote on Bill C-250 could occur as early as September 17. This bill concerns the threat of criminal prosecution on the basis of "hatred" against homosexuals. Along with another matter which is before the courts and our government is the issue of same-sex marriage. The editorial looks at these two matters and offers some suggestions as to what we can do about it.

As promised a while back, Dr. R. Faber offers another article tracing the developments of a psalter in the Reformed churches. He carefully describes not only what led to the contents of the hymn book, but also the manner in which it was implemented. This became a factor in the Secession of 1834 and in the formation of new Reformed denominations.

In his *Observations* column, Rev. George van Popta informs us of some very pathetic developments in Bible translation. It's enough to make the reader choke.

We have our regular columns, *Treasures New and Old* and *Ray of Sunshine*, the press release of the Classis where Edwar Dethan successfully completed his peremptory examination, and a report on contact with churches in Brazil and Mexico. Finally, we have a report on the annual Women's League Day at Langley, B.C.

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The time is short

We are not surprised that there are so many dark forces at work in the world around us. We are not surprised at the immorality and the temptations which assail us. We were warned of such things in the last days. Clearly the devil is doing everything he can to undo the coming of the kingdom of heaven. But he is not running things and he will not win. Christ is King and his kingdom is coming. As citizens of his kingdom we may labour with Him to declare the good news of salvation in his blood and the breathtaking liberty of a life which is sanctified by his Spirit. His victory will be total. When all those for whom He shed his blood are gathered in, then He will return on the clouds of heaven. Satan and those who listened to him will be cast into hell. But those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in heart, soul and mind, and have run with perseverance that race that was set before them, will enter the new heavens and earth. Sin will be no more. C

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What to do?

Apparently phone calls are more effective than emails and letters. Better yet, a visit to the constituency office of one's local MP. You can call your MP toll-free 1-800-463-6868. You can also go on-line to www.familyaction.org and click on "Find your MP."

The Department of Justice is also taking a tally of phone calls. You can dial 1-613-992-4621 during business hours EST and ask for the Justice Department, stating that you wish to log your opinion on the issue of same-sex marriage. All that is required is stating simply "yes" or "no" either agreeing or disagreeing with this issue.



By J. Van Woudenberg

“It actually works!”

Leviticus 9:24

The people of Israel had just been rescued from slavery in Egypt; they had just come into the barren wilderness; they had just finished constructing the tabernacle as a dwelling place for holy God in their midst. The time had come for the Aaronic priests to begin their work of bringing sacrifices in order to allow holy God to dwell in the midst of his people safely without Him striking out in wrath against their sins.

In Leviticus 9, Aaron and his sons do just that: they bring their first sacrifices for the people. Aaron then raises his hands to officially bless the people. For the first time he officially gives the people the sure promise that God, dwelling in their midst, will bless them, be gracious to them, hear their cries for help, and give them peace.

Suddenly the people see the glory of the Lord appear. In the cloud an intense radiance appears. More than that, “Fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar.”

We read further, “When all the people saw it, they shouted for joy.” They understood the significance of what had just happened! The priesthood of Aaron was actually working to secure the forgiveness of sins and the favour of God! Going through a howling desert filled with famine, thirst, and cruel enemies, they could now confidently sing, “If God is on our side against us shall be none” (Hymn 27:1).

That was indeed most amazing, for who was Aaron but that man who had made the golden calf for them? When Moses presented Aaron to the LORD to serve as priest, then the people saw that Aaron first had to be washed; then Moses had to bring a sin offering for him as well as other offerings that each time again required confession of sin; then Moses had to smear blood on the lobe of his right ear, thumb, and toe; then Moses even had to mingle the anointing oil with blood (Lev 8). Hence that God in the end actually accepted the work of Aaron was most amazing!

How impressive it must have been to witness the confirmation of Aaron’s work by seeing the glory of God shine! In the same way, how impressive it must

have been to witness on Pentecost day the tongues of fire over the heads of the disciples, confirming the priestly work of Christ! After some time, however, the brilliance would have disappeared, both in the desert and on Pentecost. Upon us today, though we are temples of the Holy Spirit, we don’t see tongues as of fire over our heads. As such we no longer have these specific confirming signs of God’s life giving presence.

Yet in faith we too may behold the evidence of God’s life-giving presence in our midst. In fact, what we today may see is even greater! For consider what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:18, “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

The light of the glory of God depicted God as a God of life and blessings. True, we may no longer see a brilliant light, but we may see that which the light points to, namely the life! We may see the life that comes from the Spirit dwelling in our midst because of the sacrificial work of our High Priest.

We may see young people growing in their desire to profess their faith and serve the Lord with all their lives. We may see in our own midst people repenting from sin and striving to live in the ways of Christ once again. We may see people, formerly entrapped in party spirit and sexual immorality, striving to repudiate such a life style and walk in the ways of the Lord again. We may see people striving to shed their relationship destroying ways and striving to live in true love in marriage once again. Where does that desire, that life, come from? It comes from the Spirit, from the glory of God that dwells in us. As Paul says in Galatians 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”

We may see people coming to the faith, and seeking to live for their new master Jesus Christ. What is that all about? It’s nothing less than a revelation of the life-giving glory of the Spirit, for as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:3, “no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.”

We may see people today facing and struggling with deep hardships in this broken world, whether connected with relationship problems, disease, death, whatever; we may see them reacting by drawing closer to the LORD and relying on Him. We may see people facing even their own death with tears, but also with an undergirding calmness, confidence, hope, peace, and even joy. Again, in that we may see the confirming glory of the LORD who gives them that life! Truly God has accepted the priestly work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore is dwelling in our midst with his life giving power and glory!

If the people in the days of our text shouted for joy because of what they saw, how much more should we! God has given us a high priest to do what Aaron could only foreshadow. It was actually only because Aaron’s work anticipated the greater work of Christ, that Aaron’s priestly service actually worked. Today, with the priestly work of our Lord Jesus Christ completed, God is dwelling in our midst, in our hearts, with his life-giving Spirit of glory!

In this broken world we too may yet sing with amazement, “If God is on our side, against us shall be none.” No, that does not mean that life will always be easy, or that there will be no more attacks from the world, from our own sinful natures, or whatever. Yet we may be confident that as we ever and again turn to Him, He will show his life-giving glory; He will give us the working of his life-giving Spirit. We may take confidence: the fullness of the high priestly blessing, also as we hear it at the end of the service by the official spokesmen of Christ today, is coming! The work of Christ has worked and is working!

Let’s rejoice with great joy, and so let’s fall down in worship and awe, saying, “Lord, as your grateful servant, amazed that you actually have come to dwell with us, I am ready to serve you in all of life!”

Rev. J. Van Woudenberg is minister of the Canadian Reformed Church at Guelph, Ontario. jvanwoudenberg@canrc.org

The Introduction of Evangelical Hymns in the Dutch Reformed Churches: Eighteenth Century Developments

By R. Faber

Introduction

This article traces the movement in the Dutch Reformed Churches towards the publication of the *Evangelical Hymns (Evangelische Gezangen)* in 1805.¹ We shall begin with a brief account of the philosophical and social contexts in which the movement developed during the eighteenth century. Then we shall consider the nature of Pietism in The Netherlands at the time, and introduce briefly two leaders who also composed devotional poems and songs. During the eighteenth century, the widespread criticism of the official psalter, *The Psalms of David (De Psalmen Davids)*, led the States General to introduce a new book of praise. The character of the new psalter, and the circumstances in which it was implemented, will be noted. We shall conclude with a sketch of the immediate and general circumstances in which the *Evangelical Hymns (Evangelische Gezangen)* were introduced, and give a summary of their contents. In a later article we shall describe further the contents of the hymn book, and the reaction to it, especially during the Session of 1834.

1. The philosophical and social contexts

During the seventeenth century, the Dutch Reformed Church had protected itself by encoding biblical teachings in carefully worded doctrinal confessions. However, this did not prevent the spirit of the age from influencing the church; as the Dutch saying goes, “when it rains in the world, it drips in the church.” Rationalism and tolerance, two powerful concepts of the age, affected the congregations, and altered

the attitudes of believers also towards the singing of metrical psalms.

The thinker who promoted rationalism among the people of the lowlands was the philosopher Renee Descartes. His influence began in the 1600s, but reached its acme during the eighteenth century. Descartes held that faith should be combined with science,

Eighteenth Century Pietism gave special attention to the individual and his own exercise of the faith.

and that God’s revelation should be joined with human reason. Contrary to the teaching that God conveys his will through his Word and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Descartes elevated the role and ability of human reason in understanding God’s will. To put it differently, for him philosophy is equal to faith. Hereby Descartes assigned more power and responsibility to the mind of man than Scripture allows. This over-evaluation of reason affected all aspects of life in Europe, and included theology and the church. Thus God was turned into the highest, most perfect form of reason, and preaching the gospel became an intellectual process aimed only at the mind.

The idea of tolerance that marked philosophy also affected theology and life in the church. The belief arose that conflicting values could co-exist, and that opposing principles need not produce strife. Freedom and tolerance were characteristic also of government

and social life. Within the church, tolerance led people to stress the liberty of the Christian conscience; unbelievers were viewed in a kindly manner, and human virtue was deemed superior to obedience to God’s will. By complicating clear biblical teachings people weakened their effect; the dogmatic distinctions that had been formulated so carefully by the previous generations became blurred. Due also to indifference and a lack of conviction, religious life was marked by friendly acceptance of other norms, values, and principles.

In light of these philosophical developments, certain motifs in the psalms of the Old Testament became unpopular. For example, the antithesis between good and evil, and between the righteous and the wicked, was ignored or glossed over. So too the psalmist’s desire for God’s judgement and punishment of his enemies was not shared by many eighteenth century believers.

Pietism, the main religious movement of the time, responded to and was affected by rationalism and tolerance. Pietism did not question the nature of human reason, but the value of it. Of itself human reason cannot comprehend the meaning of Scripture; only the soul that has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit interprets the Bible correctly. However, due to the growing individualism that came with the stress upon reason and tolerance, Pietism became more concerned with the person than the community. During the seventeenth century, Pietism had been bound up with the Further Reformation (“*Nadere Reformatie*”), and had sought to extend reform throughout society. In the eighteenth century, it



Friedrich Lampe

became introverted. Pietism no longer focused on distinctions within society, or on the covenant community. It gave special attention to the individual and his own exercise of the faith rather than the common convictions behind that exercise.

This shift in Pietism is evidenced by the changed nature of the spiritual songs. At the end of the seventeenth century, the hymns of the pietist Jodocus van Lodenstein (1620-1677) were popular. A century later the *Lofzangen Israels (Israel's Songs of Praise)* of Johannes Groenewegen (1709-1764) were favoured. The reason for the change is that whereas van Lodenstein addressed his verse to the nation and society, Groenewegen appealed to the individual and the person.

2. Two Dutch pietists of the eighteenth century

Two representatives of eighteenth century Dutch Pietism are Friedrich Lampe and Willem Schortinghuis. Friedrich Lampe (1683-1729) was a reformed pietist of German birth who spent only a few but influential years in The Netherlands as an academic and preacher. His wide-ranging interests included dogmatics, church history, instruction in the catechism, and devotional poetry. As a theologian, Lampe deemed the covenant of grace as the key to understanding the revelation of God in his Word. Often he emphasized the personal aspect of the relationship between God and human, and he expressed the bond between the church and Christ as that of a bride

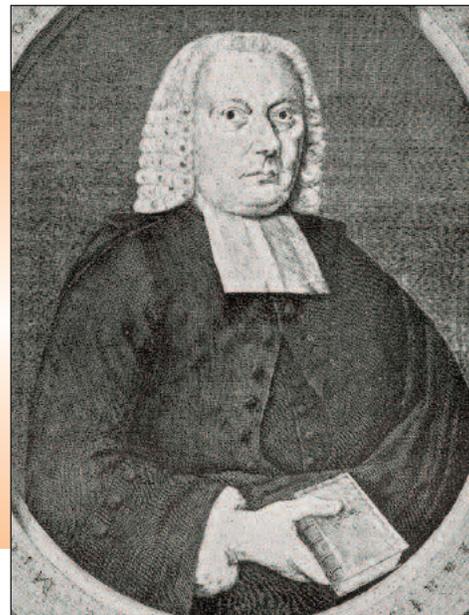
and her groom, sometimes going beyond the biblical comparison. Continual self-examination and self-humiliation were other pietistic elements in his thinking, as was the perception of the Lord's Supper as the avenue to a mystical union of the soul with Christ. It is especially in the poetry and songs composed by Lampe that mystical elements are found.

In 1724 a Dutch translation of Lampe's *Spiritual Songs (Geestelijke Gezangen)* appeared. These poems are marked by the following motifs: hatred of the natural man, self-denial and putting off one's former nature, the out-pouring of Christ's blood, and the contrast between life in the spirit and life

in the flesh. To give the reader a taste of Lampe's poetry, I translate a few lines: "In Jesus' arms, His heart and open wounds / I found the source of pure desire. / Here I taste the heavenly drink and angelic food, / Here I drowned in the sea of love. / Here all the desires of my soul became drunk; / Here is my Canaan, my Paradise. . . ."¹²

The collection also included poetry of Joachim Neander, who is perhaps the best representative of German pietist poets. His poetry is marked by expressions of the soul thirsting for Christ, the union of the believer with God, and the beauties of creation which magnifies God's name (e.g., Hymn 42: "heaven, earth, sky and sea / witness the Creator's majesty"). In fact, the influence of German Pietism was considerable during the eighteenth century, especially since it stressed the devotional aspects of the believer's life. This feature explains why so many hymns composed by German poets were sung by the Dutch. Indeed, several of the songs composed by Johan Freylinghausen, who published the popular *Spirit-filled Hymnbook (Geistreiches Gesangbuch)* in 1704, appear in modern Dutch hymn books.

The Dutchman Willem Schortinghuis (1700-1750) promotes a pietism that ignores what happens on this earth, and that over-analyses the soul. He is the author of *Inward Christianity (Het Innige Christendom)*, a work marked by experientialism. This emphasis may be explained in part as a reaction to the religious life and writings of the 1600s, in which doctrine



Willem Schortinghuis

and official teaching predominated. Insufficient attention was being given to the experience and emotions of the Reformed life, and Schortinghuis sought to fill this vacuum with an element of mysticism. In comparison with William Teellinck (1579-1629), who a century earlier stressed the heart's experience as it concerned family, congregation, and society, Schortinghuis promoted an introverted piety that allowed withdrawal from church and state into oneself. This appealed to conventicle-goers of the eighteenth century, and to those who longed for an awakening that would arise within each believer's heart.

Willem Schortinghuis promotes a pietism that ignores what happens on this earth and that over-analyses the soul.

3. The new psalter (1773)

It is in the context of the philosophical, social, and theological developments described above that the criticism of the official psalter of the Dutch Reformed Churches reached its peak. By the middle of the century, the governing authorities considered replacing *De Psalmen Davids (The Psalms of David)* of Petrus Datheen, which had been in use for nearly two hundred years. In 1772 the States General of The Netherlands appointed a committee to supervise the production of a new edition of metrical psalms. It is important to note that the task was assigned to a group of people appointed by the government of each province, rather than by the synod of the churches. This meddling of state in matters of the church was inappropriate, yet understandable: the States General was preventing a general synod from taking place out of the fear that the church would become too powerful. Consequently, the forced manner in which the new psalter was produced and implemented would cause a negative reaction in some quarters of The Netherlands. The new edition was aptly called the "*Staatsberijming*," or "state-sanctioned versification."

In the new edition the psalms as put to rhyme were to be drawn from three sources, that is, the existing translations of the poets Hendrik Ghijsen and Johannes Voet, and of a musical asso-

ciation called *Laus Deo, Salus Populo* ("To God the Praise, for the People Salvation"). The committee met to discuss how rules of language, spelling and sentence-structure would be applied; it did not treat melodies or musical concerns, on the grounds that congregations would be busy learning the new texts. The *Staatsberijming* included only a slightly greater number of hymns than the former book of praise, namely eleven. The council of the States General approved the edition, and ordered implementation as of January 1, 1775.

Much can be said about the contents and character of the new psalter, but a few comments will have to suffice. Unlike the edition of Petrus Datheen, which sought to preserve biblical language, the *Staatsberijming* is marked by philosophical diction and learned expressions associated with rationalism and other contemporary ideas. For example, the first verse of Psalm 38 portrays God as the Supreme Being ("*Opperwezen*") who, rather than creating all things, has brought everything into existence. Other expressions also depict God as the highest form of reason, the all-knowing prime mover of the universe. The Lord Jesus Christ, by contrast, is portrayed especially with human qualities. The optimistic view of life and humanity is evidenced by the glossing over of sorrow caused by sin; rarely is evil portrayed starkly. The world is no longer described as a vale of tears, while human beings are capable of acts of virtue and excellence. In Psalm One, for example, obedience to the law is replaced by human good-will and virtue. The natural world is full of beauty and inspiration.

The new edition appeared at a time when the metrical Psalms were viewed increasingly as too restricted in scope, subject matter, and tone. At the official presentation of the new psalter, the opinion was expressed that the time had come to publish also evangelical songs of praise. Christ should be sung explicitly, it was said, and not in the complicated theological language of the past. The Psalms were too "Jewish" and not sufficiently "Christian." Moreover, the Psalms of curse, the Psalms of lament, and the Psalms of revenge did not strike a chord in the hearts of people living in the late eighteenth century. And the newly published psalter lacked spiritual songs that were appropriate to the special days in the liturgical year, such as Easter and Pentecost.



Called by the church of Carman-East, Manitoba:

Rev. R.E. Pot

of Orangeville, Ontario.

Besides the contents of the psalter, the Genevan melodies were deemed ill-suited to the spirit of the age. Thus, the Synod of North Holland in 1796 observed a wide-spread desire to employ hymns that contain "the fulfilled gospel, the honour of the Redeemer and of the Holy Spirit, and reconciliation and grace." So it was that by the end of the eighteenth century the provincial synods appointed delegates who were to submit the titles of existing spiritual songs to be used in the worship services, and in 1802 a Committee for Evangelical Hymns was formed.

The Psalms of curse, the Psalms of lament, and the Psalms of revenge did not strike a chord in the hearts of people living in the late eighteenth century.

4. The Evangelical Hymns (1805)

The word "evangelical" in the title of the committee and of the hymn book it produced was meant in the strict sense of the word, and not with the connotations of the modern movement. It meant, simply, "characterised by the good news of salvation in Christ." This title conveyed the notion that the psalter should not be restricted to the Old Testament; in the second dispensation, the church should sing explicitly of the Lord Jesus Christ, of Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. 192 hymns and spiritual songs comprise the *Evangelical Hymns (Evangelische Gezangen)*, which was to be used in addition to the recently published psalter. Although some of the songs were penned by Dutch poets (such as van Lodenstein), most of the hymns were translations of

German and English originals, including, for example, those of the well-known English hymnographer, Isaac Watts (1674-1748).

The introduction to the *Evangelical Hymns* states that it is not surprising that congregations have longed for many years to sing spiritual songs in the worship services. After all, it goes on to state, throughout the ages Christianity has supplemented the singing of metrical psalms with spiritual songs; Protestant churches in other countries use evangelical hymns; the English and Walloon Reformed churches in the lowlands have adopted spiritual songs for use in corporate worship; and the book of praise used by the Dutch Reformed Churches contains a modest collection of hymns. So, having tasted evangelical hymns, the congregations hunger for an evangelical songbook cast in the spirit and tone of the Gospel in its entirety. The reader of the introduction is assured that only those hymns have been selected that accord with the confession of the church as expressed in its various forms. Indeed, the confidence is expressed that, with God's blessing, the collection of hymns will be of great benefit to the churches by preserving the purity of doctrine in a time of numerous and dangerous novelties. According to the editors, both the history of the church and the most recent achievements show that such songs will always be of great value.

The book was the product of its age also insofar as it promoted a cultural, moral, and intellectual improvement in the life of believers.

The hymn book was divided into ten sections, which were arranged according to topic, not liturgical function. They include songs about God and his perfections (1-13), creation and providence (14-30), misery and redemption (31-51), faith and trust (52-58), the Christian life of gratitude (59-78), the exercise and benefits of prayer (79-87), the public worship services (88-110), Christian holidays (111-158), especial circumstances and events (159-180), and death and eternity (181-192). Evidently, the hymn book would supple-

42 A A N D E N V E R L O S S E R. Gez. 48, 40.

10. Ja, U kiest ons hart.
Eeuwig tot zijn Koning!
Onder vreugd en smart

Geld' uw liefd' ons 't meest,
Strekk' ons hart uw' Geest
Eeuwig tot een woning!

43. A A N J E Z U S D E N V E R L O S S E R.
Nieuwe zangwijze.

Verlosser, Vriend! o hoop, o lust Van die U kennen, neem het
lied, Dat U in 't stof een stervling biedt, Een zondaar, die uw
voeten kust; Een zondaar, een verlost, o Heer! En nu geen zon-
daar meer: O! neem het aan, Gij laat geen' bidder staan, Gij
hoort in Hemellingen Verloste zondaars zingen; O! neem het aan.

2. Ja, 't was uw lust, een mensch te zijn!
Uw Vader heeft, op uw gebed,
Zijn eer gehandhaafd, ons gered;
Uw liefd' ontzag, noch leed, noch pijn:
Daar traadt Gij op, met moed en kracht,
Tot heil van ons geslacht.
Wij zijn verlost,
Maar 't heeft uw' dood gekost,
Gij leeft, Gij leeft! en 't leven
Wordt ons teruggegeven;
Wij zijn verlost!

3. Nu leeft Gods Zoon in menschlijk vleesch!
Hij stierf voor ons, maar leeft bij God,
En sterft niet meer. O zalig lot!
Gods Zoon, dat d' aard haar Schep-
per vreez!
Gods Zoon, verhoogd in heerlijkheid,
Heeft mij daar plaats bereid;
Ik ben zijn vriend!
Hij, wien al 't schepsel dient,
Der Englen Hoofd en Koning,
Verwacht mij in zijn woning;
Ik ben zijn vriend!

4. Bedreigt mij leed, ontmoet mij smart,
Ik vrees geen kwaad, maar klaag het
Hem:
Hoe groot in eer, Hij hoort mijn stem;
Hoe ver van d' aard, Hij kent mijn
hart,
Gods Zoon vergeet den broeder niet,
Dien hij op aarde liet;
Hij is mijn hoop,
Hij wiesch mij met zijn doop,
Hij geeft mij brood en beker,
'k Ben van zijn liefde zeker;
Hij is mijn hoop!

5. Waar is een vreugd, een kalmte, een
heil,
Zoo zalig, als dit hoogst genot?
Het vloeit uit God, en keert tot God,
Het heeft, noch maat, noch perk, noch
peil:
In Jezus is mijn zalig lot
Verborgen bij mijn' God;
Hij is mijn lust,
Ook als mijn stof eens rust.
O! prijst Hem, mijn gezangen!
Ik blijf zijn komst verlangen;
Hij is mijn lust!

ment the metrical psalms, and provide material that was deemed lacking therein. But in content and expression the *Evangelical Hymns* shared much with the psalter of 1773. God is referred to as an "infinite Being," like a supernatural force which maintains the order of the cosmos. This depiction gives the impression that God is far removed from this world and the human activity in it. Experientialism was reflected in the personal responses to faith and the projection of thoughts and feelings upon others. Nature and the seasons were praised as manifestations of the deity; Hymn 7, for example, is a hymn of praise upon the coming of Spring. The book was the product of its age also insofar as it promoted a cultural, moral, and intellectual improvement in the life of believers.

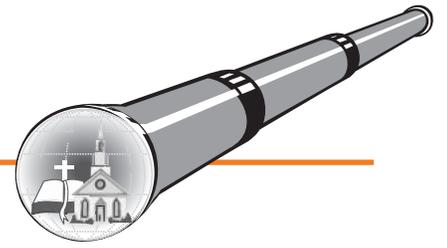
Provincial synods throughout The Netherlands approved the edition, and appointed January 1, 1807 as the date whereafter congregations were required to use the hymn book, singing at least one hymn per Sunday. Where needed, organs were constructed to assist the corporate singing, while (short-lived) amateur musical societies were formed to promote the singing of the spiritual songs at society meetings

and the like. By 1820, the *Evangelical Hymns* were well-established in the Dutch Reformed Church (*Hervormde Kerk*), though its reception was far from uniform. Indeed, both the contents of the hymn book and the manner in which it was implemented would cause considerable reaction in the decades following its publication, becoming a factor in the Secession of 1834 and in the formation of new Reformed denominations. But how the collection of songs was received, and the various reactions to its contents and language, is a subject we shall leave for another time.

¹For a description of earlier developments, see "The Introduction of Evangelical Hymns in the Dutch Reformed Churches: Developments in the Seventeenth Century," *Clarion* 52.14 (2003), 329-332.

²Quoted and translated from L. Knappert, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk gedurende de 18e en 19e Eeuw*. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff (1912), p. 36.

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Advances (choke!) in Bible Translation

By George van Popta

Publishers of the Bible do not seem to know when to quit. In what has become a market-driven money-making enterprise, the bizarre has entered the scene.

Our Australian readers have, perhaps, heard about *The Aussie Bible* (*Well, bits of it anyway*), due out in August. *The Aussie Bible*, written in the Australian vernacular, known as “Strine,” is aimed at readers who believe the Bible is too high brow or simply boring. Believing Australian English to be “a distinct language, with its own colour and feeling,” journalist and author, Kel Richards, has set out to provide Australians with a version of the Scriptures in their own vernacular, as might be spoken in any Outback pub or city building site. Accessibility is the guiding principle.

In *The Aussie Bible*, the Virgin Mary is a “pretty special sheila” who wraps her nipper in a bunny rug and tucks him up in a cattle feed trough (see sidebar). The Magi are “eggheads from out east” who follow a star to find the baby Jesus and announce their arrival with: “G’day, Your Majesty!” The Good Samaritan is a “grubby old street sweeper” who patches up the victim of a highway robbery with his first aid kit, then drops him off at the nearest pub. The stories have headings such as “The Wise Guys” and “The Story of the Good Bloke.”

The ninety page volume draws heavily from the Gospel according to Mark, with some stories from the other Gospel books and the Psalms mixed in. We are not anxious for Mr. Richards to translate the rest of the Bible.

SOURCES:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2003/06/04/wbibl04.xml>

http://www.biblenetworknews.com/asiapacific/060603_australia.html

There is a further contribution from Australia. The *Surfers Bible*, another recent version of the New Testament, is a collaboration between Christian Surfers International, a wave-ridin’ ministry, and the Australian Bible Society. The text remains a modern English translation; it’s the packaging that’s different. The jacket looks like a surfing magazine. Apparently, if not for the New Testament subtitle, you would think it a volume of handy surf hints.

SOURCE:

http://www.spiritualityhealth.com/newsh/items/article/item_5856.html

Not to be outdone by the Australians, the French have gotten in on the act by producing a new rap version of the Bible.

This “Bible” is written in a style of French likened to the rhythms of popular street music or modern poetry. The new

translation is the first to appear in France for thirty years. Unlike the *Aussie Bible* which is the work of one man, this rap version took forty-seven writers to produce – novelists, poets, as well as Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek scholars. They worked in pairs, one literary expert working with one religious expert. If the French were to be translated into English, Genesis 1:1 would read something like:

“First, God created heaven and earth.
Empty land, solitude.
Dark over the depths.
God said Light and light there was.”

John 1:1 would read as follows:

“In the beginning, the word,
the word with God,
God, the word.”

The authors state: “We’ve tried to be as faithful as possible to the original language and imagery of the Bible. But this is more literary and poetic, fluid and refreshing.” One Roman Catholic priest was reported to have commented, wisely: “It won’t age well.”

SOURCE:

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;\\$sessionid\\$QXJTVAHCIPO4JQFIQMGCF4AVCBQUIV0?xml=/news/2001/12/23/wbibl23.xml](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;$sessionid$QXJTVAHCIPO4JQFIQMGCF4AVCBQUIV0?xml=/news/2001/12/23/wbibl23.xml)

Excerpt: *The Aussie Bible* (*Well, bits of it anyway*) – Luke 2:8-14

There were some drovers camped out in a paddock nearby, keeping an eye on their mob of sheep that night. Their eyes shot out on stalks when an angel of the Lord zapped into view, and the glory of the Lord filled the air like a thousand volts of electricity. The angel said: ‘Stop looking like a bunch of stunned mullets. Let me give you the drum, the good oil, it’s top news for the whole crew – everyone, everywhere. Today in that little town on the hill a rescuer has been born: he is the Promised One, the King, the Lord.

‘And here’s how you’ll find him: the nipper is wrapped up in a bunny rug, and lying in a food trough.’ And before you could say, ‘Well, I’ll be blowed!’ the whole sky was filled with more angels than you could count, all singing away at the top of their lungs (if angels have got lungs, that is): ‘God is great! God is bonzer – and to everyone on this planet who’s on God’s side: peace and goodwill...’

If the good old Aussie bloke, the surfers and the rappers can have their own Bible, why not the bikers. Great news (said he sarcastically)! The English Bible Society has released the "open road" Bible.

The idea is that of Alan Lowther, an atheist turned Christian minister, president of the Christian Motorcyclists' Association and the "driving force" behind the new Manual for Life. The goal is to make Scripture more real and appealing to this sub-culture. On the cover is a colourful collage of motorcycles and the message: "Discover the freedom of the open road."

In this biker's Bible, Christ's blood is compared to the oil in a motorbike. An introduction to the Manual for Life reads: "As oil is essential to the running of an engine, so blood is vital for life. You check your oil regularly on the bike and repair any leaks: you stop the bleeding when you cut yourself. There is one person, however, who let himself bleed to death in order to give us life This book tells his story."

SOURCE:

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/htmlContent.jhtml;\\$sessionid\\$QXJTVAHHCIP04JQFIQMGCF4AVCBQUIV0?html=/archive/1997/05/18/nvir118.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/htmlContent.jhtml;$sessionid$QXJTVAHHCIP04JQFIQMGCF4AVCBQUIV0?html=/archive/1997/05/18/nvir118.html)

Comment: We do not need to return to the language of the King James Bible or the Book of Common Prayer, but surely, neither do we need to resort to the banal, let alone the bizarre and the blasphemous. A good, faithful translation of scripture will do. And we do not just stick Bibles into people's hands, and then move on. We bring them under the faithful preaching of the Word. For as the Word itself says: "... faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Rom 10:17).



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Partial CCCA Report to Synod Chatham 2004 Regarding our Contact with Churches in Brazil and Mexico

By K. Jonker

Introduction

In this article I continue to report on the activities of subcommittee West of the Committee for Contact with Churches in the Americas (CCCA). The material for this article is derived from the more detailed CCCA report to Synod 2004, which the churches will receive in September 2003.

Igreja Reformadas Do Brasil (IRB)

Synod 2001 mandated the CCCA *“to maintain contact with the IRB under the adopted rules for ecclesiastical fellowship.”*

Ecclesiastical fellowship

The clerk of Synod 2001, Rev. G. Ph. Van Popta, informed us that he had communicated Synod Neerlandia’s decision regarding IRB to the Brazilian churches. Our committee interpreted Synod’s decision *“to offer a relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship to the IRB”* to mean: to enter into such a relationship with these churches, since Synod Neerlandia accepted their offer. Two printed copies of Acts Synod 2001 were sent to them.

The IRB consists of two Regional synods. The Southern Regional Synod includes the churches of Colombo and Unai. The Northern Regional Synod consists of the churches in North-eastern Brazil. In contrast to the churches of the Southern Regional Synod, the churches, which form the North-eastern Regional Synod, also come together as a classis.

Our committee felt that in the initial stage of our official relationship with the IRB, it would be most beneficial to involve the Canadian churches conducting mission in Brazil. We contacted the sending churches for mission

in Brazil, the churches at Hamilton and Surrey. Via these contacts we received information about addresses, the date of their Synod, names of visitors and/or delegates to these churches and to their Synod in September 2002. When we were informed that brother A. Nap would be travelling to Brazil in September 2002, the committee asked him to represent our churches at their Synod. Brother Nap accepted our request and translated our letter to the IRB Synod into Portuguese.

Visit brother A. Nap

In our letter we sent our fraternal greetings with the prayer that the Head of the church would bless their work for the building up of the churches in Brazil. For the sake of clarity we repeated our rules for ecclesiastical fellowship. Furthermore, we requested them to send all relevant information about their churches and Synod meetings (preferably in the English language) to us. We also expressed our desire to hear from them how they would make the relationship between our churches a living matter. Brother Nap served us with a report of his visit, which we received with much appreciation.

Brother Nap’s report shows that the IRB has enjoyed growth since 1976. The membership now stands at about 500. Synod decided to publish a final version of their Psalter (150 Psalms and 200 Hymns) in four years. Reformed literature is being translated into Portuguese and works of theologians such as VanBruggen, Douma, Trimp, Doekes, and Velema/VanGenderen.

Our Dutch sister churches (GKV) also have contact with the *Igreja Pres-*

biteriana do Brasil (IPB). Synod Zuidhorn however, decided to work towards a tripartite dialogue with the IRB and IPB. Therefore the GKV requested the IRB to clarify their position with regard to the IPB. The committee for contact with the IPB of our Brazilian sister churches expressed thankfulness for the Reformed character of the IPB, that they also had taken a faithful stand against heresies and liberalism.

On the other hand they have great concern about the IPB because of their membership of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC). Via WARC the IPB is in contact with very liberal churches. They reported further that the IPB has a hierarchical church government. This hierarchy reduces the prime responsibility of elders and allows for a concentration of power in a few persons. As far as this matter is concerned the IPB has a different ecclesiastical structure than for example the OPC.

In 2000, IRB members who were in training at the IPB seminary in Recife discontinued their studies at this institution. At present these seminarians receive theological training from the missionaries A. deGraaf, E. Venema, and K. Wieske. This ad-hoc program is only for the seminarians who have studied in Recife. This project is financed by supporting churches in Hamilton and Surrey, as well as by the GKV in The Netherlands.

Synod Colombo decided to approve this ad-hoc project, which previously had been accepted by the member churches. Synod also formulated a mandate for a new committee. This committee has to formulate plans for the post ad-hoc situation.



The delegates of the Synod of the IRB which was held in Curitiba (2002).

Brother Nap also reported that the IRB has become more indigenous! “Before, some committees exclusively consisted of “foreigners.” Now some missionaries are “only” “*conselheiros*.” According to brother Nap our future contact should be, for a substantial part, at a committee-level contact; it is mandatory to send Portuguese-speaking observers to future Brazilian synods, making use of the natural contacts between members of the two federations.

In mid-February, 2002, members from the Winnipeg churches (Gerry Kuik, John Kuik, Jake & Darlene Kuik) visited Brazil. They too passed on our greetings. The visitors returned with an enthusiastic report that the Brazilian churches are doing well under the blessings of the Lord. In particular in Recife there seems to be a hunger for the Reformed faith.

Evaluation of our contact with IRB

The contact we had with IRB was an indirect contact. This was done on purpose as reported above. As long as churches within our federation have close ties with IRB through mission work, our ecclesiastical contact can naturally be exercised via those churches and/or representatives.

The CCCA recommends to Synod 2004 that Synod

1. *express gratitude for growth and a positive development in the IRB*
2. *mandate the CCCA to maintain contact with the IRB under the adopted rules for ecclesiastical fellowship.*

Independent Presbyterian Churches in Mexico (IPC)

Synod 2001 mandated the CCCA “to further investigate the IPCM.”

The committee began to carry out its mandate by studying the “supporting documents” mentioned in Article 37 of Acts 2001. Several persons and institutions were identified who were contacted for giving us the necessary information about the IPCM. However, those who responded to our request did not give us pertinent information. The main respondents to our correspondence were Dr. C. VanDam of our Theological College and Dr. John Paul Roberts, a former Presbyterian missionary in Mexico. In December 2001 Dr. VanDam visited Mexico and met Rev. Noh. A report van Prof. VanDam’s visit has been published in *Clarion* Vol. 51 No. 8.

We made numerous attempts to establish an official contact address of the IPCM. However, letters, faxes and emails were hardly responded to. Short responses only referred us to other addresses. In December, 2002, we received a communication from Dr. Roberts. This communication informed us about the appointment of Rev. Misael Custodio as chairman of their InterChurch Relations Committee. He is a person who can speak English. A letter was sent at once to Rev. Custodio. His reply brought us back to square one since we are redirected to another contact person.

Another letter was received from Dr. J.P. Roberts. He informed us that our letter had been forwarded to the right person and that answers were forthcoming. The RCUS encountered the same problem in their contacts with the IPCM. For some years they were in ecclesiastical fellowship with the IPCM. However, they too received

no responses to their correspondence. This year their InterChurch relations committee reported to Synod:

As reported last year, we do not believe that there is sufficient warrant to re-institute an active fraternal relationship between the RCUS and the IPCM. They have not responded to our inquiries regarding the way such a relationship would function. In light of this your Committee recommends, “(. . .) that the Stated Clerk of Synod write to the IPCM and inform them that we are terminating our fraternal relationship with them in light of the impracticalities preventing fruitful interaction, and that we pray God’s blessings upon them in the church-gathering work of Christ.”

RCUS Synod 2003 adopted this recommendation.

Evaluation of our contact with IPCM

We have been unable to establish any real meaningful contact with the IPCM.

The CCCA recommends to Synod 2004: Synod declare that:

1. *at this time there is no reason to actively pursue an ecclesiastical relationship with the IPCM;*
2. *CCCA will report to Synod 2007 about any further contact with the IPCM.*



Rev. K. Jonker is minister of the Grace Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg, Manitoba. kjonker@canrc.org



By Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Erna Nordeman

*“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit,
who is in you, whom you have received from God?
You are not your own; you were bought at a price.
Therefore honour God with your body.”*
1 Corinthians 6:19, 20

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We have come to the seventh commandment, “You shall not commit adultery.” It is a commandment that teaches us how to live before the Lord. We are to live as temples of the Holy Spirit confessing that Christ has ransomed our sinful bodies from what they deserve: eternal death. Lord’s Day 1 tells us that we belong with body and soul to our faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. So often we stress that our soul remains close to the Lord. Our bodies also belong to Him so we must glorify God also in our bodies. We were bought with a price and now belong to Him. To misuse our body greatly grieves our Father in heaven. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, a place where God dwells. We must always strive to live pure and holy lives also in our thoughts. Our minds should be filled with his love and of his faithfulness toward us. Knowing our bodies belong to the Lord helps us to constantly do everything according to his will. We should think twice before conforming to the ways of the world. Satan who is deceiving Christ’s church is very strong.

Everywhere we turn we see pictures in magazines or on the television that could lead to unchaste thoughts. We live in a world full of sin. The way that God wants us to live also in our sexual life is not the standard by which people live by today. Everything goes, and no thought goes to how displeasing this lifestyle must be to the Creator of all things.

Also as Christians we must learn how we must glorify God in our body. What lives in our hearts will also show in how we live before God. To dress modestly so as not to entice other people to unchaste thoughts, is pleasing to our God. Dressing like the world does create many concerns. We ought to set ourselves apart from the world in all aspects of life. To also refrain from smoking and drugs is also to refrain from polluting our bodies. It must grieve our Father greatly when our bodies are used so wrongly. We are to lead self-controlled lives in every way. When we do not listen to God, then we will also lose control and Satan will soon have us where he wants us, that is leading a sinful life.

With our bodies, God wants us to glorify Him. From our mouths should come many praises of thankfulness and with our eyes we should be reading his Word and taking it to heart every day anew.

The seventh commandment is not an easy one to obey. It involves so many areas of our life. The world is so corrupt in this aspect of life that it can leave the church very vulnerable. We must however fight the good fight of faith by praying to God to lead us not into temptation. His Word guides us each day knowing how to live

before Him. We have also two promises given to us, namely the forgiveness of sins and the life everlasting. There is much forgiveness when we humbly flee to Christ and return to the law that tells us: you are not your own but belong to the Lord. God will hear our prayers if we ask for forgiveness with true faith. He promises to redeem us from this life of sin and unite us with Him. One day all our sins will be no more and we will reign with Him eternally. Our bodies will be made holy and we will be singing praises to our God for his unfailing love for his chosen people!

*Fount of power, life, and light,
Deliver us from Satan’s might:
His strength is great and we are frail,
Our sinful flesh is prone to fail.
Against all lust and vanity
O help us, then, and make us free.*

Hymn 47:8

Birthdays in October:

6: HENRY VANDER VLIET will be 36

Anchor Home
361 Thirty Road, RR2, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2

17: ALAN BREUKELMAN will turn 37

225 - 19th Street, Coaldale, AB T1M 1G4

22: NELENA HOF SINK will turn 43

Bethesda Clearbrook Home
32553 Willingdon Crescent
Clearbrook, BC V2T 1S2

25: JOHN FEENSTRA will be 45

Anchor Home
361 Thirty Road, RR2, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2

28: MARY ANN DE WIT will be 47

6705 Satchel Road, Box 40
Mount Lehman, BC V0X 1V0

Congratulations to you all who will be celebrating another year of your life. It is our hope and prayer that our heavenly Father will continue to bless and keep you in his care, granting you all much health and happiness. Have an enjoyable day together with your family and friends. Till next month,

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

Report on the 40th Annual Women's League Day at Langley, B.C.

By Jane deGlint

Living as Citizens of the Kingdom

The Annual League Day continues to be an event of importance for many women in the Southern part of British Columbia and the northern corner of Washington. First of all, every League Day is by its nature an international occasion. Furthermore, this important day requires a lot of preparation from different congregations. And in the last place, more than two hundred women organize their lives in such a way that they are able to attend this special day of study, encouragement, fellowship, refreshments, and just plain fun.

This year just over 230 women attended the 40th League Day, which was held on Wednesday, June 18 in the attractively redecorated church building of the Langley congregation. During her opening words, Frances Slump of Willoughby Heights mentioned that these forty years have seen a gradual but definite change from Dutch to English. Yet most things stayed the same. For all these years all attendants received the general reminder to sign the cards for the wives of the missionaries, while the nursing mothers were given the special admonition to be on guard for the number which corresponded to their baby.

After the singing of a few verses of Psalm 139 and prayer Stephanie Bareman of the congregation at Lynden introduced the morning topic and its speakers. With vivid strokes she painted the process that led up to the choice of theme and writers: from denial to passing the buck to the final production of a sound introduction on the Beatitudes by two capable women, Jeanette Bouwman and Louise Willis.

These two women had entitled their introduction "The Only Way to Happiness is in Christ." Capably they brought the meaning and message of each Beat-



itude home. For example, those who mourn, who have heartfelt sorrow over their sins are blessed. They can take refuge in Christ, who came to heal, to rescue from sin. Though our mourning will continue for our lifetime, Christ will comfort us every step of the way and lead us safely to the end of our lives.

In the discussion we paid more attention to the blessing for the meek. It seems that some are naturally more meek than others. Yet, in the Bible very powerful people are described as meek. Those who do not rely on their own strength and humbly yet boldly testify of the Name of Jesus are meek. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The Yarrow congregation had chosen Linda Woelders to present us with some verse. Linda had chosen the poem "When I am an old lady," which places the parent-child relationship in an unusual and humorous light.

The afternoon session was opened by Rita Krabbendam of the Chilliwack congregation. After Bible reading,

singing and prayer she gave the floor to the afternoon speaker, Andria Lengkeek, who also hails from Chilliwack. In line with the theme of the day, "Living as Citizens of the Kingdom," Andria had chosen as title for her introduction, "The Secret of Being Content." She explained to us that God did not promise us an easy life. Neither is contentment determined by circumstances. Our inner joy and peace are found in the Lord. Trials can bring us to the joy of faith. Andria focused on Philippians 4:4-7 to describe the peace of God. We can be content when we know that Christ is in us. Therefore we draw near with confidence to God; and he will come near to us. (James 4:8)

The short discussion led to the conclusion that our troubles turn into blessings when we thank God.

Back to the hosting society of Willoughby Heights. Fiona Jansen had several points of order and closed the day. We went home, happy and content. We knew ourselves united in Christ. 



Press Release of Classis Niagara June 18, 2003 held in Lincoln, Ontario

Opening

On behalf of the convening Church of Rockway, br. B. Gritter calls the meeting to order. He requests all present to sing Psalm 103:3, 4. Scripture reading is Psalm 135. Br. Gritter leads in prayer. The delegates from Rockway report that the credentials are in order and Classis is declared constituted. The moderamen is as follows:

Rev. J. vanVliet, chairman
Rev. K. Kok, clerk
Rev. D. Agema, vice-chairman

The chairman welcomes the delegates, the deputies of Regional Synod, br. and sr. Dethan and all guests. The agenda is established.

Peremptory examination of br. Ed Dethan

After br. Dethan has submitted the required documents he presents a sermon proposal on Exodus 3:10-12. In closed session Classis decides to continue the examination. Br. Dethan is examined in Exegesis O.T. (Judges 14,

Malachi 1), Exegesis N.T. (Luke 9, Phil 1), Doctrine and Creeds (Means of Grace), Church History, Knowledge of Holy Scripture, Ethics, Diaconology and Church Polity. In closed session Classis decides to sustain the examination. The Deputies of Regional Synod concur with this. After the proper documents have been presented Classis approbates the call. The chairman reads the Form for Subscription and br. Dethan signs this Form. Classis expresses its thankfulness to the Lord in song and prayer. The delegates receive opportunity to congratulate br. and sr. Dethan.

Article 44 CO

The chairman asks the required questions. The Church of Rockway requests that Rev. Kok be appointed as counsellor. This is granted. Rockway also requests monthly pulpit supply. Classis arranges pulpit supply for July and September for Grassie and Rockway. The Church at Smithville asks advice in a matter of discipline. Advice is given in closed session.

Proposals

The Church of Attercliffe presents a proposal to institute a new congrega-

tion in the Dunnville/Wainfleet area. With thankfulness to the Lord Classis decides to give its concurrence to this proposal.

Church Visitations

Reports of visitations to all the churches in the Classis are read and received with thankfulness.

Appointments

Next Classis
Convening Church: Smithville
Date: September 17, 2003
Officers: Chairman: Rev. D. Agema
Vice-chairman: Rev. K. Kok
Clerk: Rev. J. VanVliet

The Church of Grassie is appointed to represent Classis at the ordination of br. Ed Dethan.

Closing

Censure ad Article 34 CO is not necessary. The Acts are read and adopted. The Press Release is read and approved. Classis sings Psalm 84:4 and 5. The chairman leads in prayer and closes Classis.

For Classis,
Rev. D.G.J. Agema

CLARION

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

Births

I have called you by name, You are mine. Isaiah 43:1

God gave us

ROY EDWIN

Born June 5, 2003

Randy and Nienke, Amanda van Raalte

7 Cooperstreet, PO Box 461, Grand Valley, Ontario L0N 1G0

email: rvanraalte@sympatico.ca

For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. Psalm 139:13

With thanks to our Heavenly Father for entrusting one of His children to us, we joyfully announce the birth of our daughter

JAIME LYNNE

Born July 20, 2003

Les and Rebecca Blokker (nee Kingma)

287 Regional Road 14, Canfield, ON N0A 1C0

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Psalm 127:5 NKJV

With thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for blessing us with this great gift, we joyfully announce the birth of our first-born son

ALEXANDER PETER

Born on June 26, 2003

Jack and Jennifer Thalen (nee Jonker)

1st grandchild for Alex and Henny Thalen

16th grandchild for Peter and Henrietta Jonker

7637 Wellington Road 7, Alma, ON N0B 1A0

With great thankfulness and praise to our Heavenly Father, who makes all things well, we joyfully announce the arrival of our beautiful baby, a girl named

ABIGAIL BARBARA

Born June 11, 2003

Doug and Karen Beintema (nee VanderVeen)

23647 Industrial Road, Thamesville, ON N0P 2K0