Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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R. Aasman

Real Heroes

To all appearances he was a quiet, low-key hero

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Charles Dickens starts his novel *David Copperfield* with this line: "Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show." The literal meaning of hero is "protector" or "guardian." However, in everyday usage a hero is someone who in the face of danger and adversity, or from a position of weakness, displays courage and the will for self-sacrifice to achieve a higher good. The life of David Copperfield demonstrates that he is not the hero of his own life. Someone else is his hero.

There are people whom we do regard as real heroes. We think of men like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Guido de Brès. In the face of terrible danger and at considerable risk to their personal lives, these men displayed courage as they strove to bring the Word of God back to the people. Guido de Brès did that at the cost of his own life. But even men like these would never have claimed to be a hero in the fullest sense of the word, as if somehow in their own strength they were the protectors and guardians of their own lives and the lives of others. Guido de Brès said on the day of his execution: "This morning I have been condemned to death for the doctrine of the Son of God. Praise be to him. I am happy. I never dared to think that God would do me such an honour." Even heroes recognize that whatever they are and whatever they accomplish is only possible through Jesus Christ, our real hero.

The real hero

In the Bible God is clearly portrayed as our hero in the literal sense of the word: He is our defender, protector, and guardian. David writes in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." These words are fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our hero not only in the sense that He protects and guards us, but also in the sense that He faced terrific danger with courage and the willingness to sacrifice Himself in order to defend us. His heroism was not accomplished with great fanfare and the kind of swashbuckling bravado that our culture likes to see in its heroes. When Jesus Christ faced the great enemy Satan, He did not raise a fist or a sword, nor did He surround Himself with an army of disciples, but He became obedient to death. To all appearances He was a quiet, low-key hero. He was obedient to his Father – both in keeping the law and being willing to pay for the sins of his people by death on a cross. His victory cry was "it is finished." His heroism was confirmed in breathing his last and bowing his head in death. No greater sacrifice has the world ever seen. No greater suffering has any man ever endured. That was a real hero – a one-of-a-kind hero – that died on Golgotha. We read in Hebrews 2:14, 15: "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."

Jesus Christ is the hero of our life: He has delivered us from Satan, sin, and death. He has also caused us to be born again through his Spirit. And even though we live in a world that is still the valley of the shadow of death, He remains our constant guardian and defender.

Heroes of faith

We saw that Charles Dickens starts *David Copperfield* with this line: "Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show." To us the answer is obvious: only Jesus Christ is the hero in my life. However, when we genuinely believe that and live by faith in Jesus Christ, then we also become heroes. Think of Hebrews 11 where we read of believing men and women who are often called "heroes of faith." Their heroism was not in the first place a matter of what they accomplished, but it was a matter of their undivided confidence in Jesus Christ. Looking in faith to Jesus Christ, they denied themselves, took up their cross and followed Jesus. And in Jesus Christ they began to do very courageous things. Some of them might not sound like heroes. We read of Abel offering a better sacrifice; Abraham prepared to offer Isaac as a sacrifice; Moses' parents hiding him for three months;

Rahab the prostitute welcoming the Israelite spies in Jericho. Of others we read:

> Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated – the world was not worthy of them.

A hero of faith does not have to accomplish spectacular feats of strength and courage and sacrifice. A hero of faith does not have to receive accolades, trophies, medals, or a Nobel peace prize. He or she must hold on to Jesus and courageously live life to the praise and glory of God.

The right stuff

Let us take an example from Scripture. In the letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3, we read of regular everyday people who go to work at the local guild and are pressured to worship the emperor or the pagan gods of their particular guild. Failure to do so could result in loss of job, an inability to buy and sell, and even the loss of freedom, property, and life. Jesus Christ said to them:

> To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Whoever denies himself, takes up his cross, and follows Jesus in all situations is more than a conqueror. He or she is a hero of faith. Such people could never do this in their own strength. But they can do it in Jesus Christ who leads them safely through the valley of the shadow of death.

Who is the hero?

Our concept of a hero really should not be shaped by culture and the entertainment industry. Even history skews the idea of what it takes to be a hero. Considering what we have said above, heroes are everyday men and women, boys and girls who live by faith in Jesus Christ. A hero is a teenager working at McDonald's who refuses to work on Sunday or to get involved in the immoral lifestyle of fellow workers. A hero is a college student who quietly but firmly states in biology classes a personal belief in God as Creator of this world. A hero is a young wife who dares to get pregnant and to raise children in the midst of a broken world. A hero is a business person who engages in fair business practices with everyone. Heroes are regular, everyday people who have experienced the joy of salvation in Jesus Christ and courageously use their lives to serve God and to build up the life of their neighbour.

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J.L. van Popta

Poohsticks

MATTHEW 13:52

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"Samaria and its king will float away like a twig on the surface of the waters."
Hosea 10:7

We've all played poohsticks. You might not have called it that, but I'm sure you've played it just as I did. Winnie the Pooh invented that game. You can read about it in *The House at Pooh Corner*. Winnie the Pooh and his friends would stand on the upstream side of the bridge in the Hundred Acre Wood and lean out over the creek. Each of them would drop a stick into the water and then race to the other side of the bridge to see whose stick came out first. It's a fun and simple game. Try it some time.

I remember my aunt in Edmonton taking her grandchildren out into the back lane behind her house to play poohsticks. Like many Canadian cities, the older part of town where they lived had many back lanes and those lanes were never cleared of snow during the winter. The cars packed the layers of snow down all winter, until sometimes that ice was more than twenty centimetres thick. And then the spring thaw would come. Those narrow back lanes would quickly become rivers of melt water rushing down to the storm sewers.

My aunt would come out with her grandkids to race popsicle sticks down those streams and eddies in the back lanes. Convoluted streams flowed down the lane, this way and that, but always directing the water to the drain cover. Grandma and her kiddies were out there, racing sticks on the water. Their hands were in the ice-cold water; the warm sun was on their necks. What fun! Each would try to find the fastest stream so that their stick would be the first to the drain cover, the first to disappear down into the earth, never to reappear again.

If you've played this game, you'll know how the flow of the water always controls the stick. Perhaps you have tried this in a mountain stream. Throw in a stick, or branch, or twig, and violently the stream carries it away. It's pulled under; then it leaps out in the rapids, until it plunges over the falls and disappears. If it is slower water, a twig, branch, or leaf bobs along on the current, gets caught in the eddies, and then aimlessly rounds the bend of the creek, never to be seen again.

Hosea knew about this. He used this image to describe the fate of Samaria and its wicked king. Hosea was the Lord's prophet in the final years of the northern kingdom of Israel. The king and Samaria, the capital city, were in open rebellion against God. They were steeped in their sins and did not heed the preachers that God sent to them.

The prophet therefore declares that Samaria and its king will be like a twig on the surface of the waters. They will be swept away, like so many poohsticks. A branch in a mountain stream has no rudder. It's caught in a whirlpool and goes under; it floats into a back eddy, comes out again, then plunges over a falls. My aunt's popsicle sticks had no control in those back-lane rivers. Winnie the Pooh and his friends' sticks were driven by the stream. In all their power and pretension, the rebellious Samaria and its king were but twigs on a stream. Sweep them away!

Men may think they have built up mighty empires and kingdoms, but without God in Christ, they are rudderless. They have no sail, no engine, no propeller, and the current of time draws them along like twigs on the water. The Lord will sweep them away on the streams of history. Through his prophet, God declares that mighty powers and institutions, nations and kings, can be and will be swept away. They have no anchor, no power.

The same is not true for God's people. In Isaiah 43:2, the Lord promises safety for his own. He says, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and when you pass through the rivers you will not be swept away!" When we walk with the Lord Jesus Christ, we are not twigs on the water. We are not anchorless, rudderless, and powerless. We will not be swept away. Instead, it is our sins and our iniquities that are removed. The water of baptism is a symbol that He has already taken them away. God in Christ is the anchor of our soul, the captain of our lives. His Word is our rudder. In Him we have strength and power.

When springtime comes and the snow melts, or perhaps this summer at a mountain stream, throw a twig into running water. Watch the stream sweep it away. That is how God deals with those who stand against Him in their sin. But when you trust in God, you will never be swept away. Instead that twig will be like your sins: washed away around the bend in the stream, never to be seen again.

E. Kampen

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Unity efforts between the Canadian and United Reformed Churches: Progress to Date (Part 2 of 2)

This article is an edited version of a speech delivered to the League Day of the Canadian Reformed Men's Societies in Ontario, on November 24, 2007.

The need to revive the drive to unity

While the review of the progress to date may have ended somewhat bleakly, there is the undeniable fact that despite giving mixed signals, the recent synods of both federations have continued to commit themselves to achieving federative unity. The ecumenical drive that was there initially may have slowed, but there still is some drive. While I may betray bias, I would say that the CanRC have done everything they can to keep the process going. In a way they have set the pace, for Canadian Reformed synods are always held earlier in the year than URCNA synods. An example of this is the way Synod Smithers spoke about a federation-controlled seminary, admitting that it is hard to make this an absolute scriptural principle. This did not take away the conviction that a federation-controlled seminary is a good way of working out the principle that the church should ensure it has men trained for the ministry (c.f. LD 38, "First, that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be maintained"). What we need to consider is how to revive the drive that led to those bold decisions made in 2001 to move toward federative unity. Without reviving that drive, the prognosis would be that the status quo will continue, namely, of existing as separate federations, slowly drifting apart as each gets wound up in its own struggles and developments.

In this connection it is worthwhile to refer to H. Algra, who wrote a fine book in the mid 1960s with the title, in translation, *The Miracle of the Nineteenth Century*. In this book he wrote about the Secession of 1834 and the Doleantie of 1886, with the final chapter being about the Union of 1892. It was truly a miracle that the Reformed faith, which appeared nearly extinguished at the beginning of the nineteenth century, revived. At the end of that century, after two reformations, there was again a strong united Reformed witness in The Netherlands. What was remarkable was how quickly the union between the two groups was accomplished. That it was an accomplished fact by 1892 is evidence not only of the amount of energy that was directed at this union but also of the powerful drive to unity. All this happened even though they also had to work through issues of church order and theological training, perhaps having less of an issue in a common song book.

In the chapter on the Union of 1892, Algra remarks that even though it took only six years, he was convinced that it couldn't have waited any longer. He writes, in translation, "Then unification would have become more difficult from year to year and humanly speaking would never have come about." He then adds the caustic remark, "And then there would have been in 1965 (nearly seventy years later) still weekly – or monthly – articles in the church papers about what unites us and about that which 'as yet' keeps us separate and 'don't force anything.'" He further adds that continued separation would have kept alive the opinions the two groups had of each other. The people of the Doleantie, more recently from the big and

established church, would think of the Seceded as the followers of DeCock and the Seceded would keep on lamenting that the Doleantie people misunderstood and neglected (*miskend*) them, acting as if they didn't really exist.[1]

The ecumenical drive that was there initially may have slowed, but there still is some drive

It would seem that we see something similar happening now already, as the unity process is faltering. All too often in the last couple of years there are subtle swipes at Schilder's views of the covenant, often simply by dropping his name in connection with the hot button issue of the Federal Vision. At the same time, from the CanRC side, there is the sense the URCNA misunderstands us and neglects us and acts as if we don't exist. We simply don't seem to have the prominent position on their synod agenda as they do on ours.

In the end, the comments of Algra bring to mind the suggestion of C. Venema, made back in 1992, not to come to a premature formation of new federation(s) of former CRCs, stating that if this was done "it becomes extremely difficult to pursue further contacts with a view to organic union" (*Challenge of Church Union*, pp 140,141). The new federation of the URCNA may be a done deal, but it can still work if there is the understanding that it is merely a means to a goal.

Renewed commitment

In light of this, if things are ever going to reach the desired goal, there will first need to be a renewed commitment to the process. Every year that passes will make it more difficult. To show the commitment to this process, both federations should direct all their energy to it and suspend everything that suggests they are limping on two opinions. This means no more tinkering with present church orders, nor tampering with the song books and liturgical documents. It would mean putting all the ecumenical contacts in a holding pattern, maintaining present contacts but telling new groups seeking contact that we will talk once federative unity has been achieved. It would mean finding a solution to the theological education issue where the opinions of both sides are respected and the Canadian Reformed approach is not ruled out immediately.

Reviewing national or international

Secondly, there may be the need to re-evaluate the present goal of aiming for a North American federation. That may well be the bridge too far. In this respect, the words of Dr. Faber come back as he urged all involved to work things out on a national level, keeping in mind the cultural differences between Canadians and Americans and that we live under different governments. This is also more practical in that the Canadian churches know each other and could easily integrate at a classical level. At present, approximately one third of the URCNA's one hundred congregations are in Canada, mainly in the same regions you find Canadian Reformed churches. There would be the additional benefit of having the same shared cultural experience in terms of immigration after the Second World War while many of the US churches have members with far longer histories in the US in the immigration of Seceded people in the 1840s. Further, it would perhaps address the problem that the CanRC is an unknown entity to so many United Reformed churches in the USA. It is to be recognized this suggestion impacts the United Reformed churches that have a long history of a transnational federation. There is need for Canadian Reformed people to be sensitive to this. Still, one has to

Church News

Called by the church of Elora, Ontario:

Rev. J.E. Ludwig

of Grand Rapids, MI, U.S.A.

Called by the church of Ottawa, Ontario:

Rev. G.Ph. van Popta

of Ancaster, Ontario.

Examined by Classis Ontario West on March 26th, 2008, and received consent to speak an edifying word in the churches (C.O. Art. 21) upon successful completion of the current academic year (May 25th):

Student Rodney Vermeulen

After a colloquium (cf. Art. 5. B.2, C.O.) on March 26th, 2008 Classis Ontario West approved the call extended to:

Rev. A. William De Jong

He will be installed in Hamilton (Cornerstone), ON, on March 30th, 2008, D.V. He previously served as minister of the United Reformed Churches in North America in Kansas City, MO.

ask whether it is not more important to be united with the brotherhood in one's own country as a testimony to that country rather than being divided at home in favour of a unity with those abroad. Of course we cannot insist on this, but in light of the current situation, it is something that at the very least should be discussed.

Reconsidering statements

Third, while it is becoming clear that the nine points of Synod Schererville were not at all aimed at the CanRC, the cause of unity was not helped by these points. These nine points, and especially point six, immediately triggered fear of the situation that led to the Liberation of 1944 because of the way it so narrowly defined the way of speaking about the covenant to the exclusion of other ways. It is to be hoped that the brothers in the URCNA will realize that while trying to sweep out an enemy they thought was getting a toehold in their churches, they nearly swept out a dear friend in the process. They have touched a sensitive nerve in the hearts of Canadian Reformed people and placed a considerable obstacle on the road to federative unity.

Conclusion: work and pray

In a way, this prognosis does not look promising. Of course, humanly speaking, the whole effort toward church unity is not promising. While we may feel that the ball at this point is especially in the URCNA court, we have our own responsibility while we wait for them to toss it back to us. Do note well, however, that we are not to pull out of the game. Rather than giving room for latent sentiments favouring retreating into our comfort zone, our own little domains, we must remember that Christ is not divided and neither should his people be (1 Cor 1-3; Eph 2:11-22). We need to remain committed, or perhaps regain the commitment to the unity of Christ's church and do what we can with the opportunities given to us. We need also to give our United Reformed brothers room and time. They face challenges as a young federation we cannot imagine as a well established federation. The key thing is that we need to keep working away at it and praying for it.

It is important to highlight that last aspect of praying. After all, the Lord Jesus taught us to pray, "Your kingdom come." In our Catechism we expand on that and say it means, "Preserve and increase your church." As James writes, "You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God" (James 4:2).

It is on this note regarding prayer that we conclude. Indeed, we need to make sure we ask our heavenly Father for his blessing over our humble efforts, eager that his name be glorified in the unity of his children. As we pray that He will open the way that at times seems to have roadblocks, above all we need to pray that He will keep us on the better way, the way of love.

[1] See Algra, *Het Wonder Van de 19e eeuw*. Tweede Druk. Franeker: T. Wever, 1966, pp 334, 335.

Ray of Sunshine

By Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Patricia Gelms

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love. . ."

Galatians 5:22

What is a fruit of love? How can this fruit live in us and be shown in all we do? As we begin this mini series on the fruits of the Spirit, we will concretely look at the fruit of love.

The Bible has much to say about fruit, which is mentioned some 106 times in the Old Testament and seventy times in the New Testament. Even under the old covenant, a believer produced good fruit only by God's power, not his own. For, "Our fruitfulness comes from me," the Lord declared to ancient Israel in Hosea 14:8. Yet the Lord wants us to bear much fruit: "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit" (John 15:8a).

The first characteristic of spiritual fruit is love. This is also the most excellent way of Christian living. Love is also known to be the other word for fruit. It blends so well with all the other fruits and there needs to be a lot of this fruit.

Jesus Christ is the supreme example of this virtue. It was not only the Father's love but also his own love that led Jesus to lay down his life for us by dying on the cross (Rom 5:8). When we see what love our heavenly Father has given for us, through faith, the Holy Spirit will fill us with love directed back to Him and to those around us. For to believers, love is not an option but a command. Yet this command cannot be fulfilled apart from the Holy Spirit, the source of this love and all other spiritual fruits. Paul explained to the Roman believers in Romans 5 that the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has given it to us. It was for such love in the Spirit that Paul gave thanks for the believers in Colosse. We must walk in love. Paul continues to exhort us in Ephesians 5:1, 2 "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

May we find much strength, comfort, and joy in the love of our heavenly Father. Trust and believe the words that Jesus teaches us in John 15: 9-14, 17, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. This is my command: love each other.

All glory to Him alone for graciously pouring out his love on us, while we were yet sinners. May our lives be filled with God's love and so be used as instruments in his hand.

O come with thanks, God's goodness praising;
His firm and steadfast love endures.
Let Israel and the house of Aaron
Proclaim His love forever sure.
Let all who come to Him in worship
Be in His steadfast love secure.
Come to the LORD with your thanksgiving;
His everlasting love endures.

Psalm 118:1

Birthdays in May:

1 **CLARENCE ZWIEP will be 54**
653 Broad Street West, Dunnville, ON NIA IT8

4 **DEBBIE VEENSTRA will be 34**
RR 1, Sherkston, ON L0S 1R0

10 **ROB DE HAAN will be 43**
Anchor Home
361 Thirty Road, RR 2, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2

30 **BERNIE DE VOS will be 33**
40 Kerman Avenue, Grimsby, ON L3M 3W5

Till next month,

Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Patricia Gelms
548 Kemp Road East
RR 2, Beamsville, ON LOR 1B2
905-563-0380
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G.H. Visscher

News from the Theological College

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Illness at the College

How can we describe life at the Theological College without mentioning the fact that we too daily wrestle with the frailties common to everyone else? As we all know, Dr. J. DeJong has been on disability for some time because of his condition. Though his wife, Margaret, is still courageously managing to care for him at home, regular communication is no longer possible with him and his walking too has become very difficult. It is so hard to observe our brother, once so very able, now as incapacitated as he is. May our Lord continue to be with him and his family, daily giving them the blessings so needed. Last fall, we were again reminded of such frailty when Mrs. A. Geertsema, the dear wife of our retired New Testament professor, suddenly became very seriously ill, even close to death. While we certainly thank the Lord for sparing her, she has suffered serious impairment to the use of her hands and her feet. That is, no doubt, so very difficult for a woman who has been very active in so many ways all the days of her life. It also means that her husband has had to abandon the projects he was busy with in his retirement days in order to give her the care she needs. Lastly, as the churches have been informed, our professor of Dogmatics, Dr. N.H. Gootjes, has also been suffering with health issues, particularly with respect to his memory. In the meantime, extensive tests have been conducted and the specialists have concluded that the difficulties are entirely caused by stress. This surely is reason for tremendous gratitude. It is a good thing, then, that already in January, he was relieved of his duties as principal as we attempted to remove all unnecessary stress. We are thankful that he has still been able to teach; in the meantime, the Board of Governors has been busy making other arrangements so that Dr. Gootjes can take a well-deserved rest from his teaching duties for the next academic season as of September 2008. We trust that you will continue to pray for these brothers and sisters and all of us at the College as we daily experience a need not only to teach young men about a reliance on God and his grace but also to practise that same reliance in our own lives, homes, and community.

"A full and independent review"

If you have followed the decisions of our last major assembly, General Synod Smithers 2007, then you will be aware that Synod responded to our request for additional manpower partly by deciding (Art 130, 5.5) that a "full and independent review" of the Theological College should precede any such action. As a result of that decision, the Board of Governors has decided that the best way to conduct such a review and ensure that it would be indeed full and independent would be to proceed with the matter of gaining full accreditation for the Theological College. Accreditation is a process whereby an independent organization takes a long and detailed look at the College and literally evaluates everything from the physical plant to the personnel to the courses and programs we offer and makes recommendations regarding possible improvements. While the possibility of going down this route had been considered before and rejected also because of its time-consuming and energy-draining nature, Synod's decision gave new impetus for following this course. To become a member of such an organization and to remain a member throughout future years will no doubt be an exacting process but at the same time one through which the training we offer can only improve. In the past, we have not always regarded this course of action necessary also because our graduates have been accepted in doctoral programs at so many different institutions of higher learning (a fine testimony in itself!), but we have come to realize recently that a process whereby we and others take a long hard look at how and why we do what we do can only be beneficial for the significant task we have among the churches and for the cause of

the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One point which has already come out of our preparations for this accreditation process is some interesting statistics regarding enrolment at the College. The College has produced a total of eighty-four M.Div. graduates; eighty-three percent of those received a place working in the federation and twenty-one percent of the total also went on for some further graduate work at some point thereafter.

Another point raised by Synod was the manner in which professorial appointments are made. Synod mandated the Board of Governors "to review the appointment process for faculty members to ensure transparency within the generally accepted academic appointment process" (Art 130, 5.6). The Senate welcomes this review. May the Lord bless all efforts to pursue excellence in the instruction and administration of the Theological College.

A new book

New books are not uncommon at the College, since the wonderful work of the Women's Savings Action makes considerable money available for us to purchase them. The publishing of a new book is, however, more exciting when one of our own faculty members has written it. We congratulate Dr. N.H. Gootjes with the publication of his book *The Belgic Confession: Its History and Sources*, which has been published by Baker Academic in the Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post Reformation Thought series. Especially since thus far there has been little information available in English about this significant Reformed confession, this is a tremendous accomplishment.

A new website

While one might for a moment imagine that developments in technology might just pass by a community that is busy studying ancient languages and antique books, this is very far from true. Over the last seven years or so, the College has made major strides in this regard with a state of the art network, high speed wireless Internet throughout the building – all of which also provides ready access to advanced computerized searching tools for the library. In other words, we are using the finest modern technology available to get what we can out of all that ancient literature. And now, we offer you the possibility to do so as well!

If you have journeyed to our former canrc.org site on the World Wide Web, you will have noticed that you are now being redirected to a new site at www.theologicalcollege.ca. All the information that you might want about who we are and what we offer is found on this new, professionally designed website. Possible future students can find all the information they need for admission on this site. Even our complete and most recent calendar is available in PDF format.

Of general interest, though, is the possibility to access our extensive library. If you want to know whether we have a certain book among our collection of 26,000 volumes, all you have to do is go to www.theologicalcollege.ca, to Library, and to Search Library Catalogue, and input the author's name or the title. And do you have difficulty remembering which issue of *Clarion, Reformed Perspective, Preach the Word, Koinonia,* or *Diakonia* contained a certain article? Go again to www.theologicalcollege.ca; this time, go to Library and to Search Reformed Periodical Index and input author, title, or subject and there's the information! True, you still have to have the actual copies of what you are looking for available to you, but at least now you know where to find them and suddenly those volumes are so much more useful. All of this has been wonderfully done by our own librarian, Miss Margaret VanderVelde. We thank her for her relentless labours, not only with those old books but also with all this new technology.

That's it for now. We trust that you will pray for us, that our gracious God may continue to give health and strength, insight and wisdom, and every gracious gift that is needed so that we might properly prepare the young men He gives for service in his Kingdom.

Keith Sikkema

Mr. Keith Sikkema is principal of Dufferin Area Christian School in Orangeville, Ontario
ksikkema@istop.com

Evaluation and/or Assessment

The League of Canadian Reformed School Societies in Ontario (LCRSS) supports various joint activities to help local schools. Its Curriculum Assistance for Reformed Education (CARE) committee is an example; and during the summers of 2006 and 2007, a subcommittee of CARE developed a new curriculum framework for Bible Study. It addresses how general principles of Reformed education apply to this subject area, sets the parameters within which unit writers will be working, and presents matters like aims, themes, methodology, skills, content, and follow-up activities. The framework stresses ongoing assessment of student progress, with less emphasis on evaluation. The document was adopted by CARE in October, 2007 and distributed to the principals and the schools for discussion. Writing teams will begin the preparation of teacher resource material in 2008. In this article, I discuss the aspects of assessment and evaluation.

Marks

A few definitions will help understand the difference between assessment and evaluation. Though there is no unanimity on this, assessment is generally regarded as an ongoing process by which teachers monitor student involvement, participation, and growth in knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide corrective and encouraging feedback for improvement and may record aspects of student development. This record is primarily qualitative in nature, and may translate into some comments, but no grade on a report card. Assessment helps the teacher teach more specifically to student needs and so to improve learning. Evaluation, on the other hand, stresses the deliberate effort of the teacher to put a value on the amount and quality of student learning by assigning a grade. This grade can be weighted against and averaged with others to produce a mark for the report card. Evaluation and assessment are not mutually exclusive: Many teachers will continually assess student progress and take certain assignments (often including a test or project) for determining a summary mark.

Giving marks that fairly reflect student ability, effort, and progress is a challenging activity anywhere. Some twenty years ago, a group of Sentani (Indonesia) high school students had me appalled when they implied that low marks were always the result of "lack of diligence" and high marks quite the opposite. Other factors, such as ability, aptitude, and support just weren't considered. In North America, an alternative rubric scheme has become popular; some discard marks altogether; and others give letter grades for some subjects, but percentage grades for others. Many schools supplement the reports' letter or percentage grade with an effort mark and comments. The point is, of course, to summarize for parents and students how well or how much has been achieved, and for the teachers to see how effective their teaching has been. As noted, the Bible Study curriculum framework suggests a shift away from evaluation and sticking to assessment. While the nature of this shift is significant, it is not considered such that one should accept or reject the curriculum framework on the basis of this aspect only.

Evaluation

We are all used to marks and probably embrace their propriety. They are the summary determiner for whether or not students pass the test, get credit for the course, and whether there is a call for pulling up socks, lavish praise, or acceptance. It is not really recommended, but marks may help to motivate if there is a carrot or stick attached: If your average goes up, you get. . . ; unless you pass, you will not. . . . We also accept that teaching groups of students implies sorting, such as presented in controversial but famous Bell Curves. We expect the sorting to show a "natural distribution," in which four-fifths of our students perform somewhere between, say,

forty and eighty percent, and others do better or worse. We don't usually ask: what did you learn? but: what did you get? We classify our children as "A, B, or C students" in school and, whether rightly or wrongly, our conversation rarely emphasizes that we actually work for the Lord. Some people are obsessed with numbers, certainly in diagnostic evaluation: modern science wants to measure everything, being optimistic that careful measurement will help identify and resolve problems. (However, teachers say that diagnostic tests may give numbers that confirm what they already knew, without always suggesting a remedy.)

Schools have been compared to factories, students to workers, and grades to wages; but education renewers often clamour for abolishing the grading system.[1] Research suggests that stressing grading and rewards may actually de-motivate students and that they may look for easy and even illegitimate ways to get the desired grades. Renewers also address the weakness of testing instruments: not all tests measure well what was learned. Aside from the difficulty some students have to demonstrate what they know and understand, skills can hardly be measured in paper-and-pencil tests; and multiple choice questions falter in measuring critical thinking and applications. Some things just cannot be measured: How does one test and grade the "big things" we are really after, such as growth in maturity and Christian commitment? As a result, our report cards rarely go beyond a fairly subjective E, G, S, or I in conduct and attitude sections. It is difficult to evaluate to what degree a student has worked for a mark, a carrot, or for the Lord; and we must opt for describing behaviours. Questions clearly abound about the reliability of grades, but people still view them as the currency of schooling and parents and students expect them on report cards as an integral part of education.

Catechetical instruction

The CARE document speaks about Bible Study as the deliberate and organized study of the Word of God as source, object, and primary content of each lesson. It is about God's ongoing care for his creation, about the history of salvation through the redeeming work of Christ, and about the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Bible Study wants to relate the great deeds of the Lord and his work of salvation and evoke the students' response of love, gratitude, and obedience.

Bible Study wants to relate the great deeds of the Lord and his work of salvation and evoke the students' response of love, gratitude, and obedience

Just like faith has inseparable twin components of knowledge and trust (HC, LD 7), Bible Study seeks to equip the students not only with skills and knowledge, but also to instill trust, awe, and respect for the work of the Lord. The Synod of Dordrecht (1618-1619) addressed the aims of what we call Bible Study as the purpose of "catechetical" instruction. In its view, this took place in three distinct spheres of responsibility, each with unique approaches. First, parents had an all-encompassing primary mandate to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord, as in Deuteronomy 6:4-9; next, trained teachers committed to the Reformed faith should teach Scripture knowledge with an academic intent; and, finally, ministers should teach doctrine (what we call catechism) with a pastoral approach. This arrangement was neither in conflict with Scripture, nor explicitly demanded by it. In Article 58, our Church Order still reflects the triangle envisioned by Dort and parents still partially delegate their responsibility to the school for (minimally) the development of academic knowledge and skills. This, of course, also applies to the study of the Word of God.

Cognitive and affective domains

Educators have long distinguished between different domains of learning. They talk about the "affective domain" in connection with emotions, attitudes, godliness, and trust; and about the "cognitive domain" when referring to knowledge and understanding.[2] In Bible Study, teachers convey very specific content, but pray that the students will not only acquire knowledge in their heads (cognitive domain), but also embrace it in their hearts (affective domain). The Lord wants us to love Him not just with our whole mind and strength, but also with our whole heart and soul. The school's role has a strong traditional focus on the cognitive domain (mind and strength), but it cannot help but address the affective domain (heart and soul) in the process. The two domains are intimately intertwined.

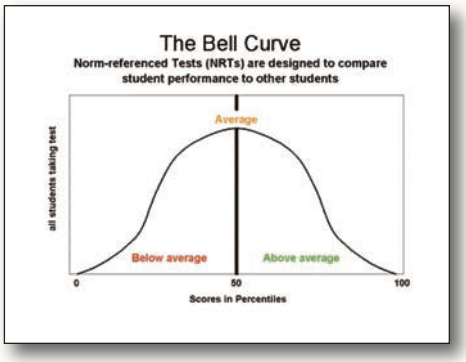
Unlike the affective domain of learning, the cognitive domain contains much that can be

measured. For instance, students can learn key texts of Scripture, remember important things that the Lord has done for his people, and they can demonstrate that they understand how God works out his plan of salvation. They can take quality notes and restate key concepts in their own words. The extent to which they have learned these lessons falls within the range for which a grade can be assigned. Despite its inherent difficulties, measurement pertains here to the knowledge component of faith, of which HC, LD 7 speaks; and, for at least some decades now, this has also been applied by ministers in catechism tests. Ministers probably understand that they cannot give marks for the students' faith, their love for the Lord, or their commitment to his service. It becomes different when consistories examine candidates for admission to the Lord's Table: They look for (cognitive) knowledge of the Lord, but should be at least as interested in an (affective) faith-commitment to that knowledge.

Unique

The CARE curriculum framework underlines that Bible Study is a unique subject for very special students. It does not transfer just any knowledge and skills, but specifically teaches about God's work of salvation in Jesus Christ and the history of redemption. In addition, it is specifically aimed at the children of believers, covenant children no less, who were received into grace in Christ, and who are called to live a life of gratitude for what they receive in Him. In all subjects, we acknowledge that the earth is the Lord's and everything in it (Ps 124) and that by Christ all things were created and that in Him they hold together (Col 1), but more clearly than any other subject, Bible Study pursues affective aims for a response of praise. Both the aims and the themes, as defined in the curriculum framework, seek to guide the students in their spiritual growth to know, love, and serve their God and Father. It is in attaining these affective aims that the cognitive aims receive their full meaning and purpose: knowing God and his counsel from Scripture informs us and our children how we are to live a life of grateful obedience in a relationship of love with the Lord. At the same time, we acknowledge with 1 Corinthians 3 that teachers can plant and water, but that God makes faith grow.

The CARE curriculum framework stresses that, as Bible Study seeks to instill reverence, awe, and love for the triune God, and a commitment to a life of grateful service to Him, the emphasis should be on qualitative assessment of growth towards the (mostly affective) aims. What is measurable (cognitive achievement) should not take precedence over the core aims of Bible Study. Achievement in Bible Study should not hinge on academic ability and the course should be designed so that all can do well. The document argues that a percentage grade could actually distract from the core aims, by inadvertently suggesting that a child is less a child of God, or that his or her commitment to serving God is low because he or she gets a low mark. Conversely, it could imply that the child must have a deep love for the Lord because he or she received an A. Our students' ability to do well (or not well) on a paper-and-pencil Bible Study test must not be confused with their level of confidence that the Lord Jesus Christ is also their Saviour, or their commitment to serve Him wholeheartedly. The curriculum framework argues for reducing (or even eliminating) the significance of evaluation and raising the importance of ongoing assessment–including assessment of the quality of the student's work.



Erroneous

Obviously, it is erroneous to link academic achievement to assumed commitment to the Lord. The error would be similar to that of the Sentani girls, who believed that high marks always result from effort and low marks from no effort. The error is far worse, however, if achievement is taken as the determining factor for salvation. Some think I am too optimistic, but I would trust that parents do not read a mark for Bible in this way and that they will diligently hold before their children that the Lord seeks their heart and best effort more so than a high mark. To get a "passing" B with an "Insufficient" mark for effort is a fail, but to get a "failing" D with an "Excellent" for effort is a pass. It is imperative, however, that this be made very clear. To completely reject measurement of cognitive achievement in Bible Study because of possible misinterpretation of the mark, or because of difficulties in designing testing instruments, or because we aim for the heart, goes too far. We would have to completely rethink our stance and conduct on marking and evaluation – not only in Bible.

Teachers have a great responsibility in making sure that Bible Study is a positive and exciting experience for the students and their model of love and enthusiasm as co-members and heirs of the covenant cannot but impact the affect of the students. To lead and direct children in their calling to a life of gratitude as prophets, priests, and kings and to develop their unique gifts, it is imperative that students receive instruction in God's ways. It must be made clear that no one is less a child of God just for getting a low mark, or more so for getting a high one. Mindful of this, teachers should continue to closely monitor and assess their students' understanding and achievements, including the contributing effort, participation, attitude, interest, and commitment. They should give regular feedback to the students about their progress, help them overcome learning hurdles, perhaps modify expectations, and include a relevant summary comment about affective growth on the report card. With good care for its proper interpretation, they need not hesitate to give a mark as well.

Conclusion

Parents continually assess their children's progress as they grow up and seek the Lord's wisdom and guidance as they address the challenges that arise; but few parents would actually give marks.

Teachers have a great responsibility in making sure that Bible Study is a positive and exciting experience for the students

Pastors and shepherds may debate whether or not they should evaluate student progress in their catechism classes through tests and other instruments: is it the pastoral thing to do, especially when admission to the Lord's Table does not hinge on IQ or memory? But schools have evaluated students through tests and quizzes and other instruments for as long as we can remember because that is the nature of schools. There is no good argument to support eliminating assessment, but should we abandon marks?

Part of this discussion would centre on the purpose of the school and particularly of the Bible Study course. Our schools have much in common, such as a commitment to help the parents in training the children in godliness, but there are also differences. Some schools stress equipping students with academic knowledge and skills. Some added social, emotional, and affective aspects in their stated purpose, but others only refer to them by default, as not being able to avoid these factors. Some of these things can be evaluated and graded fairly easily; others would pose big challenges. Few schools would have a thoughtfully defined rationale to mark cognitive achievement in Bible Study with a grade, or not to. What does your school expect the teachers to do?

[1] For instance as presented in Postman, Neil, & Weingartner, Charles (1973). *The school book. For people who want to know what all the hollering is about.* (New York: Delacorte Press). For one outspoken current critic of marking, homework and other traditions in education, see Alfie Kohn http://www.alfiekohn.org/index.html

[2] In the now popular Understanding by Design approach to educational design, the cognitive and affective domains are much more integrated.

The Education Matters column is sponsored by the Canadian Reformed Teachers' Association East. Anyone wishing to respond to an article written or willing to write an article is kindly asked to send materials to Clarion *or to*

Otto Bouwman
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Press Release of Classis Manitoba convened in the Redeemer Canadian Reformed Church in Winnipeg on March 14, 2008

1. On behalf of Grace Canadian Reformed Church, the convening church of the March 14, 2008 classis, Br. V. Schriemer called the meeting to order. He requested that the brothers sing Psalm 133:1, 2 and read 1 John 3:11-24. He welcomed all present, in particular Rev. D. Barnes from Classis Central US (URCNA) and Br. A. Bakker from the Providence Reformed Church (URCNA) in Winnipeg.
2. The credentials of the delegates were examined by the brothers from the Grace Canadian Reformed Church and reported to be in order. Only one of the delegates from Denver was able to attend. There were two instructions from the church at Denver.
3. Classis was declared constituted.
4. The following officers were appointed:
   a. Chairman: Rev. J. Poppe
   b. Vice Chairman: Rev. A.J. Pol
   c. Clerk: Rev. P.H. Holtvlüwer
5. Rev. Poppe thanked the Grace Canadian Reformed Church for the preparations involved in convening the classis. He mentioned that since the last classis the Grace congregation extended a call to Rev. C. VanderVelde, but that the call was declined. He also wished the church at Denver the Lord's guidance and blessings in view of the impending departure of Rev. D. M. Boersma. He reflected with thankfulness to the Lord on the good news from the Theological College concerning Dr. Gootjes. The agenda was adopted after a few adjustments.
6. The fraternal delegates were seated.
7. The documentation pertaining to the departure of Rev. Boersma, who has accepted a call to work as missionary of the Pretoria-Maranata Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk in South Africa, was examined and found to be in order. A Certificate of Release pertaining to Rev. Boersma was provided by Classis for the classis FRCSA (CO 5B1).
8. A financial report was received from Br. H. Veldman, the treasurer of Classis. The recommendation that the classical assessment of $5.00 per communicant member be maintained was accepted. The church of Carman West reported that the books of the treasurer of Classis were audited and found to be in order. The Redeemer Canadian Reformed Church reported that the archives of Classis have been inspected and found to be in order, with the exception of part of the archives of the September 2007 classis, which were handed over at the current classis. A report was received from Br. W. van Beek in regard to the activities of the Deputies for Contact with the Provincial Government. The Redeemer Canadian Reformed Church also reported that the financial records of the Committee for Aid to Needy Churches have been inspected and found to be in good order.
   In closed session the church visitors reported on visits to the Canadian Reformed Churches of Carman East and West and the Grace and Redeemer Canadian Reformed Churches in Winnipeg. Prayers were offered for these churches after each report.
   In open session again, the delegates to ecclesiastical assemblies of sister churches reported on their activities, which consisted of correspondence in response to invitations extended to attend classes of the RCUS and URCNA.

A. A proposal from the Carman East Canadian Reformed Church regarding the appointment of Deputies for Contact with Neighbouring Classes was discussed. Given the various responsibilities that the ministers have locally and because of tasks already entrusted to them by Classis, Regional Synod, and General Synod, it is recommended that men other than ministers be appointed as Deputies to respond to invitations to attend ecclesiastical assemblies of churches with which we have ecclesiastical fellowship (currently the URCNA, OPC and RCUS). The proposal was adopted with an amendment stipulating that the Deputies will attempt to organize annual visits in person or at least once every two years to the Presbytery of the Dakotas (OPC), the Northern Plains Classis (RCUS), and Classis Central US (URCNA); also, that the Deputies will occasionally make use of retired or active ministers as feasible in visiting these assemblies.

B. The church at Denver requested advice in regard to the position of Rev. Horner, a minister of the RCUS who has become a member of the church at Denver

with his family. He was sent from California to start a mission work in Denver, but this was discontinued. He is approaching retirement age. Since he still has ministerial standing in the RCUS, Classis encourages the church at Denver to continue to make use of his services. The church at Denver also requested pulpit supply from Classis in view of the departure of Rev. Boersma. Arrangements will be made for pulpit supply once every three months. Br. Werkman led in prayer for the church at Denver.

10. Question Period according to Art 44 CO was held. The church of Carman East requested advice that was given in closed session.
11. A letter of greetings from the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the OPC was read. Rev. Pol offered a prayer for the Presbytery of the Dakotas and for the RCUS. Rev. Barnes was given the floor to address Classis. He expressed appreciation for the fellowship experienced with the Canadian Reformed Churches. He noted the like-mindedness in many matters and highlighted the importance of continuing to work on resolving differences. We need to have patience with each other in these matters. Interaction with each other also does much to remove caricatures that have arisen regarding each other. Br. Bakker brought greetings from the Providence Reformed Church and expressed thankfulness for the pulpit exchanges and various contacts between the Providence Reformed Church and the Canadian Reformed Churches. They are encouraged by the growing relationship. Rev. Holtvlüwer thanked Rev. Barnes and Br. Bakker for coming, expressing appreciation in turn for the developing contacts, and led in prayer for the URCNA.
12. Correspondence: A letter was received from the Committee for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry requesting the appointment of a replacement member. Classis decided to appoint Br. R. Werkman to this committee.
    A letter was received from Rev. R. Grossman extending an invitation to the South Central Classis of the RCUS, to be convened on March 25-26, 2008. Although the gesture is appreciated, it is felt that it would not be feasible to send a delegate since there is already contact with the Northern Plains Classis of the RCUS.
13. Appointments.
    a. The convening church for the next classis is the Redeemer Canadian Reformed Church in Winnipeg. The classis is scheduled to be held on June 27, 2008. Alternate date: September 26, 2008.
    b. The suggested officers for the next classis are:
       i. Chairman: Rev. Holtvlüwer
       ii. Vice-chairman: Rev. Poppe
       iii. Clerk: Rev. Pol
    c. Appointment of Deputies for Contact with Neighbouring Classes: Brs. A. Poppe and W. Gortemaker.
14. Personal question period was held.
15. No censure according to Art 34 CO was necessary.
16. The Acts were adopted and the Press Release approved for publication.
17. The chairman requested that the brothers sing Hymn 46:2 and led in closing prayer.

For Classis Manitoba,
March 14, 2008
A.J. Pol
Vice-chairman at that time

Press Release of Classis Central Ontario March 14, 2008

On behalf of the convening church of Ottawa, Br. Schriemer called the meeting to order. The meeting was opened in the Christian manner: the assembly sang Psalm 133:1 and Br. Schriemer read from 1 Corinthians 1. He then welcomed the delegates.

The church at Flamborough examined the credentials. The delegates of that church reported that all the churches were properly represented. There were no instructions. Classis was then constituted.

The following officers took their places: Rev. J. L. van Popta as vice-chairman and Rev. Dr. G. Nederveen as clerk. The suggested officer for the chair was not present (Rev. J. De Gelder was in Cyprus, at a meeting of the MERF board of directors). The assembly appointed Rev. W. Den Hollander in his place. Rev. Den Hollander took the chair.

The chairman noted that since the last regular classis Rev. J. Huijgen accepted a call to the Church at Attercliffe. Last December, Rev. Jagt departed to the west and has taken up a charge in Taber. The chairman commended the church at Ottawa and Rehoboth Church to the grace of God, as their calling committees did their work. Rev. den Hollander declined a call to Elora.

The church of Toronto's missionary has received two calls to churches in Australia. We commend Rev. 't Hart and the church at Toronto to the Lord's care during this time. Some comments were made concerning joys and sorrows in some of the ministerial families. The assembly noted with thankfulness that Dr. Gootjes' health concerns are not as serious as was feared.

The provisional agenda was adopted with some changes.

The chairman asked the delegates of the churches the questions required by the Church Order in Article 44. In response, all the churches reported that the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued and the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured. Classis decided to invite the deputies for Regional Synod (CO 48) to assist the churches in determining whether or not one of the churches is honouring the decisions of the broader assemblies.

The church at Ottawa requested that the churches of Classis provide pulpit supply for one Sunday per month. This request was granted.

An appeal was judged inadmissible (Art 30 CO).

The church of Toronto was appointed to convene the next classis to be held on June 13 (with an alternate date, September 19) in the Ebenezer Church building at 9:00 a.m. The following officers were suggested: Rev. de Gelder as chairman; Rev. den Hollander as vice-chairman; Rev. van Popta as clerk.

Question period was held. The chairman asked whether censure as per Art 34 CO was necessary. It was not required. The Acts were read by the clerk and adopted by the assembly. The Press Release was approved for publication. The chairman thanked the brothers for their good co-operation. After the assembly sang Psalm 134, he closed the meeting with prayer.

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The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. Psalm 126:3

We give thanks to our gracious Father and praise His name for He has heard our prayers and granted us a healthy daughter

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Wayne and Hilda Bartels

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I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well. Psalm 139:14

With thankfulness to the Lord we joyfully announce the early but safe arrival of our 4th child

NICHOLAS JAMES

February 25, 2008

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7th grandchild for William and Rita Reinink

12th grandchild for Ben and JoAnne Vanderzwaag

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It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to thy name, O Most High. Psalm 92:1

With thankfulness to our heavenly Father for the miracle of new life, we joyfully announce the birth of our second child

RYLEE ROSALINE VAN DER HOEVEN

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Weddings

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5, 6

With thankfulness to the Lord for directing the lives of His children, Mr. and Mrs. Peter and Janet Kingma would like to announce the upcoming marriage of their daughter

STEPHANIE JOELLE KINGMA

to

MARK ALAN TEN HAAF

son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry and Lynn ten Haaf

The ceremony will take place, D.V., on May 9, 2008 at 5:30 p.m. in the American Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan

Future address: 3532 Hickory S.E. Grand Rapids, MI 49508

Birthdays

Blessed is he whose help is in the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God. Psalm 146:5

It is with thankfulness to our Father that we hope to celebrate the 70th birthday of our wife, mother and grandmother on April 26, 2008

LINDA ELZINGA

Dunnville, ON: Keith Elzinga
Burlington, ON: Ralph and Joanne Elzinga, *Bradley*
Onoway, AB: Harold and Linda Elzinga, *Dustin, Jamie*
Orangeville, ON: Krista and Tony VanOmmen
Roslynn, Justin, Darren, Matthew
Charlotte and John Bouwers
Corry, Kaylina, Ricki
Smithville, ON: Grace and Roger Otterman, *Jessica, Lauryn*
Carvel, AB: Paul and Dorothy Elzinga
Micheal, Katherine, Nicole
Dunnville, ON: Frank Elzinga

Open House at Keith and Linda Elzinga's home, D.V., on Saturday, April 26, 2008 from 1:30-4:30 at 7800 Canboro Road, RR 1, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1

Anniversaries

40th Wedding Anniversary

1968 ~ March 22 ~ 2008

I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1, 2

With thankfulness to our heavenly Father for His guiding hand, we wish a blessed 40th Anniversary to our parents and grandparents

ANDY and HELEN LEFFERS

Coaldale, AB: Pete and Ang Hulst
Karina, Kevin, Tara-Lee, Andrea
Ken and Shelley Leffers
Andrew, Samuel
Pete and Melanie Harthoorn
Edmonton, AB: Bryan and Denise Meyer
Curtis, Kelsey
Dwayne and Trixie Leffers
Kailyn, Jocelyn, Laryssa, Hailey, Brennan
Box 652, Coaldale, AB T1M 1M6

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1963 ~ March 29 ~ 2008

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5

With thankfulness to the Lord for His steadfast love, we announce the 45th Wedding Anniversary of our parents

HENDRIK (Hank) and

HENDRIKA (Henny) BOUWERS (VanRaalte)

It is our prayer that the Lord may continue to bless and keep them in their married life together.

With much love,
Shelburne, ON: Willy and Betty Kamphuis
Shannon, Brandon, Nicole
Orangeville, ON: John and Charlotte Bouwers
Corry, Kaylina, Ricki
Rob and Anne Bouwers
Joshua, Sheri, Brett, Taryn, Tiffany
Jack and Tanya Bouwers
Cassandra
Andy and Arlene Bouwers
Brittany, Emily, Todd, Megan, Jared
Wellandport, ON: John and Shirley Lof
Chantal, Shayna, Annika, Kaelyn
RR 1, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S5

1973 ~ May 11 ~ 2008
Burlington, Ontario

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:15

With praise and thankfulness to the Lord, we are pleased to announce the 35th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents

DIRK JAN (John) and

ZWAANTJE (Tina) RIEMER (nee Hulleman)

Celebrating this occasion with them, we thank the Lord for His faithfulness and abundant blessings throughout the years.

Caledonia, ON: Tina and Derek Lanting
Sarah, Terissa, Lydia, Albert, John
Aldergrove, BC: Gary Riemer
Hamilton, ON: Mark and Monica Riemer
Jonathan, Marta
1080 Clearview Avenue, Burlington, ON L7T 2J1

Teaching Positions

NEEDED

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER(S)

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER(S)

The **Board of the Covenant Canadian Reformed School at Neerlandia** invites applications for the 2008 – 09 school year to fill 3 openings.

Applicants must be confessing members of a Canadian Reformed or sister church and must possess a Bachelor of Education degree, or its equivalent.

We are a rural K – 12 school with a projected 2008 student enrolment of 180, and a further substantial growth potential. Perks include mostly 4 day work weeks, competitive salaries, a good benefits package, small class sizes with angelic children, an expanded facility, a terrific staff, a supportive membership and Board, and a comparatively low cost of living within an hour's drive of big city conveniences. School membership fees remain among the lowest in the country.

Successful applicants cannot lose!

Inquiries should be directed to

Harry VanDelden, principal, at:

School: (780) 674-4774, Home: (780) 674-3704

e-mail: hvd@xplornet.com

Applications should be sent attention:

Mrs. Sonya Van Leeuwen

Covenant Canadian Reformed School

PO Box 67, Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0

The **Owen Sound Canadian Reformed School Society** invites applications for a full-time

TEACHING POSITION

in the elementary grades for the 2008-2009 school year.

Duties to commence in August of 2008.

Our school is located in the countryside in the beautiful Owen Sound area, about 2 hours northwest of Toronto.

Our small and growing school currently has 56 students in grades 1-8.

If you are interested in this position or have any questions about this position or of the school, please contact:

Diane Jonker, principal

(519)371-4498 (school); (519)371-4847 (home)

jjonker@wightman.ca

Please submit applications to

OSCRS Education Committee

c/o M. Nyenhuis

PO Box 439, Tara, ON N0H 2N0

e-mail: 9house@bmts.com

The

MARANATHA CANADIAN REFORMED SCHOOL SOCIETY INC.

of Fergus, Guelph and District, in planning for the 2008-2009 school year, invites applications for

POSSIBLE OPENINGS IN OUR

UPPER ELEMENTARY GRADES

All duties to commence August 1, 2008

Our school is located in the beautiful and picturesque southern Ontario town of Fergus, where one would be very close to rural life and within easy commute of major urban areas.

The school currently has 253 students in Grades K – 8.

If interested in the above position or have any questions about aspects of the position or of the school, please contact one of the following people for more information, or submit your resume to the school's address:

Lydia VanVeen, principal

519-843-3029 (school); 519-843-4062 (home)

lydia_vanveen@bellnet.ca

Mark Veenman, Education Committee Chair

519-699-6274

Applications to be addressed to:

Maranatha Christian School

c/o Education Committee

RR 3, Garafraxa Street, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W4

The Board of **Credo Christian School i**n Woodbridge, Ontario is seeking applications for a

GRADE 7 AND 8 TEACHER

Aspirations of assuming the role of Principal, either immediately or in the future, would be an asset but are not required.

In light of a potential opening, we are also inviting applications for a

PRIMARY GRADE TEACHER

for the 2008/2009 school year.

Credo is a school of roughly 60 students, serving the congregations of Brampton and Toronto. The school is blessed with exceptional community involvement which enhances the academic, musical and athletic programs that we are able to offer. Our students consistently meet with success and are well prepared to enter the high school environment. If you are a team player interested in helping us maintain high standards, we would love to hear from you.

For more information, contact the Principal, **Miss B. Maat**

school: (905) 851-1620; home (905) 453-7480

E-mail: credo@idirect.com or

Education Committee Chairman: Mr. Anthony Kampen

Home: (905) 927-9790; Work (905) 764-5455

Letters of application stating qualifications, experience and references, as well as a personal statement of philosophy of Christian education should be sent to:

Anthony Kampen, Chairman, Education Committee

22 Gormley Road East, Richmond Hill, ON L4A 1E2

E-mail: at.kampen@sympatico.ca

FOR THE 2008/2009 SCHOOL YEAR

The **Canadian Reformed School Society of Flamborough, Inc.** operating **Covenant Christian School** is in need of a **PART-TIME TEACHER**

for **GRADE SIX MATH AND LANGUAGE ARTS**

Qualified persons are asked to send their letter of application, résumé, statement of faith and view of reformed education to the address below. Applicants belonging to either the Canadian Reformed or United Reformed churches are encouraged to apply. For further information, please contact the Principal.

Principal – **Mr. G. Hofsink**
(905) 689-3191 - school; (905) 383-6782 - home
Applications may be sent to or faxed to:
Covenant Christian School
Attention: Personnel Committee
497 Millgrove Sideroad, PO Box 2, Millgrove, ON L0R 1V0
Fax: (905) 689-0191
Email: covenantchristianschool@bellnet.ca

The Board of the **Coaldale Canadian Reformed School Society,** Coaldale, Alberta invites applications for a

POSSIBLE POSITION IN JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH

We are especially looking for candidates with qualifications in Social Studies and possibly Band.
Position would commence August 2008.
For further information, please contact the Principal.
Mr. J. Harthoorn
(403) 345-4055 (school); 345-4891 (home); fax: (403) 345-6436;
E-mail: ccsoffic@telusplanet.net
Letters of application should include university and teaching qualifications, and two letters of reference.
Mail to: **Coaldale Christian School**
2008 - 8th Street, Coaldale, Alberta T1M 1L1

To fill possible vacancies starting September 1, 2008, the **Board of the Canadian Reformed School Society of Abbotsford, B.C.** operating the **John Calvin School** invites applications for

PRIMARY OR INTERMEDIATE TEACHERS
(Gr. K - 3) (Gr. 4 - 7)

Successful applicants must:

- be a communicant member of a Canadian Reformed Church or a sister church;
- be able to obtain an Independent School certificate or certification from the B.C. College of Teachers;
- be able to commence duties as of September 1, 2008;
- furnish two professional references;
- furnish a character reference from the applicant's pastor.

Applicants with French proficiency would be an asset.
For information contact the principal,
Mr. P.H. Torenvliet
1-604-823-6814 (school) 1-604-854-5851 (home)
1-604-823-6791 (fax)
Send resumes and applications to the Secretary of the Board:
c/o John Calvin School
4268 Stewart Road, Chilliwack, BC V2R 5G2

The **John Calvin Christian College** in Armadale, Western Australia, has vacancies for

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

in 2008 and beyond.

The Middle School consists of Years 7 – 9 and is a transition between primary (elementary) education and secondary education. Presently it consists of some 180 students across the three year levels, who are taught by 8 full time teachers and a number of part time teachers. The Middle School has its own dedicated facilities and draws on specialist facilities in the wider College. It offers a full range of subjects by way of compulsory studies and electives.

The most urgent vacancy is for an English teacher.
Also urgent but not as pressing is an upcoming vacancy in the area of Science.

The vacancies are at Year 8 level, although prospective applicants need to realise that over time they could be expected to teach across the range of Middle School students, depending on the needs of the moment.

The vacancies could be suited to primary (elementary) teachers who would like to be challenged by subject material at a higher level.

The College invites expressions of interest and / or applications for the position of Middle School teachers from teachers who have abilities and specialities in the nominated areas.

Applicants will be members of one of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia or one of its sister churches. They will have a keen desire to serve the cause of Reformed Education. Completion of a Reformed Education Diploma will be considered favourably.

All teachers in Western Australia must be registered with the Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT). Applicants must therefore have accredited teaching qualifications that would be recognised internationally.

The School Association will assist with immigration procedures and relocation expenses. Working conditions include a salary which is based on a scale which in general is the same as that received by Western Australian government teachers.

Information regarding the criteria for this position can be obtained from the Principal:

Mr Alwyn Terpstra, phone: (08) 9497 0000,
or by email: alwyn.terpstra@frsa.asn.au
Application forms can be downloaded from
http://www.frsa.asn.au

A complete application pack should include a completed application form, a resume, teacher registration certificate and two references, one professional and one from the present pastor (or elder), and should be addressed to:

Confidential – Career Application

Free Reformed School Association (Inc.)
PO Box 474, Armadale, WA 6992 Australia

The deadline for applications is prior to close of business on ***28th March 2008.***

PRINCIPAL

Maranatha Christian School

Due to the strong growth of our school, we are accepting applications for an experienced and energetic principal, duties to commence August 2008. Experience and post-graduate work will be definite assets. All parties interested in this position are invited to contact the chairman of the education committee.

Open to all members of Canadian Reformed Churches and Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches have ecclesiastical fellowship.

Maranatha Christian School offers Grades K-8, presently with 254 students, and is located in Fergus, Ontario.

Ms. Lydia VanVeen, Principal
(519) 843-3029 (school); (519) 843-4062 (home)
Email: lydia_vanveen@bellnet.ca
Mr. Mark Veenman, chairman, education committee
(519) 699-6274 (home)
Applications to be addressed to:
Maranatha Christian School
Attention: Mr. Mark Veenman, Education Committee Chair
RR 3, Garafraxa Street, Fergus, ON N1M 2W4

The Board of **Dufferin Christian School,** Carman, MB is inviting applications for the following 2008-2009 position

MIDDLE YEARS / HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

Dufferin Christian School is a K-12 school with 208 students and 20 full-time staff.

More information about our school can be obtained by visiting our website: home.merlin.mb.ca/~dufferin

If you are interested or would like further information, please contact the principal

Mr. Andy Huisman
Phone: 204-745-2278 (work) or 204-745-3023 (home) or
Email: dcsprincipal@mts.net
Applications can be sent to:
Anton Borst, Secretary of the Board
PO Box 1450, Carman, MB R0G 0J0
Fax: 204-745-3441 or email: dufferin@mts.net

JOHN CALVIN SCHOOL

320 Station Street, PO Box 280, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0
"The Heart of the Niagara Peninsula"

In anticipation of an upcoming vacancy(ies) the Board and Education Committee of **JOHN CALVIN SCHOOL** invites applications from

QUALIFIED TEACHERS

for the school year 2008-2009. Enquiries about and applications for these positions are encouraged.

Please contact the Principal, **Mr. F.C. Ludwig**, for further information, at
(905) 957-2341 School, or (905) 957-3111 Home

Applications and resumés may be faxed directly to the school at (905) 957-2342, to the attention of the Principal, or addressed to:

The Education Committee
c/o Mr. E. Ludwig, Secretary
RR 2, 7057 Concession 4, Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.
Proverbs 1:7a

With thankfulness to our Heavenly Father,
the Maranatha Christian School Society
is pleased to celebrate

40 YEARS

of providing covenant education!

We hope to celebrate this milestone, D.V.,
with an **Open House** on

Thursday, May 22, 2008 from 7-9 p.m.

at Maranatha Christian School
8037 Wellington Road 19, Fergus, Ontario
www.mcsfergus.ca

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Payable to: Jerry Tillema – **519 351 4290** - 6 am - 11 pm
Bethel Books, 274 McNaughton Ave. E., Chatham, ON N7L 2G8
For ***Covenant in Creation***, please see *Clarion* Feb.29/08, page 122

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For further information contact:

Rosanne van der Woerd

109-3260 New Street, Burlington, ON L7N 3L4

905-681-0311

Email: rvanderwoerd@sympatico.ca

George Bartels

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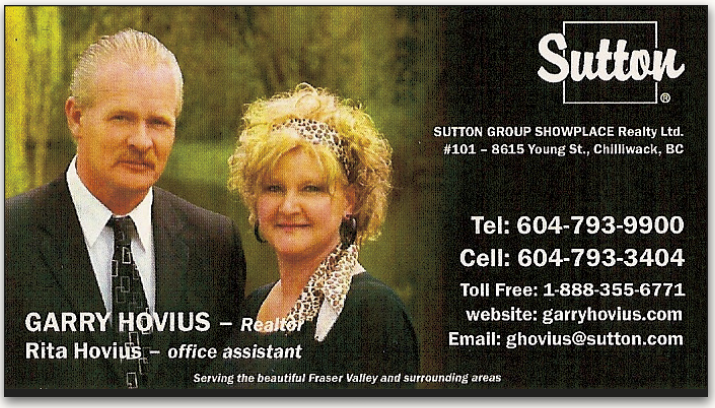

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Attn: Pieter Dejong

We've been blessed with an exciting problem...
Heritage Christian School in Jordan, Ontario
is running out of classroom space to house the children Christian families are sending us. A plan to build a new secondary school facility is under way. But we need help.

Can you help us raise the $4.8 million it will take to complete the project? If so, donations are payable to Building on His Promises . Send to:
Heritage Christian School, 2850 4th Avenue, P.O. Box 400,Jordan, ON L0R 1S0
Inquiries? Contact: 905-562-7303 or visit our website: www.hcsjordan.ca

"BUILDING ON HIS PROMISES"
Capital Campaign Facts
Growth: From 140 students in 1992 to 560 in 2006
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Foundation: God's Word and the Reformed Confessions

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