

Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 57, No. 17 ■ August 15, 2008

... astronomers developed the so-called Big Bang theory of cosmic origins. . .



Inside this issue

- Unity in Diversity
- The Test of Jealousy
- Defending the Faith Today





E. Kampen

Rev. E. Kampen is minister of the Canadian Reformed Church at Orangeville, Ontario
eric.kampen@canrc.org

Unity in Diversity

The key thing was “that we are all directed to one Christ, in whose truth being united together, we may grow up into one body and one spirit, and with the same mouth also proclaim whatever belongs to the sum of faith.”

An old question

Can we speak of unity of faith when there is not a unity of confessional documents? It is a question that just does not seem to want to go away even though the Canadian Reformed churches have established ecclesiastical fellowship with churches using confessions different than the Three Forms of Unity. Mentioning this is not stirring up the pot but stating a reality.

This simmering issue came to mind recently when reviewing the plurality of confessions that sprung up during the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. This plurality of confessions came about not simply because the Protestant Reformation developed into three main traditions, namely, Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed, but also because there was a multitude of confessions within each of these three traditions.

The main period of Protestant confessional writings extends from approximately the 1520s till the mid 1560s. After this foundational phase, further confessions were written but they often reflected developments that arose after the Reformed faith had begun to take root. One could say that Protestant confessional writing came to an end with the Westminster Standards, produced in the late 1640s. These Standards moreover reflected developments that happened over two generations. Already in the middle of the foundational phase, as well as at the end of that phase, the question arose about unity in this diversity of confessional documents. It is instructive to see what was said.

Old answers

First, John Calvin addressed the matter in the Dedication which precedes the Catechism he composed for the Church of Geneva. His Dedication was directed to “the Ministers of Christ throughout East Friesland,” that is, in modern northern Germany, definitely some distance away from Geneva. In the first paragraph he wrote that “it were to be wished, not only that a perpetual consent in the doctrine of piety should appear among all, but also that one Catechism were common to all the Churches.” He immediately continued,

But as, from many causes, it will scarcely ever obtain otherwise than that each Church shall have its own Catechism, we should not strive too keenly to prevent this; provided, however, that the variety in the mode of teaching is such, that we are all directed to one Christ, in whose truth being united together, we may grow up into one body and one spirit, and with the same mouth also proclaim whatever belongs to the sum of faith.¹

For Calvin, one Catechism for all would be desirable but not essential. The key point was that “we are all directed to one Christ.” Calvin was concerned about the substance, not the form.

A second example is what took place at the Synod of Emden held in 1571. This was a Synod of the Reformed churches in The Netherlands but it was held outside The Netherlands because of persecution. At this Synod, the brothers present decided that they would subscribe not only to the Belgic Confession but also to the Gallican (French) Confession. In this way,



Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd., Winnipeg, MB

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Visscher; Copy Manager: Laura Veenendaal
Coeditors: R. Aasman, E. Kampen, C. Stam, C. Van Dam

ADDRESS FOR COPY MANAGER:

Clarion, 57 Oakridge Drive South, St. Albert, AB T8N 7H2
E-Mail: veenendaal@shaw.ca

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.
One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2J 3X5
Phone: (204) 663-9000 Fax: (204) 663-9202

Subscriptions: clarionadmin@premierpublishing.ca

Advertisements: clarionads@premierpublishing.ca

Website: www.premierpublishing.ca

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:
One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2J 3X5

Subscription Rates for 2008

		Regular Mail	Air Mail
Canada*		\$48.00*	\$ 79.00*
U.S.A. U.S. Funds	 	\$60.00	\$ 77.00
International		\$89.00	\$130.00

*Including 5% GST – No. 890967359RT

Advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch

Full Colour Display Advertisements: \$21.00 per column inch

We reserve the right to refuse ads.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, Canada through the Publication Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Cancellation Agreement

Unless a written subscription cancellation is received we assume you wish to continue to subscribe. You will be invoiced prior to the subscription renewal date. Agreement No. 40063293; PAP Registration No. 9907; ISSN 0383-0438

Copyright © Premier Printing Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part may be reproduced in any manner without permission in writing from the publisher, except brief quotations used in connection with a review in a magazine or newspaper.

Useful Link: www.canrc.org

they would show their allegiance and connection with the French churches.²

A third and very instructive example comes from a publication that appeared in Geneva in 1581. It appeared in an English translation in 1586 with the title, "A Harmony of the Confessions of the Faith of the Christian and Reformed Churches which purely profess the holy doctrine of the Gospel, in all the chief kingdoms, nations, and provinces of Europe &c." The title actually continues with these words, "There are added in the end very short Notes which both the obscure things are made plain, and the things which may in shew seem to be contrary to each other, are plainly and very modestly reconciled; and if any points do as yet hang in doubt, they are sincerely pointed at. All which things, in the names of the Churches of France and Belgia, are submitted to the free and discreet judgment of all other Churches. . . ."³

This publication came about in response to suggestions that it would be helpful to formulate one confession to serve as a statement of unity. Upon the suggestion of people from Geneva and Zurich, however, it was decided to make a compilation of the various confessions. In the preface there is interaction with the accusation that the churches which revolted from the Catholic Church "neither agree with ourselves...but that there are as many religions among us, as there are Confessions of Faith."⁴ In response it is said that "this conference of Confessions will pluck every vizard from their faces, whenas it shall plainly appear that all the opinions in these Confessions of Faith were in other sundry words so laid down, that yet the same truth always abideth, and there is none at all, or very little, difference in the things themselves." Also, it can be seen that "with common consent they renounce the abuses and errors of the Romish Church. . . They also who accuse us of sedition, shall perceive how reverently we think of the dignity of kings and the Magistrate's authority."⁵

What is striking in this *Harmony* is that it includes confessions from all three branches growing out the Reformation, namely, Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed. The difference with respect to the Lord's Supper was not ignored. In one brief sentence, however, we see a succinct summation of similarities and differences as it is written, "In like sort we all

In This Issue

Editorial – Unity in Diversity — E. Kampen	426
Treasures, New and Old – The Test of Jealousy — K.A. Kok	429
Defending the Faith Today (I) — F.G. Oosterhoff	430
Ray of Sunshine — C. Gelms and P. Gelms	434
Farewell to Pastor Dirk Boersma — G. Brintjes.....	435
Ontario Ministers' Conference — E. Kampen	437
Education Matters – How Do We Dress? — O. Bouwman	439
Press Releases: Board of Governors of the Theological College, Classis Alberta, Classis Pacific West	441

believe the true communication of the true body and true blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; the controversy standeth in the manner of communicating.”⁶ To be sure, Lutherans were not quite as agreeable as is evident when you study their Book of Concord, published in 1580, as well as a document called the Saxon Visitation Articles.⁷ The Reformed believers, however, saw the fundamental unity despite the different confessional documents and even a difference on the matter of the Lord’s Supper.

All the opinions in these Confessions of Faith were in other sundry words so laid down, that yet the same truth always abideth. . . .

This unity in substance also comes out when one compares the basic structure especially of the confessions that developed in the Anglican and Reformed churches. Generally, they begin by dealing with God and his Word, followed by man’s creation and corruption. This is followed in turn by a section dealing with God’s work of salvation in Christ and finally a section on the fruit of Christ’s work in this world as he gathers his church (Theology; Anthropology; Christology; Ecclesiology).

A final example that can be mentioned is the variety of international delegates that were invited to the Synod of Dort. Among those present were representatives from the Church of England. This example is helpful in how it shows that even some fifty years after the conclusion of the foundational period of Confessional writings, there was still a sense of unity in the substance of the Reformed faith even if it was not expressed in exactly the same form.

Not normative but still informative

It is to be recognized, of course, that history is not normative. Only Scripture is. At the same time, a look in history is informative for it enables us to see how previous generations looked at matters. We might discover that we handle confessions in a way they never would have done. When it comes to the diversity of confessions, we can see that there was a catholic vision that did not get stuck on form but looked at substance. To be sure, they did not gloss over the fact that there were differences.

At the same time, as Calvin wrote, the key thing was “that we are all directed to one Christ, in whose truth being united together, we may grow up into one body and one spirit, and with the same mouth also proclaim whatever belongs to the sum of faith.” It is Christ who is the unity in the diversity.

¹ For full reference, see http://www.reformed.org/documents/calvin/geneva_catachism/geneva_catachism.html

² N.H. Gootjes, *The Belgic Confession: Its History and Sources*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007, p. 101.

³ Peter Hall (ed) *The Harmony of Protestant Confessions*. Edmonton, AB: Still Waters Revival Books. Reprint 1992 from the 1842 edition. Pp ix-xi. For copies of the many Protestant Confessions, a good source is Philip Schaff’s, *Creeks of Christendom* (3 Vols) available in reprint from Baker Books, Grand Rapids. There are also many helpful websites that give access to the various confessions.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xxx

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xxxii

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xxxiii

⁷ The Lutherans by this time in history severely condemned the Reformed position on the Lord’ Supper and election.



K.A. Kok

The Test of Jealousy



MATTHEW 13:52

Rev. K.A. Kok is minister of the American Reformed Church at Blue Bell, Pennsylvania
revkenkok@aol.com

“This, then, is the law of jealousy when a woman goes astray and defiles herself while married to her husband, or when feelings of jealousy come over a man because he suspects his wife.”

Numbers 5:29-30

Often, the Old Testament laws do not seem to make much sense to us. This confusion arises because we think of biblical law as mere legislation, like a posted speed limit. Yet God’s law is not to be thought of as legislation, but as wisdom and instruction, as the revelation of who God is. You cannot meditate on a speed limit day and night and hope to gain insight. You are supposed to meditate on God’s law, for it is wisdom from Him.

Understanding that God’s law is wisdom and instruction helps us interpret what seems very odd. Perhaps one of the oddest laws is the test of jealousy found in Numbers 5:11-31. This is a detailed ritual of what is to be done if a husband becomes jealous and suspects his wife of adultery.

The woman suspected of adultery is brought into the courtyard of the tabernacle, at the centre of the camp. There she brings a grain offering as a memorial before Yahweh, which means He will see and judge the works of her hands. Then she has to drink the water of bitterness (which is water from the laver), mixed with dirt from the floor of the tabernacle (which is holy ground) and mixed with the curses of the covenant. If she were guilty, it would then show; if not, she would be her husband’s wife forever.

Why have this law? Israel already had the seventh commandment and Yahweh had

prescribed death for both men and women who committed adultery. We also do not have any examples of this law being carried out. Perhaps something other than defending marriage is the issue, something related to the nature of who Israel is as the people of Yahweh.

While we cannot go into all the symbolism here, we must take this rite seriously. Consider the context: in Numbers 1-4 Israel is organized as Yahweh’s camp. Since He is holy, they must be holy. In Numbers 5:1-10 there are described three kinds of uncleanness – symbolic and ritual forms of death – for which an Israelite must be put outside the camp, because the camp is to reflect that Yahweh is the God of life.

Given this, what would Israel have heard in this ritual? For one thing, it involves an attribute of Yahweh: jealousy. Yahweh’s very name is “Jealous” (Exod 34:14). And marriage is one of the key images for the covenant between Yahweh and Israel, while adultery is the image of what breaks that relationship. What’s more, Yahweh has established that holiness in the camp requires absolute faithfulness.

Thus we return to the central question: Why this law? It seems unlikely that it would have been invoked. So imagine you are an Israelite at Sinai. You hear a law about a jealous husband and about drinking water mixed with dirt. What would that sound like to you? It would sound like what happened when Israel worshipped the golden

calf. Israel rejected Moses as mediator and made one of their own. Instead of eating with God, they ate with a false god. As a result, they were forced to drink water mixed with the ground-up tablets of the Ten Words. The people drank the same basic elements they had been baptized with: water (at the Red Sea, cf. 1 Cor 10:1) and the law (Exod 24). Those who were guilty were made known and the Levites killed them. The test of jealousy recalls Sinai and Yahweh’s judgment and what it means to be God’s people.

Paul tells us in Colossians 2 that Jesus blots out the curses of the covenant, which is the language of Numbers 5:23. Indeed, Jesus’ death is the ultimate test of jealousy. In Him the defiled bride, which is who we are by nature, is accepted. By his death and resurrection He took and removed our uncleanness, our death, and our sin.

As the Husband of the church, He commands his bride to be faithful. Our God is a jealous God, but that is not to say He is a tyrant. For in Christ, He has shown that He is passionately involved with us. He also gives us the Lord’s Supper, the new covenant in his blood. In eating the bread and drinking the cup, we undergo the trial of jealousy in Him. The cup of blessing is rooted in his drinking of the cup of bitterness and we take his work into ourselves. As 1 Corinthians 10-11 show, this judges the unfaithful and it marks the faithful as the bride of Christ.



Defending the Faith Today

(Part 1)

Under this heading I intend to write a series of articles on apologetics – “the reasoned defence of the faith.” It is a subject that demands our attention, for the attacks on the Christian religion are multiplying. Leading these attacks is a group of militant atheists whose names are increasingly becoming household words. I am referring to men like Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Christopher Hitchens, Sam Harris, and others, who use every possible medium to spread their ideas – books, magazines, lecture halls, television, and Internet – and whose influence has been exploding in recent years. We meet them at every turn. So do our students.

Happily, the spate of books by atheists is more and more being matched by the volume of Christian apologetic writings and it is my intention to introduce a number of these. I will begin by describing a project, undertaken by an international committee of Reformed educators, to develop courses in apologetics for our schools. The first-fruit of this project is a bibliography with short descriptions of relevant writings. That work I will introduce in the present article. In subsequent

installments I hope to review a number of books that do not (yet) appear on the list, or that deserve a more extensive introduction than is possible in an annotated bibliography.

Before turning to the main topic, however, I must give some background information on the current atheistic attacks.

The new atheism

Hostility against the biblical faith is as old as Christianity. There was a lapse during much of the Christian Middle Ages, but large-scale assaults resumed in the modern period, beginning with the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. They continue apace. There is a difference, however, between the battle as it was fought in the Enlightenment and in subsequent centuries. In the eighteenth century most of the attackers were deists. True, there were atheists as well. There always have been, also during the Middle Ages. Even the Old Testament knows of people who said in their hearts, “There is no God” (Ps 14). But by denying the supernatural, atheists were unable to answer the question about the origin of the universe and all it contains. Their influence was

therefore limited. That drawback was removed, in the opinion of many, during the nineteenth century as a result of the triumph of evolutionism. Charles Darwin made it possible, according to contemporary scientist Richard Dawkins, to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist. And indeed, after Darwin the enemies of Christianity would increasingly be atheists. They would also increasingly look for scientific arguments to prove the non-existence of God.

One would think that in our postmodern age the struggle would have abated. After all, religiosity and belief in the supernatural are fashionable again and at the same time the question about ultimate truth has lost its urgency. Postmodern orthodoxy proclaims that there are no universal truths; that we are free to make up our personal ones. So why the intolerance? Why should atheists want to proceed in their struggle against Christianity? But in fact the struggle does continue and the militancy of the attackers is as great as it has ever been. More disconcertingly, their message is popular. The anti-religious writings of Richard Dawkins, evolutionary scientist at Oxford University and generally seen as

leader of the new atheism, are best-sellers and so are the publications of his fellow-militants. The attacks of these men are as blunt as any in history. This is already evident in the titles of their books. Some examples: Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (2006); Daniel Dennett, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (2007); Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (2007); Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (2004); Victor J. Stenger, *God: The Failed Hypothesis: How Science Shows that God Does not Exist* (2007).

Why the fury?

There are, as I see it, at least three reasons why militant atheism has found it necessary to intensify the war in recent years. They are: (1) important developments in Christian philosophy, (2) recent scientific discoveries that challenge the old skepticism, and (3) the resurgence of militant Islam.

Firstly, the renaissance of Christian philosophy. Christian philosophers in North America and England have since the late 1960s launched an increasingly successful defence of Christianity by demonstrating the rationality of belief in God. Perhaps best-known among them are Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff, William Alston, William Lane Craig, and Richard Swinburne. In the July issue of *Christianity Today*, one of them, William Lane Craig, writes that as a result of this renaissance, "The face of Anglo-American philosophy has been transformed . . . Atheism, though perhaps still

the dominant viewpoint at the American university, is a philosophy in retreat." This may sound a bit optimistic, but as Craig shows, non-believers also speak of the apparent "desecularization of academia that evolved in philosophy departments since the 1960s." Concerned about this development, atheists have closed ranks against their Christian opponents.

The tables are turned: one scientific discovery after another appears to support a non- materialistic view of the universe

Secondly, some twentieth-century scientific discoveries. The following have been of special significance:

(a) *The end of determinism.* During much of the late-modern period atheists have, as I already mentioned, increasingly looked for scientific arguments as weapons in their war against Christianity. Until the early twentieth century they were fairly successful. The prevailing scientific model (mechanism) implied a belief in determinism (the idea that all events in nature, as well as all human thoughts and actions, are caused by an unbroken and unbreakable chain of prior events). This determinism implied, firstly, that divine intervention, including miracles, was impossible; and secondly, that human beings (who

were no more than machines) could not claim freedom of the will. In fact, being machines, they had no will. Whatever they did, thought, or decided was determined by causes that were absolutely outside their control. In the early 1900s, however, physicists discovered that at least at the sub-atomic level events take place that have no discernable causes. Thinkers reasoned that non-determinism in the natural world may imply non-determinism in human thought and behaviour. They also realized that the new physics had seriously undermined the arguments against the existence of the supernatural.

(b) *The Big Bang.* Twentieth-century astronomical discoveries added to the naturalists' problems. To avoid the need for a supernatural creator, it had long been scientific orthodoxy to assume that the universe had always existed. In the course of the century, however, a number of astronomers developed the so-called Big Bang theory of cosmic origins and demonstrated that the universe is expanding. This meant that the cosmos was not eternal after all. There had been a beginning and it seemed logical to conclude that there had been a creator as well. (True, some scientists have come with non-theistic alternatives to the standard Big Bang interpretation, but these tend to be speculative.) Largely because of the theistic implication, a majority of physicists and astronomers began by stridently opposing the new theory. Finally, however, they had to admit that the evidence for a beginning was overwhelming, and the Big Bang model is now

generally accepted among scientists. (I realize that some of our readers will be surprised to hear that many an atheist objected to the Big Bang theory because it seemed to favour Christianity and that many a Christian welcomed it for the same reason; but that is nevertheless the case.)

(c) *The fine-tuning of the universe.* I have written about this before and will not repeat myself here. I only want to remind the reader that the discovery of the fine-tuning, and the "anthropic principle" built on this discovery and on related ones, constitute, even according to self-proclaimed agnostics and atheists, the most striking evidence for a supernatural origin of the cosmos.

Christianity is widely judged today by its failures

In short, the tables are being turned: one scientific discovery after another appears to support a non-materialistic view of the universe's origins and history. This is shocking to militant atheists, who had always been convinced of both the infallibility of science and its tendency to support atheism. They have their work cut out for them.

Thirdly, atheists have intensified their assault because of the resurgence of militant Islam and, especially, the horror of 9/11 and of subsequent terrorist attacks in other western countries. This religion-based terrorism has

provided a welcome argument against religion. Many of the militantly atheist writings, in fact, appeared shortly after the year 2001. And if fear of religion-fuelled terrorism plays a role in inspiring today's militant atheism, it probably also helps explain why the anti-Christian writings become best-sellers, for the authors tend to paint all religions with the same brush. Christianity, according to them, is no better than Islam or other religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, and so on. And it is true, Christians also have been guilty of bloodshed and violence. Think of the crusades, the Inquisition, the religious wars, the African slave trade, western imperialism. The conclusion, for Hitchens and others, is that it is in the very nature of religion to poison and kill; that religious faith is a malignant virus and must be rooted out.

The new apologetics

Atheists are correct in accusing historic Christianity of its failings. True, arguments to relativize some of the accusations can be found. Apologists have pointed out, for example, that Christianity still provides a better basis for a peaceful society than atheism. Religion-based violence among Christians may have killed thousands but is primarily a matter of the past, whereas the victims of atheistic systems like Communism run into countless millions and the killings continue today. Also, episodes like the crusades may be regrettable, but they were at least in part responses to Muslim aggression and therefore not just offensive but also defensive in

intent. History further makes clear that Christianity has been instrumental in guaranteeing personal freedoms, democracy, and the rule of law, whereas no atheistic system has ever done so. The atheists' trust in such a system is therefore naïve at best.

But the fact remains that Christianity is widely being judged today by its failures, rather than by its accomplishments. Christian apologists have an important task in rectifying, or at least qualifying, the current picture. More importantly, they have a task to re-acquaint society with the central message of Christianity, which is by now all but unknown. Apologetics today involves proclaiming and explaining the gospel. At the same time it involves reminding *Christians* of the need for humility and a spirit of service. The time is gone when we could impose our moral views upon society. We must learn again – like the early Christians – to illustrate the truth of Christianity not simply by our talk, but also, and especially, by our walk.

The good news is that interest in the reasoned defence of the faith is growing in tandem with the interest in atheistic arguments

Yet *intellectual* arguments remain necessary. And the good news is that interest in the reasoned defence of the faith is

growing in tandem with the interest in atheistic arguments. The July issue of *Christianity Today*, to which I already referred, quotes in an editorial the following remark by apologist Lee Strobel: "It wasn't too many years ago that scholars were writing off apologetics because we live in a postmodern world where young people are not supposed to be interested in things like the historical Jesus. The biggest shock is that among people who communicated to me that they had found faith in Christ through apologetics, the single biggest group was 16- to 24-year-olds." The editorial further mentions overflow crowds of students at apologetics conferences in the United States, Canada, and Europe – often led by North-American and English apologists. Apparently today's young people want to hear both sides of the issue; and apparently they are searching for universal truth after all. One wonders if postmodernism is in decline in academia. Some believe that it is. But perhaps it is precisely the postmodern openness to the supernatural that explains the wide current interest in arguments for both the non-existence and the existence of God.

Teaching apologetics

In any event, we live in exciting times. The intellectual and scientific attacks on Christianity may be more severe than they have been, but the scientific evidence in support of Christianity is also greater than it was in former ages. As one author writes (Hugh Ross, in *The Creator and the Cosmos*), in biblical times God often gave evidence of his existence in proportion to the level of resistance to his revelation and He appears to do so again today. The need to make our students and our entire community aware of the truly

striking abundance of evidence against an atheistic materialism was behind the decision, mentioned at the beginning of this article, to develop a course in apologetics for our Reformed schools and to prepare for that work by issuing an annotated bibliography. The course in apologetics which the committee envisages should serve first of all, as we can read in the introduction to the bibliography, "as a means of helping students deal with the ongoing attacks upon the faith in our post-Christian society. It should not only, however, serve as a defensive strategy but also as an offensive one, enabling students to answer questions about and objections to the faith by outsiders (1 Peter 3:15)."

God has often given evidence in proportion to the level of resistance to the gospel, and He appears to do so again today

The bibliography, which is very much a work in progress, contains at present some thirty-five titles of books dealing with apologetics proper and with related issues such as worldview analysis and theory of knowledge. Each of the four sections is preceded by an introduction providing background information on the issues in question. Although the work is incomplete, even in its provisional phase it can serve to acquaint educators (and others) with developments in the field of apologetics. I hope that it will also encourage some of them to contribute to the work. The

Church News

Declined the call to the Free Reformed Church of Albany (West), Australia:

Candidate Rolf den Hollander

Declined the call to the church of Hamilton (Providence), Ontario:

Candidate Rolf den Hollander

Declined the call to the church at Owen Sound, Ontario:

Candidate Rolf den Hollander

Declined the call to the church at Elora, Ontario:

Candidate Cornelis Kleyn

Accepted the call to the church at Winnipeg (Grace), Manitoba:

Candidate Rolf den Hollander

Accepted the call to the church at Kerwood, Ontario:

Candidate Cornelis Kleyn

bibliography is (or should soon be) available on the website of the Teachers College:

www.covenantteacherscollege.com

So much for the curriculum project. In the next installment I hope to review one of the recent works on apologetics, namely *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (2008), by Timothy Keller, the well-known founder and pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, New York.

¹ See, for example, the articles I published in *Clarion*, Nov. 23 and December 07 and May 9 and May 23, 08.



Ray of Sunshine

By Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Patricia Gelms

"I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which He is to be praised, according to all the LORD has done for us – yes, the many good things He has done for the house of Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses.."

Isaiah 63:7

Do unto others as you would have them do to you. What would some of this include? Surely kindness, goodness, and gentleness. Yet this can be such a challenge for us at times. Yes, we all at some point get frustrated and out of our frustration we sometimes do or say mean things about others. What does our heavenly Father want from us here on earth?

Let us look at what He taught us while He was here on earth. Open your Bibles to Matthew 11:29, where we read: "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Here Jesus teaches us that no matter what our task is on earth, we can carry it with gentleness, knowing that in his goodness, He will redeem us from this sinful life and veil of tears.

For what really is kindness and goodness? It is a tender concern for others. Caring for others, while actively displaying the fruit of love. Just as our Lord is kind, so we his servants are commanded to "not quarrel; instead he must be kind to everyone" (2 Tim 2:24a). As with every grace the Spirit provides, we are commanded to show goodness.

In Galatians 6:9, 10 Paul encourages us with these words, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

Through our goodness we can also display the fruit of gentleness. For to be gentle is to have a humble heart; that is, patient even when others accuse us of wrongs which we did not do. It is only by God's grace and the working of the Holy Spirit that we are able to do any good. We must daily pray for his guidance in our lives, that in all we do we may show these fruits of kindness, goodness, and gentleness.

Let us conclude with the beautiful words of Colossians 3:12-14: "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.

Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Let us live for God day by day, keeping his Word very near us at all times. Always be thankful and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. May our lives be a reflection of Christ's compassion! Praise be to Him!

*The LORD His goodness has revealed;
He is to us a sun and shield,
For He bestows renown and favour.
And when the upright seek His face,
The LORD will not withhold His grace;
His faithfulness endures forever.
O LORD of hosts, how blest is he
Who puts his hope and trust in Thee.*

Psalms 84:6

Birthdays in September:

- 8 MARSHA MOESKER will be 31**
5820 Dixon Dam Road, Vernon, BC V1B 3J8
- 11 MARY VANDE BURGT will be 52**
32555 Willingdon Crescent, Abbotsford, BC V2T 1S1
- 14 JERRY BONTEKOE will be 44**
Anchor Home
361 Thirty Road, RR 2, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2
- 22 NICK PRINZEN will be 36**
653 Broad Street West, Dunnville, ON N1A 1T8
- 29 PAUL DIELEMAN will be 39**
653 Broad Street West, Dunnville, ON N1A 1T8

Congratulations to you all who are celebrating a birthday in the month of September. May our heavenly Father continue to bless you in this new year with much happiness and good health. Hope you all have an enjoyable day together with your family and friends.

Till next month,

Mrs. C. Gelms and Mrs. P. Gelms
548 Kemp Road East, RR 2, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2
Phone: 905-563-0380
Email: jcorgelms@porchlight.ca



Farewell to Pastor Dirk Boersma

Although it has now been several months since the farewell evening of Pastor Dirk Boersma and his wife, the evening will not soon be forgotten, especially since it has now found its way into the pages of *Clarion*. The memories still seem so fresh looking back. The church was full of all the people that the pastor had ministered to during his five year tenure as the shepherd of his flock. All the surrounding churches had been invited and many from outside with whom the pastor had connected over the years. It was truly an evening filled with reminiscing of years past and full of fellowship and laughter.

Elder Roelof Brintjes started off the evening from the Word of God. He read a small passage from Psalm 84 which praises God for his dwelling place and the blessings thereof. Brintjes then went on to encourage the pastor in the new task that lay ahead in the mission field in South Africa. He also touched on the fact that Christ's congregation in Denver should also not lose sight of their calling, but rather see God's sovereign plan unfolding in this event as well. It is a blessing to know that even though God has led the pastor down a different road we may all rest assured that God will continue to be with his people wherever they may be gathered on his earth. Finally Mr. Brintjes led us in a word of prayer to open the evening

and we sang those beautiful words of Psalm 100.

Following the opening Johan Brintjes told a number of short funny stories that highlighted the good times we experienced during our pastor's stay in Denver. One of course cannot forget the palm pilot which he had to carry around so as to keep track of all his appointments. Of course that was until he was blessed with his wife Rinette. The pastor also had his distinct dress style with his purple blazer, pink shirt, and tie. Pastor Boersma was able to somehow be his own and at the same time be there for anyone who had a need, always changing and adapting to those needs.



After a few short stories Gerrit and Jacco Brintjes joined Johan for a small skit about the many vacations that had to be requested in order to find a suitable marriage partner. This brought a few chuckles from many in the congregation including the pastor's wife. It is amazing how the Lord has brought them together so that as one they may worship and serve the Lord where ever he leads them.

Rev. Matthew Kingsbury of the Park Hill OPC church sang with the guitar a funny (aka Bob Dylan) song about the "The To Do List" of Pastor Boersma!

We were presented with a slideshow showing many of the activities that occurred in the past five years. Excited sighs of recognition could be heard throughout the church as pictures marched by on the screen. kid's nights, Thanksgiving, Meals on Wheels, adult baptism of Han, baptisms of Sarah Temu and Kaitlin Sterk, barbecues in the park, Pastor and Paki proclaiming the gospel at senior homes, car washes, yard sales at our church parking lot, Easter celebrations, Westminster Fair, etc. This was presented with beautiful music in the background. We all enjoyed watching it and were grateful for the memories.

Michele and Chloe Moorlag were very active throughout the evening. They began with a funny song dedicated to Pastor and Rinette. Chloe read a beautiful



poem that she wrote about the "four feet" who will now be missed! Michele and Chloe also played several beautiful songs on the piano and the cello. Their vocal talent was brought out in renditions of "Someone" and "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and ended with "The Bright Side of Dark" which was a meditation on God's wonderful creation. They also demonstrated some acting skills in a funny skit called "Phone Calls." This skit focused on the constantly ringing phone of the pastor's. There was even a time when the pastor's phone rang during prayer on New Year's Eve.

Two of the younger men from the congregation, Jacob Ashcraft and Josiah Horner, sang Psalm 121: "Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." They also presented to the pastor and his wife a scrapbook with memory pages from the whole congregation. Each family had the opportunity to create several pages of picture, quotes, and memories which were eventually all combined into one book.

Paki Temu, a relatively new member of our church, sang a beautiful Polynesian song in the Maori language about a lovely

flower. He thanked Pastor Dirk for all his work in and outside the congregation and also for his friendship. As a reminder of Colorado the pastor and his wife were presented with an exquisite vase designed from the Aspens found in the Rocky Mountains. The congregation and visitors joined in for a very nice and funny farewell song for Pastor Dirk Maurits and Rinette. The song was modified text to "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean" but the words went something like "He came from over the ocean, the Rockies to see." The song concluded with "We are marching to Pretoria!" Pastor Dirk requested a chance to thank the congregation and all the friends who had come to the evening. He underscored how he had gotten close to many of the people over the past five years and together with them has grown. He reminisced about the old church building, the closeness of the congregation when he was preaching, the kid's nights, and the international flavour of the church. While he was sad that he would be leaving Denver, he was looking forward to serving the Lord in the mission fields in South Africa.

The evening ended in prayer and refreshments followed. In classic Denver style the sanctuary was quickly converted into a fellowship area with a wide variety of food. The church building was portrayed in a well designed cake. The evening was a great time of reflecting on God's blessings of the past years and looking forward to the future, knowing the God was, is, and always will be the sovereign Lord of creation.



Rev. E. Kampen is minister of the Canadian Reformed Church at Orangeville, Ontario
eric.kampen@canrc.org

Ontario Ministers' Conference

The ministers of the churches in Ontario held their first ever Ministerial Conference from June 10-12, 2008. This Conference was modeled after conferences held by the ministers in Western Canada. One big difference, however, was that this conference was more like a retreat as it was held at the *Campfire* facilities near Markdale.

Eighteen ministers were able to attend, with many others indicating regret in not being able to attend due to various reasons. The purpose of this conference was

for mutual edification and encouragement among the ministers. Most church councils had encouraged their ministers to go, promising to pay the conference costs.

The conference agenda was filled with a variety of items. On Wednesday morning, Rev. VanLuik spoke about his recently completed thesis which focused on the use of *El Shaddai* as one of God's names. On the afternoon of that day, there was first a discussion on three sermons dealing with the same

text with the aim of refreshing and sharpening sermon preparation skills. This was followed by an overview of the developments in the Reformed Churches (liberated) in The Netherlands. On Thursday morning, Dr. G. H. Visscher spoke about his recently completed thesis dealing with Romans 4 and the so-called New Perspective on Paul. This was followed by a discussion on how to help those who see the need to appeal to a broader assembly so that their case will be clearly presented and a clear judgment can be given. The afternoon session had a time for seeking pastoral advice in various difficult situations encountered in the ministry. It was a good sign that in all of the sessions, time required that the discussion be ended.

The ministers were also given an opportunity to show their practical side. Those present had been divided into four advisory committees. Each committee was instructed at which time to meet in the kitchen and prepare something for plenary session, that is, meal time and clean up afterward. Each committee did an excellent job and none had to be sent back to revise their report. A catered meal, provided by Sr. Brenda VanGrootheest, was enjoyed on Wednesday evening.



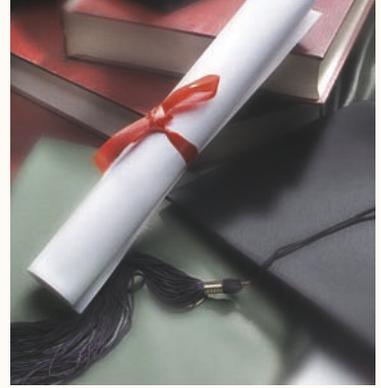


The final point on the agenda was an evaluation of the conference. It was obvious that all considered the retreat a treat and it was unanimously agreed to hold another conference next year around the same time. There was a spirit of collegiality and there was very little quiet time, which should not be surprising when you get a group of ministers together. Everyone could return home refreshed for their task. The retreat indeed was a treat.



Otto Bouwman

Mr. Otto Bouwman is principal of Cornerstone Christian School in Lynden, Washington
obouwman@cornerstoneschool.us



How Do We Dress?

Perhaps throughout any given school year, and especially at the beginning of a school season, clothing issues can receive special focus. How ought we to dress? How distinctive should our dress be? Last year at our school, some students came up with the idea of a special photo shoot for the yearbook: students were going to be encouraged to wear name brand clothing. That event provided a great opportunity to interact with clothing patterns of students at school. The following was written in response and is intended to encourage parents and students to keep the discussions alive and maintain a God-glorifying focus in life.

Fads

In many communities, it seems that fads can be a substantial reality. When some people do something, others quickly follow. Every community can find a host of areas where this is true. That's not to say that fads are necessarily good or bad; they just are. Sometimes they're related to fashion and dress. For example, a few years back (at least in our community) many (young) women needed to wear little frilly bouncy scarves. A short while later they had become passé. The next season, a particular color was in vogue. Six months later that color was definitely out of vogue. People decided they wanted to start

wearing contact lenses instead of glasses. Later, the "noticeable frame" look came in. Widths of and patterns on ties change. You can come up with your own other examples of things moving in and out of vogue. If nothing else, these changes keep life interesting.

However, there are several aspects to this topic that are worth discussing, I believe. One aspect is that we live in a materialistic culture, where great value is placed on material things. Marketers know that and, in order to keep sales hopping, they encourage our society to change fashions as often and as quickly as possible. With some products, they target particular ages and lifestyles. Advertising is meant to reach particular potential customers and they are placed under tremendous pressure to purchase particular products. That keeps things moving off the shelves and consequently keeps company coffers healthy.

Pressure

Unfortunately, we're not able to stay free of this pressure. Many children and parents have felt challenged by the undetectable but nonetheless very real pressure from others with regards to clothing. While some parents might be able to cope with it slightly differently, they nonetheless also feel it. Many people feel pressured to purchase

and wear obvious name-brand clothing; others might feel pressured not to purchase and wear precisely the same clothing.

Of course, there are various aspects to this issue. Do your children wear clothing that identifies with a popular current name brand, such as Aeropostale, American Eagle, Billabong, Roots, Element, Hollister, Hurley, Roxy, etc? Have you ever researched any of these brand names? Most of them deliberately target youth; some of them have at least questionable affiliations or themes that they promote. It doesn't take long to do some research and bump into some deliberately anti-Christian aspects of what some of them stand for or practice. It might be a very appropriate exercise to determine precisely what a company stands for before choosing to use your chest as a company billboard. Would you really want people to associate you with a company that deliberately pushes an anti-Christian agenda?

It's not my intention to say which company we can or can't support. However, we need to ask ourselves the question: "Why do our children dress the way they do?" Are they wearing clothing because they wish to deliberately identify themselves with something that is in reality unchristian? If that was the case, we'd really have quite a challenge on our plates. Another possibility is

that they are wearing particular clothing because they wish to belong, in a more general sense, to the 2008 culture of the day in Whatcom County, or in the Fraser Valley, or in whatever community you live in. Do our children wear particular clothing because of a strong sense of a “need-to-belong”? That sentiment can also be an unhealthy one.

Does our children’s clothing reflect their status as God’s covenant children? Or are we blindly letting them follow the dictates of Hollywood/California/New York so that in their clothing they are completely indistinguishable from the so many other millions of American/Canadian youth? That might be a good reason to wear clothing that gives deliberate evidence of supporting causes that are good to promote: a Christian school sweater or something that delivers a godly and positive message.

I raise these questions not because I have the answer to every one of them, but because I hope this fosters discussions at the dinner tables and coffee tables in our homes. Let’s keep talking about appropriateness of dress with our children and also about who and what we are identifying ourselves with as we put on that sweater with big letters on it.

Need to belong

We can also take a slightly broader view of the issue: How many things do we do just because we feel a need to belong? Choice and style of motor vehicles have long been a good example of another object that people invest in, hoping that it helps them be a bit more accepted in a particular group. In some communities, for example, a young man needs to be driving a truck. Other times, it might be a car with special wheels or tires. Curiously, those pressures were there just as strong a generation or two ago already.

Do our children wear particular clothing because of a strong sense of a “need-to-belong”?

I have often been amazed at the amount of money some people have been willing to spend on their vehicles, so that they could feel part of their group. Many people since have joined hockey teams, or soccer teams, or volleyball teams, or basketball teams, because of a strong desire to belong to a group: “Everyone else is doing it, so I better join in. I’ll stick out if I don’t like it.”

Ironically, there are also some in various communities who pride themselves in trying to be different from the rest of the group; in their effort to be different, they, ironically, all end up looking incredibly similar to each other. I’ve concluded that outrageous hair styles and garish jewellery do little to make anyone more beautiful or handsome. One can find that culture in many public schools; I’m very thankful that this is not in evidence at the school I serve in.

As we work with the next generation of God’s children, we need to imbue in them a healthy sense of self-confidence, combined with a good awareness of how God will have us all glorify Him in all areas of our lives. When children internalize those perspectives, then the need to belong to a particular group and identify with a (perhaps questionable) style of dress can more likely be held in check. Furthermore, an appreciation of healthy stewardship should also help us develop the understanding that we don’t need to slavishly follow latest trends and fashions. So just because my neighbour walks around with an American Eagle sweater, doesn’t mean my perfectly decent (but slightly outdated, perhaps) sweater needs to be mothballed. Let’s instead encourage each other to be ourselves, be modest, be financially responsible, and be godly in our clothing.

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
obouwman@cornerstoneschool.us

Mistake: The author of Education Matters in Issue 15 is listed as Derek Stoffels when in fact Keith Sikkema wrote it (our apologies).



Press Release for the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches for a meeting held on April 21, 2008

The Board of Governors met at the College Facilities in Hamilton, Ontario on April 21, 2008. Present at the meeting were Archie J. Bax, Lammert Jagt, Hank C. Kampen (Treasurer), Dr. Gijsbert Nederveen (Chairman), Gerard J. Nordeman, Rev. Andrew J. Pol, Rev. Robert A. Schouten (Secretary), Rev. Willem B. Slomp, Rev. Eric Kampen, Rev. John VanWoudenberg and Karl J. Veldkamp (Vice-Chairman). All board members are present. The meeting is opened by Dr. Nederveen with the reading of Scripture and prayer.

Minutes and agenda

The minutes of the Board meeting held on January 24, 2008 are reviewed, revised, and approved and the agenda for the meeting is settled.

Finance and Property Committee report

This committee reports that preparations have commenced for the arrival of Dr. J.W. and Mrs. Maris relating to housing, work permit, remuneration, insurance coverages, and the like. The financial arrangements with Rev. Kampen, Rev. P.G. Feenstra, and Prof. J. Geertsema relating to assistance completing Semester II in Dogmatics on behalf of Dr. N.H. Gootjes are confirmed.

Correspondence of note

a. Correspondence is received from Dr. Maris in response to questions from the Board for confirmation and clarification. It is confirmed that such response is satisfactory for the purposes of confirming the appointment of Dr. Maris.

- b. A note from the Principal confirming the attendance of Dr. C. Van Dam and Dr. A.J. de Visser completing lectures in the Sudan on behalf of MERF.
- c. Letter from the Principal advising of the recommendation of the Senate that Dr. Gootjes be relieved of his teaching duties for the balance of Semester II of the 2007-2008 academic year due to the continuing health concerns relating to Dr. Gootjes. Rev. Feenstra, Rev. Kampen, and Prof. J. Geertsema are appointed as temporary instructors to teach the dogmatics program for the balance of the academic year. [These decisions were taken and approved effective March 25th]
- d. A letter is received from one of the churches in which they express objections to the appointment of Dr. Maris on the basis that it contravenes the bylaws of the College in that Dr. Maris is not a member of one of the churches of the federation of Canadian Reformed churches. Following intensive review, consideration, and discussion the Board acknowledges that this was indeed an oversight, but that the current academic needs of the College and current circumstances would require and permit a one time exception to this requirement. A letter of explanation will be sent to the consistory of the church that had written to the Board, together with all other consistories of the churches in the Canadian Reformed churches.
- e. Regarding Dr. Gootjes, due his continued ill health and inability to complete his task, it is decided that he will be placed on indefinite sick leave. This situation will be monitored in consultation with Dr. Gootjes and his family, subject to the medical diagnostic advice he receives. It is determined that

realistically Dr. Gootjes will not be available at all for the 2008-2009 academic year and that a replacement is required for Semester II of the 2008-2009 academic year.

Material agenda items

- a. The Board accepted the proposal of the Senate to appoint Rev. J.P. Van Vliet, minister of the Canadian Reformed Church in Surrey, British Columbia, as a temporary instructor in dogmatics for Semester II of the 2008-2009 academic year. Rev. Van Vliet is a doctoral candidate at the Theological University of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk at Apeldoorn, The Netherlands.
- b. The Board received the favourable report of Dr. Van Dam and Dr. de Visser on the lectures they had given at the Khartoum Pastor's Conference held in Sudan in February of 2008.
- c. A report is given by Prof. G.H. Visscher on the visits to the churches in Manitoba which were completed in April of 2008. Prof. Visscher was able to provide a number of presentations as well as speak with young men interested in the ministry.
- d. We are advised that Prof. Visscher is scheduled for his thesis defence in connection with his doctoral studies through McMaster University in May of 2008. D.V. Dr. Nederveen, Board chairman will attend this event on behalf of the Board.
- e. With respect to accreditation of the College with the Association of Theological Schools, it is reported that the initial application and material has been submitted and that the process has been fully initiated. The next step in the process is a one day visit by the Association

to the College to assess eligibility and the like.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for September 4, 2008, D.V.

Press release and closing

The completion of the Press Release is delegated to the Vice Chairman, in consultation with the Executive, and the meeting was closed with prayer and thanksgiving by Rev. Kampen.

*On behalf of the Board of
Governors of the Theological
College of the Canadian*

*Reformed Churches,
Karl J. Veldkamp, Vice Chairman*

Press Release of Classis Alberta of the Canadian Reformed churches meeting on June 10, 2008 in Neerlandia, Alberta

On behalf of the convening church at Neerlandia, the Rev. J. Louwse welcomed the delegates and called the meeting to order. He read Ephesians 1:15 - 23 and requested the singing of Psalm 122:3 and led in prayer. He welcomed the delegates and Rev. R. Pontier, delegate of the United Reformed churches (URCNA). He also welcomed Rev. M. Jagt, minister of the church at Taber who was at classis for the first time. Several highlights were mentioned: the calls of Rev. R. Aasman to the churches at Smithers and Abbotsford, which he declined; the call of Rev. W. B. Slomp to the church at Owen Sound which he declined; the health of Professor Dr. Gootjes was also noted. He expressed thankfulness that the work in the college could continue.

The delegates from the church at Neerlandia reported on the credentials. Classis was declared constituted.

The executive was as follows: Rev. Louwse, chairman; Rev. E. J. Tiggelaar, vice chairman; and Rev.

R. Bredenhof clerk in place of Rev. Slomp.

The agenda was adopted after some additions.

The Rev. Pontier was seated at classis.

The Form of Subscription for ministers of Classis Alberta was read and signed by Rev. Jagt.

A report was received from the Church for the Inspection of the Classis Archives. The Immanuel church reported that everything was found to be in good order. This was received with thankfulness.

A report from the Committee for Financial Aid to Needy Churches was received. It was thankfully noted that no aid was needed by any of the churches in the classis. Having completed their task the committee was disbanded.

A report from the Committee for Financial Aid to Needy Students was received. They reported that support had been given to a student of the Theological College.

Questions concerning support of the family of a student were also brought into discussion.

Rev. Tiggelaar reported that he could serve the churches as contact person with the provincial government. There was no news from the government that needed the attention of the churches or ministers.

Question Period according to Article 44 of the Church Order was held. The ministry of the office bearers is being continued in all the churches. The decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured by all the churches. Two churches requested and received the advice of Classis on matters of discipline.

Rev. Pontier was given the opportunity to address Classis on behalf of the URCNA. He brought greetings and spoke of the desire for the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace between our federations. Rev. Aasman responded placing emphasis on the ongoing desire of the Canadian Reformed churches for an even greater unity.

The next classis will be held, the Lord willing, at St. Albert in October 14, at 9:00 a.m. (alternate date: Dec. 9) Suggested officers: Rev. Aasman, chairman; Rev. Louwse, vice-chairman; Rev. Tiggelaar, clerk.

Delegates to Regional Synod at Carman were appointed. The two minister delegates are the Revs. Bredenhof and Jagt (alternates in order: Kalkman and Poppe). The two elder delegates are M. Bareman and S. Viersen (alternates in order are K. Hoeksema and B. Tuininga).

Personal question period was held and made use of.

Censure according to Article 34 C.O. was not deemed necessary.

The Acts were adopted and the Press Release was approved.

Rev. Tiggelaar requested the brothers to sing Hymn 64:1, 2 and led in prayer. Classis was closed.

*For Classis Alberta, E.J.
Tiggelaar, vice-chairman e.t.*

Press Release of Classis Contracta for Classis Pacific West, June 24, 2008

On behalf of the convening church, Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church of Surrey, BC, Rev. J Van Vliet opened the meeting with Scripture, invited delegates to sing from Psalm 108, and then lead in prayer.

The Credentials from the delegates were examined by the delegates from Maranatha and found to be in order.

Classis is declared constituted and the consensus is that the chairman would be Rev. Van Vliet and the clerk would be Br. F. Kleine-Deters.

The chairman lists the items to be covered to approbate the call from Willoughby Canadian Reformed Church to Rev. A. Souman of Smithville, ON.

The letter of call to Rev. Souman complete with the provisions for the minister and his family is reviewed by all delegates and is found to be in order.

The acceptance of the letter of call is reviewed by all delegates and is found to be in order.

The release from the consistory with the deacons of the Smithville Canadian Reformed Church is found to be in order.

The release from the Classis Niagara is found to be in order.

The delegates from the Willoughby CanRC indicate that

their congregation has been an integral part of the decision to call.

A date of August 1 at 11:59 PM EDT has been set for the Willoughby congregation to take over responsibility for Rev. Souman.

The chairman asks if there are any objections to any items covered at this classis. There are none.

The chairman asks if there are any questions per Art. 44, C.O. The

delegates from Willoughby extend their thanks to the Chairman for his role as counsellor.

Censure per Art. 34 of the C.O. was not necessary.

The clerk gives thanks in prayer and the chairman closes the meeting.

*For Classis Pacific West,
June 24, 2008
F. Kleine-Deters*



Advertisements:

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

BIRTHS

*Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from Him.
Psalm 127:3*

With great thankfulness to our Heavenly Father we joyfully announce the safe arrival of our second son

BENJAMIN JOHN

Born May 8, 2008

Gregg and Laura Vandenberg

excited siblings *Hannah and Joshua*

8th grandchild for John and Thea Heyink

5th grandchild for Henk and Ria Vandenberg

265 Bold Street, Hamilton, ON L8P 1V9

vdberglaura@yahoo.ca



*Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God,
how pleasant and fitting to praise Him!*

Psalm 147:1

We give thanks to the Lord for blessing us with a daughter,
who we named

SKYE JANTIENA

Born June 13, 2008

to **Thad and Anita Vegter**

A little sister for *Declan and Laila*

28th grandchild for Reinder and Tineke Steenbergen

10th grandchild for Bram and Joanne Vegter

5301-56 Street, Barrhead, AB T7N 1C3

tavegter@yahoo.ca

*See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called
children of God. 1 John 3:1*

With much joy and thanksgiving for another precious gift from
our Heavenly Father we are happy to announce the birth of a new
covenant child, our son and brother

MATTHEW JACOB

Lovingly welcomed on July 7, 2008

Menze and Sylvia Feenstra

Christina, Nicholas, Timothy, Julia, Benjamin

RR 3, Arthur, Ontario NOG 1A0



*Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are his.
Psalm 100:3*

With thankfulness we announce the birth of our third daughter

CHANTELLE ELISABETH

July 14, 2008

Rich and Anne deJong

Kayla, Jasmin

52010 RR 265, Spruce Grove, Alberta T7X 3L7



Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

With thankfulness to God we announce the birth of our son

CURTIS GERRY

Born July 16, 2008

Gerry and Margaret Doekes

A brother for *Logan and Jasmine*

15th grandchild for Louis(†) and Gerrie Doekes

3rd grandchild for Andy and Jeannette Nijenhuis

55 Shirley Street, Orangeville, ON L9W 2T5