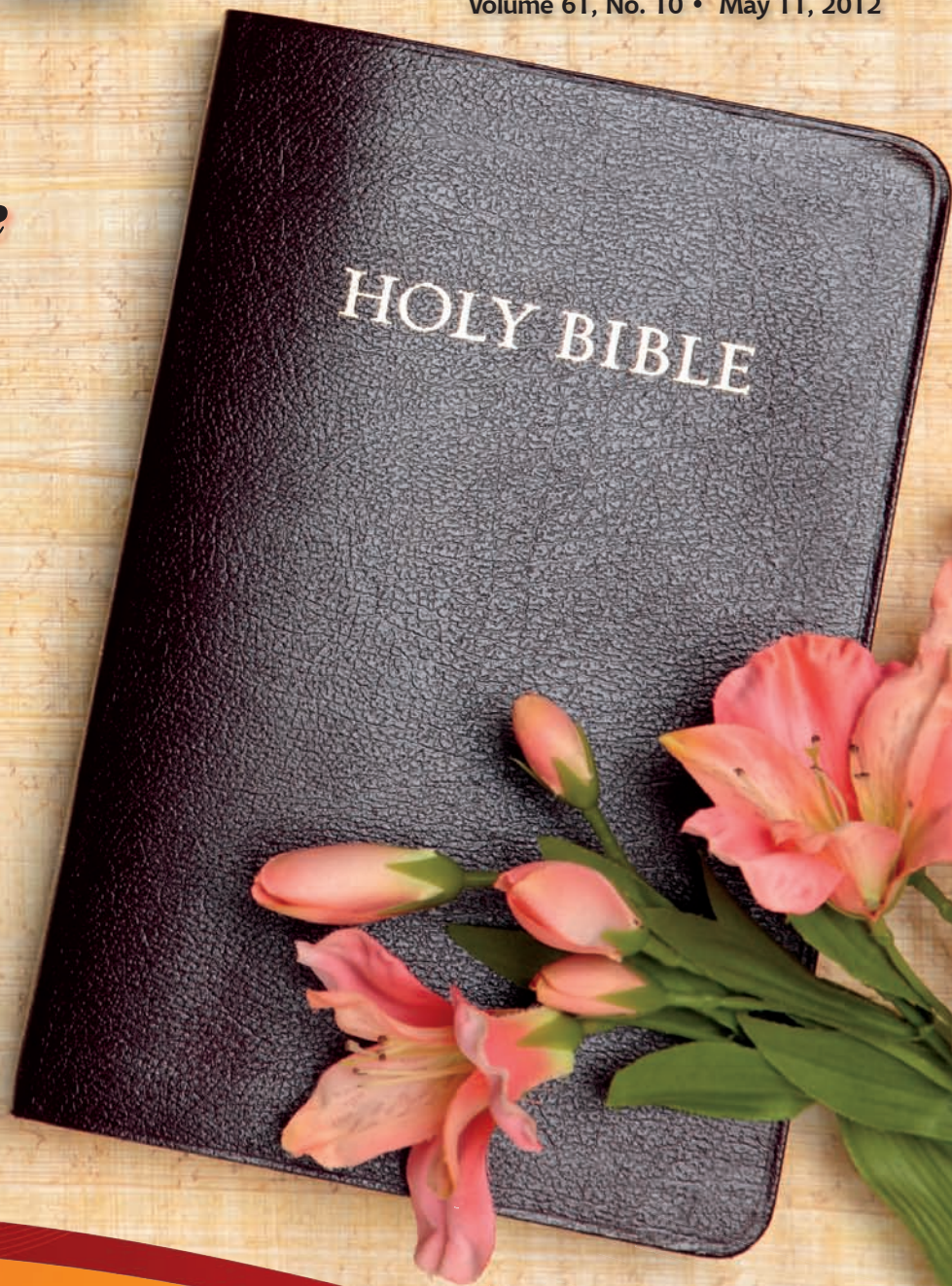


*What more does one
need than the
all-sufficient
God-spoken,
Christ centred
and Spirit-inspired
Word of God?*



Inside this Issue

- Continuing Revelation?
- All the LORD's People Receive His Spirit





Dr. James Visscher is co-pastor of the Canadian Reformed Church at Langley, British Columbia
jvisscher@telus.net

Continuing Revelation?

Should we supplement biblical revelation with direct revelation or should we simply replace the one with the other?

Many years ago

It happened many years ago in Orangeville, Ontario, even before I became a minister. I met a man who had married a member of my home congregation. He recognized me and proceeded to tell me a most amazing story. He said that he had been deeply in debt and that one night God came to him and told him to take out his cheque book and write cheques to all of his debtors. He told me that he did what God told him to do and that now several days later all of his debts were gone.

Needless to say, his story left me puzzled. "How could this be? What did this mean?"

But then as time passed I forgot about the matter until some months later I met him again. I asked him how he was doing. He said that he was doing poorly for he was deeply in debt. Surprised, I asked him how this was possible. "The last time we met you told me that all of your debts had miraculously disappeared thanks to God's command." To which he admitted that some weeks after he wrote the cheques, they all came back NSF – non-sufficient funds!

Needless to say that incident made me an instant skeptic when it came to "God told me" stories. Nevertheless, I continued to come across them.

For example, some of you may remember the story of the faith healer Oral Roberts who said that God told him to build the City of Faith Medical Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Later, when the Center got into financial trouble, Roberts said that God had appeared to him again and this time God told him, through the Spirit, that he had to raise 8 million dollars to keep the Center open, or else he would kill him. Now that story generated more than a few headlines to the effect – "God says, 'Pay Up or Die!'"

Or what about the Pastor who told his congregation one fine Sunday morning that the Spirit had appeared to him in a dream and told him that he had to build a new \$11,000,000 church building? Or what about the husband who said that God told him to divorce his wife, while his wife claimed that God told her that she had to stay married to him? Or what about the missionary who showed up one summer in the Bulkley Valley with a brand new, young and beautiful wife and told everyone that the Spirit had directed him to discard the old model?

Now, I could go on, but I think you get the picture. The stories of Christians, especially those of the charismatic variety, claiming that God the Father or God the Holy Spirit speaks to them directly and tells them specific things or gives them special orders, are everywhere these days. So often you can hear people say "God told me" or "The Spirit said to me" or "I got this vision from God" or "I am doing this on God's orders." I read about it often. I hear it locally and I hear it in China. It is everywhere.

Passing the biblical test?

Now in a way all of this might not be so far off the mark; after all, Christianity has long recognized that while God communicates his will to his people through his Word, he also makes use of intuition, events, incidents, brotherly advice, and a host of other things to guide and direct us. God has an unlimited arsenal of providential weapons at his disposal. But should these means and instruments be identified as revelation, and direct, divine revelation at that?

Furthermore, the issue becomes much more complicated when the things that people claim God told them are in direct conflict or at flagrant odds with his Word. Since when does God tell people to dump

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Visscher; Copy Manager: Laura Veenendaal
Coeditors: P. Holtvüwer, E. Kampen, K. Stam, C. Van Dam

ADDRESS FOR COPY MANAGER:

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

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.
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
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their wives and get divorced? Since when does God tell pastors to build huge churches? Since when does God tell people to avoid their financial responsibilities and write cheque after cheque, even when they have no money in the bank?

There is also something else that is disturbing here. Why should people bother with the Bible at all when they already have a direct line to heaven? Why read the Word, memorize the Word, discuss the Word, meditate on the Word, and do all of that other mentally taxing stuff, when you can just go to God, ask him whatever you want and get an instant answer? Forget the Word of God! Dial heaven directly!

But is that the way to go? All of this calls on us to stand back and ask ourselves, “Is this according to the will of God? Should we supplement biblical revelation with direct revelation or should we simply replace the one with the other?” Obviously we need to study and test this matter.

So what does the Bible say about itself? And what does it say about direct and ongoing revelation today?

What’s Inside

Issue 10 is our Pentecost issue. We begin with an editorial from Dr. James Visscher on “Continuing Revelation.” In this article Dr. Visscher discusses direct versus biblical revelation. We also begin a three-part series from Dr. Cornelis Van Dam on Pentecost in light of the Old Testament. Readers will also find a Pentecost-themed Canticle and Treasures New and Old meditation.

Concluding a series on finding office bearers, this issue includes an article from Rev. Clarence Bouwman on “Finding the Deacons We Need.” Rev. Bouwman covers scriptural qualifications as well as the nature of the work that needs to be done by deacons.

We also have the second article in a four-part series on early Canadian church history. The articles are adapted from a chapter of *Geloof in de Nieuwe Wereld: Ontmoeting met Afrikanen en Indianen* by Leen Joesse with the assistance of Dr. Wes Bredenhof.

An article from Rev. Peter Holtvüwer details a recent ARPA conference and suggests some ways in which Reformed Christians can get involved. In addition, Issue 10 includes an Education Matters article, two press releases, and a Mission News insert.

Laura Veenendaal

Church News

Called and accepted the call by the Abbotsford,
British Columbia Canadian Reformed Church:

Candidate Justin Roukema

Called by the Houston, British Columbia
Canadian Reformed Church:

Rev. S.C. Van Dam

of Grassie, Ontario

Called by the Langley, British Columbia
Canadian Reformed Church:

Rev. J. Louwerse

of Neerlandia, Alberta

Called by the Redeemer CanRC of Winnipeg for
mission work in Manitoba:

Rev. J. Louwerse

of Neerlandia, Alberta

Bible, tell us all that we need to know about Christ. "But these (signs) are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (20:31). The biblical record tells us about the Saviour. It tells us that he is the Anointed. It tells us that he is divine. It tells us that we need to believe in him. It tells us that when we do, we shall receive life – eternal, everlasting, glorious life. Hence it is all there. Who needs more?

The Bible is sufficient for salvation

And there is something else as well. Both John 20 and 21 tell us that there is a lot more that could have been included, but was not. John 20 informs us that "Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples." John 21 tells us that if all the things that Jesus did were written down there would not be enough room in the world for all the books that would be written. Quite simply, there is a great deal more to tell about Jesus, but what we have in the Bible is, John says, enough. We do not need any more. We should not go looking or asking for any more.

Revelation – complete!

Besides, there is also Hebrews 1. It teaches us that not only is this Word's revelation sufficient, but it also adds that this revelation is the best, the fullest, and the most complete revelation of all. Consider: "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (1:1, 2a).

Just who is this Son?

- He is "the heir of all things" (v. 2);
- He is the One through whom God made the universe (v. 2);
- He is "the radiance of God's glory" (v. 3);
- He is "the exact representation of his being" (v. 3);
- He is the One who sustains all things (v. 3);
- He provides "purification for sins" (v. 3);
- He is enthroned "at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (v. 3).

In other words, there is no better or higher or fuller revelation than what we receive in and through the Son. Look to him, take his gospel words and deeds to heart – it does not get any better than this. God has never spoken any clearer than this. He never will. What more does one need than the all-sufficient God-spoken, Christ-centred and Spirit-inspired Word of God?



Revelation – beware!

The first thing that we learn from the Bible itself is that revelation, or those who claim to be dispensing divine revelation or prophecy for that matter, are dealing with dangerous things. Do you know what happened in the OT to a man who stood before God's people and claimed to be speaking for God? Deuteronomy 18:20 – 22 says that you need to test him. If what the man says comes true, he is for real. If what he says does not come true, he is false.

But that's not all. For if what he says is false, he must be put to death. If that measuring rod were applied today, the landscape would be littered with a lot of bodies, the dead bodies of a great many false prophets. Claiming to dispense divine revelation is a serious matter.

And so is trying to add to this revelation. The Book of Revelation says "I warn anyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book" (22:18).

Revelation – enough!

The second thing that we learn from the Bible itself is that it is sufficient for salvation. In other words, we really do not need any additional revelations. Indeed, when it comes to the heart and centre of our salvation, we know enough.

Turn to two places at the end of John's gospel. The first of these in John 20 tells us that John's gospel, and by extension the other gospels, as well as the rest of the



MATTHEW 13:52

All the LORD's People Receive His Spirit



Rev. Walter Geurts is
minister of the Fergus North
Canadian Reformed Church
in Ontario
walter.geurts@canrc.org

"But Moses replied. . . 'I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them'."

(Numbers 11:29)

We believe that anyone who has faith in God and trusts in his promises has been given this through the power of the Holy Spirit. Whether it's us in our time, or God's people 2,400 years ago in the time of Moses, we are all sinners and no sinner has ever chosen on his own to live in faith.

While all believers have enjoyed this faith-giving work of the Holy Spirit, there is another way in which he is present in the lives of God's people. It's this that is different for us today than it was during the Old Testament. Some people then had the Spirit in the way we do, just not everyone. Moses was one of those who had received the Spirit of God in this special way.

The Holy Spirit was given to men who were called for special service. Through his presence especially in the prophets, priests, and kings, these office bearers were equipped for the work that God called them to do.

Moses found the work of leading all those thousands of Israelites, especially with their rebellious attitude, to be too much. Seventy of the elders of Israel were appointed to assist him. To equip these men with what they needed for this work, God took from the Spirit whom he had given to Moses and God gave him to the elders as well.

All the office bearers of God's people have been given this gift, even the greatest office bearer, Jesus Christ. When it was time for the Lord to begin his ministry, he was baptized by John and anointed by his Father with the Holy Spirit. In his humanity, he too needed to be strengthened for the work that he had been sent to do, including the work of going to the cross to bear the penalty of God against our sin. It was through the Holy Spirit's presence in his life that he was given this strength. In Matthew 12, when the Pharisees accused him of driving out demons by the power of Satan, the Lord said that his work was done by the power of the Spirit of God.

Through the faith that the Holy Spirit gives us, we are united with Christ so that we share in his saving work. However, as his people we share in his other work as well. Before he left the earth, he told his disciples that he was sending both them and the whole church into the world to continue what he had begun.

In Lord's Day 12 we confess that as Christians we share in his anointing, so that with him each one of us is also a prophet, priest, and king. This makes us different from God's people in the Old Testament. Today we are all office bearers, and each one of us has a part in the special work that only some did in the past.

Since we are all called to this service, we are also promised the Holy Spirit's special presence in our lives. Just as God took the Spirit who was on Moses and shared him with the seventy elders, so today he takes the Spirit of his Son and he shares him with all who believe in Christ. This was exactly what Moses hoped for. It was what God repeatedly promised his people through the prophets.

Pentecost was the beginning of the church's work to carry on what the Lord left for us to do. That work hasn't been finished yet, so we have a responsibility to continue being prophets who share the good news, priests who give praise to God, and kings who fight against sin.

We shouldn't be afraid of speaking about what we believe. We often feel quite inadequate, but remember the promise that has also been given to you. The Spirit equips us all with whatever we need, and he works through the testimony that we give. What we say has power because it's used by the Spirit to give people faith.

We can be joyful because in our special calling and task we are promised everything that we need through the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives. If we listen as he teaches and leads us through the Word of God, then we will be able to do all that the Lord calls us to do.





*Dr. Cornelis Van Dam is professor emeritus of Old Testament at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario
cvandam@canrc.org*

Pentecost: the Feast in the Light of the Old Testament (Part 1 of 3)

Pentecost was a huge event in God's dealing with his people. It was a turning point. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit inaugurated "the last days" (Acts 2:17), the final age before Christ's return. So what exactly was the Feast of Pentecost and how did the events in Acts 2 relate to that? What is the meaning of all of this for us today in appreciating the work of the Holy Spirit? In this and two subsequent articles, let's consider Pentecost: its meaning, fulfillment, and continuing relevance for us today.

Pentecost: the Old Testament feast

Although we tend to associate Pentecost with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost was of course first of all an Old Testament feast. So we need to go back to Old Testament times if we are to fully understand the fulfillment of this feast in the saving work of Christ. Indeed, the first part of Acts 2:1, which begins the account of the outpouring of the Spirit, can probably best be translated as follows: "When the Day of Pentecost was being fulfilled." The realization that this was an Old Testament feast deepens our understanding and appreciation for the fact that it was this festival that was chosen as the time for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The Feast of Pentecost did not exist in isolation on Israel's calendar of special days. It was closely linked to, and dated from, celebrations connected with the Passover. The Passover feast was celebrated at twilight in the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month (Lev 23:5). It was followed on the fifteenth day by the beginning of the closely related seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:6). On the next day, the sixteenth, the first fruits of the (barley) harvest had to be brought to the Lord (Lev 23:11, cf. vv. 6-7). Seven weeks and one day later, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) was celebrated, during which, among other things, offerings from the grain (wheat) harvest and two loaves of bread had to be brought to God (Exod 34:22; Lev 23:15-

17). (The fact that this festival was on the fiftieth day later gave rise to the name Pentecost, from the Greek word for "fiftieth.") Because the week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread with all its different ceremonies and requirements was dominated by the Passover, it was known as Passover week. It is within the light of the Passover that Pentecost needs to be understood.

Pentecost was a day of joy for the harvest that God had given his people. Not surprisingly, it was therefore also known as Harvest Feast (Exod 23:16; 34:22) and Day of First-fruits (Num 28:26). This day, however, was not the first time that first fruits were brought. The first fruits of the barley harvest had already been presented three days after Passover. Why did the Lord require the first fruits on Pentecost?

Pentecost was first of all an Old Testament feast

The Passover celebrations reminded Israel that God had passed over the blood-sprinkled Israelite homes and had killed the firstborn of Egypt. So God had worked their exodus from Egypt's bondage and led them out into freedom as his people (Exod 12). God's salvation is, however, a complete salvation. He not only delivered his people from Egypt, but he also brought them into the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey. God will provide! For this reason God already told Israel in the wilderness that when they would come to Canaan, and celebrate the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest would need to be brought to God three days after the Passover (Lev 23:10-11).

Fifty days later, near the end of the harvest season, more fruits of the field, including two loaves of bread, were to be given (Lev 23:16-17), for Israel had to realize and give recognition to the fact that God not only delivered his people from certain death in their bondage

in Egypt, but he also provided life nourishment in the land of promise. The first fruits of the harvest, and indeed the entire harvest, were the result of his salvation as commemorated at Passover. Thus also on the day of Pentecost Israel not only had to give first fruits, but also had to recall their bondage in Egypt (Deut 16:12) and so enjoy and celebrate the new life God had given them because of the Exodus. This new life also enabled them to live in holy service to God.

New Testament fulfillment

With this orientation to the Old Testament feast we can appreciate something of the tension and anticipation surrounding the first Pentecost after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. When Christ lay down his life on the cross, he did so as our Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7), fulfilling the Passover feast and setting his people free from the dominion of the evil one (cf. Col 2:14-15). Three days later he rose from the dead as the first fruit of the salvation he had accomplished for his people (cf. 1 Cor 15:20, 23). He thus fulfilled the offering of the first sheaf of grain on that day and showed that God's salvation not only delivers his people from bondage, but also gives the new life (cf. Rom 6:5-11). Now Pentecost had come. With a fulfilled Passover and the fulfillment of the offering of the first fruits three days after Passover, what would Pentecost bring? Was this feast not closely related and did it not speak eloquently of the provision of a full harvest and the new life of service that God gave his people on the basis of the salvation he had accomplished as seen in Passover?

With a fulfilled Passover and the fulfillment of the offering of the first fruits three days after Passover, what would Pentecost bring?

In Acts 2:1 we are told that "they were all together in one place." No one was missing. There was a sense of expectation (see Acts 1:4, 5). They were not disappointed. The risen Lord poured out his Spirit as he had promised (Acts 1:8). Having effected the deliverance of his people from the bondage of sin, he continued his work of salvation by giving them his life-giving Spirit. The people whom he had redeemed as his possession on Golgotha and for whose justification he had been raised from the grave (Rom 4:25) were now invigorated with the newness of life in Christ and made a new creation (cf. 2 Cor 5:17). What a change that meant! Filled with the Spirit of the risen Lord, they shared in

the first fruits of what life with God, on the basis of his accomplished salvation, was all about. In this way they were equipped to serve the God of their salvation.

One of the immediate consequences of the outpouring of the Spirit was that the Spirit of Christ gave them new power and boldness. After the death of the Passover Lamb, they had been frightened, disheartened, and had met behind closed doors. But now they received courage to speak openly of the mighty works of God (Acts 2:11). Peter, who a little over seven weeks ago had not dared to confess the Lord Jesus before a servant girl (Matt 26:69-72), now boldly proclaimed the Christ before the "men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem" (Acts 2:14).

God's people may have a foretaste of the full life with God in the Spirit of Jesus Christ

Peter's sermon is a clear proclamation of the crucified Christ who rose from the dead for the New Testament Pentecost can only be understood within the context of Christ's work of fulfilling the Passover as the Paschal Lamb. On the Day of Pentecost the Lord Jesus Christ who had brought about the deliverance of his people continued to provide for them. With his life-giving Spirit he made them a new creation (cf. Rom 8:9-11), equipped to serve him with the prophetic proclamation of his salvation for the great ingathering of the harvest in the last age. That fact speaks of the abiding significance of Pentecost. Christ, the Passover Lamb and risen Lord, continues his work (cf. Rev 5). The three thousand who believed on the Day of Pentecost were but a beginning. The results of Christ's once-for-all salvation work continue to be evident as he gives new life to his redeemed people and as he harvests to the glory of the Father. The final result will be a new creation, not just as seen in the people whom he recreates after his image, but a new recreated world for them to dwell in. For Pentecost, coming after a fulfilled Passover, means that God's people may have a foretaste of the full life with God in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. This is what gives life, a lustre of joy, and festivity for those who confess the Lamb of God. They can live in the expectation of the coming, complete fulfillment of Christ's salvation work.

The question is often raised: what is the difference between the work of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament Israel and the people of God today, the new Israel of God, the church (Gal 6:16)? Is there a difference? More about that next time.





Rev. Clarence Bouwman is minister of the Canadian Reformed Church at Smithville, Ontario

Finding the Deacons We Need

Our search for new office bearers extends not just to elders, but also to deacons. What is the congregation to look for as they consider whose name to recommend to the consistory, and eventually whom to vote for? And what is the consistory to look for when they nominate a brother for the office?

Scriptural qualifications

The Lord has given specific instructions to us in the Bible about the qualities he wishes to see in those called to the office of deacon. Unless a person meets these criteria, no consistory may nominate the brother for the office, and no congregation member may give him his vote. Paul was moved by the Spirit to record these criteria:

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus (1 Tim 3:8-13, ESV throughout article).

Nature of the work

When all is said and done, every brother of the congregation ought to fit these criteria (though in the brokenness of this life not all do). More needs to be said, then, in considering the question of who should be nominated for the office, and who of the nominated brothers should receive one's vote. As I did with the previous article on the elders, I wish to devote some

space to detailing the nature of the work of the deacon. As that work comes into clearer focus, we can also determine the better who is able to do the work.

Communion of saints

The congregation of Jesus Christ at Corinth is, says Paul, a body: "Now you are the body of Christ" and all the Corinthian believers are "individually members of it" (1 Cor 12:27). This reality has consequences, for a body by definition must work together. In order to impress upon the Corinthians how important each individual believer is for the proper functioning of the congregation as a whole, Paul compares the spiritual body of Christ to the physical human body. The human body is the sum total of all its members, and each member has its unique contribution to make to the well being of the whole body. He puts it like this:

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unrepresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our

more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (1 Cor 12:14-26).

The body of Christ functions no differently than the human body in that all the members individually make up one whole, and all the members need each other. That's why Paul concludes, "Now you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it" (v. 27).

*The deacon's task is the
ministry of mercy: letting people taste
the mercy of God*

This reality described here by the apostle was evident in the way the believers in Acts 2 interacted with each other. For the Christian converts "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. . . . And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:42-47). These people realized that as a group they were united into one body through their shared faith in Christ, and they expressed this unity in deeds that sought each other's benefit.

The same can be found in Acts 4:32, concerning the body of believers in Jerusalem: "Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common."

The same chapters add that great numbers of people came to faith. Acts 1:15 records 120 persons, while on the day of Pentecost about 3,000 souls were added (Acts 2:41). In Acts 4:4 one reads that the number of men alone totaled 5,000, to which "believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women" (5:14). Hence by the time one gets to Acts 6 one could

estimate that there may well have been a sizeable congregation of some 20,000 people.

Acts 6 tells us, though, that such church growth brought its own difficulties in relation to the effective functioning of the communion of saints. "Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution" (Acts 6:1). Possibly the Greek-speaking widows did not receive the food they needed. Or maybe they were not involved in the work of distributing food. Whatever the case might be, the fact is that the limitations of this broken life caused the body to malfunction. Something was not right in the church of Jesus Christ.

How were the apostles to address this problem? They recognized the importance of devoting themselves totally to the ministry of reconciliation, since God had ordained that the preaching of the gospel was the way by which people would come to faith. So the apostles came up with this solution:

And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word (Acts 6:2-4).

If the apostles had to involve themselves in the actual functioning of the communion of saints, they would have to do so at the cost of their real work. So they appointed and ordained seven men to the office of deacon. The seven men are not called "deacons" in so many words, but their task description ("serve tables") captures the work characterizing the deacon; he serves.

*Deacons help and encourage the
members of the congregation to
look after each other*

In fact, the Greek word "serve" is simply the verbal form of the noun deacon; these seven men had to *deacon the tables*. Hence the name "deacon."

Each church of Jesus Christ is a body, with each person a member. That body (like the human body)

needs to function corporately; each member needs to function for the benefit of the other members. In the abiding brokenness of this life, this may require organization. It is when spontaneity does not cover a need that the deacons must get involved. Their task is *the ministry of mercy*: letting people taste the mercy of God. To that end deacons *help and encourage the members of the congregation to look after each other*, to be the communion of saints the body of Christ must be.

Encourage

Of course, in order to know the needs and ensure that the appropriate support is given by the brotherhood, the deacons need to go into the congregation and visit the members. I realize: we commonly understand the collection and distribution of money as forming the heart of the deacon's task (for managing the collection bags is what we all see them do in church). But here we understand the matter wrongly. Distributing alms to the poor is only a small part of the ministry of mercy. A more important duty of the deacons is to make sure that the communion of saints functions well. Hence

deacons need to make visits to all members, and in their visiting are to determine (in this order!):

1. Whether the gifts God has given to the visited are properly used for the benefit of other members of the body, and
2. Whether there are any needs at the visited address that are not being met by the brotherhood.

Where gifts are not being utilized for the benefit of others, the deacons will need to encourage and instruct in greater obedience to following the example of Christ. Where an unfulfilled need is found, the deacons will need to encourage others of the body to be the hand and foot the needy member requires. Where the need is financial, they may be able to help through the gifts earlier collected in the offerings.

Who, then, can be a deacon? The deacon's main task is not first of all to give (financial) assistance or advice to the needy, but rather to ensure that the members are willingly assisting each other, and if not, stimulating them to do so. The brother gifted in encouraging the congregation to be the communion of saints God wishes it to be: let him be called to this beautiful task.



Early Canadian Church History (Part 2)

Dr. Wes Bredenhof is pastor of the
Providence Canadian Reformed
Church, Hamilton, Ontario
wbredenhof@bell.net

Dr. Leen Joosse is minister-emeritus
of the Reformed Church in
Groningen-West, The Netherlands

This series of articles is adapted from chapter 4 of Leendert Jan Joosse, *Geloof in de Nieuwe Wereld: Ontmoeting met Afrikanen en Indianen (1600-1700)* (Kampen: Kok, 2008)

The St. Lawrence Valley to 1629

Because of French royal and ecclesiastical policy, the Huguenots were also obliged to take Roman Catholic priests with them overseas. The Romanist clergy were mandated to provide pastoral care for the colonists. However, Pierre de Chauvin de Tonnetuit took along some Reformed pastors as well to support his plans and the Calvinist colonists. Samuel de Champlain accompanied de Chauvin de Tonnetuit as his secretary – de Champlain had likely been born into a Calvinist family, but by this time was a Roman Catholic. From his reports we learn of the presence of Huguenot pastors in New France, although he did not record their names.

Pierre de Chauvin de Tonnetuit was to clear lands and establish a “seigneurie” (county or district) along the same lines as what the French had in their own country. He and Pierre Du Gua de Monts were to provide for each colonist in terms of labour and the costs of living. These merchants were reluctant to engage in colonization, even to a modest extent. Instead, commerce was begun with the native peoples and the fur-trade began in the valley. Travelling along the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, the armed agents of de Monts won the confidence and respect of the aboriginal population. They played a major role in the fur trade in this region. From 1609 to 1615, they were extremely successful in expanding trade into the interior and helped to draw the Hurons into the existing alliance with the Montagnais and Algonquian.

Consequently, the Huguenot settlers in New France focused on commerce rather than agriculture. This led to their familiarity with the ancient trails used by the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. However, it was only later in this period that the Iroquois allowed

Frenchmen to travel deeper into the interior. Hurons gradually became the most important middlemen between the French and all other First Nations. The goods began flowing; copper kettles, alcohol, and weaponry were exchanged for fur that the French could use for luxury clothing items. The French regarded hunting and trapping as consistent with biblical principles, since human beings were supposed to wear clothes. They also saw the exchange of goods with native peoples as a way to transmit Christian culture, since the native people would see the value that the French put on clothing.

In the meantime, a political council was appointed to govern the St. Lawrence seigneurie, as well as the seigneurie of Acadia. As of 1612, they would be ruled as one region. Henry of Bourbon, the prince of Condé, was appointed as governor. He was charged to supervise New France on behalf of the French king, together with the Political Council in New France. They would carry this out alongside the trade company and its board. Samuel de Champlain became the lieutenant-governor. In 1618 a leader from among the First Nations was also granted a seat on the Council. He received a French hat – a peculiar gesture from our perspective, but an important mark of equality in that context. The Dutch Reformed pastors in the New York area were known to wear hats with a silver band to give credibility to their authority. In north-eastern Brazil around the same time, the Dutch colonists would also give hats to indigenous leaders such as Nhandui, a powerful Tapuya chief. This allowed him to be perceived as being on the same level as the Dutch colonial leaders. Similarly, the native leader in Quebec would take his seat in the Council by making a flamboyant French gesture with his hat. Then he would be seated next to the other council members as a peer among equals.

Now all of that tells us something about the economic and social situation. But did the Huguenots also introduce their Christian beliefs?

From the outset, the Huguenots had several strategies. First, colonists began to meet every Sunday.

They organized open air worship services aboard ships and in the houses they built. They did not endeavour to build churches because they were satisfied simply to have some place to gather. Besides, the French government did not allow public meetings other than those conducted by the Roman Catholic priests. Therefore, the Huguenots were prevented from building something. They avoided conflict with the government in New France.

Nevertheless, they would have their gatherings for worship. They would sing psalms – Psalm 68 and Psalm 79 were favourites. There was preaching as well, but it was really the singing that stands out in the historical record. Their gatherings became known as “chanteries.” From the complaints of the Jesuits in this region we learn that the Genevan melodies of Clement Marot were sung loudly.

The emphasis fell on transforming native people by setting an example of Christian behaviour

Furthermore, agents were sent with Huron interpreters to penetrate deeper into the interior. Many young soldiers went into the woods and visited hidden villages. They became familiar with native customs and won friendships with the Montagnais and Algonquians. Gradually they even took over some of their lifestyle and culture. Since these endeavours were oriented to the fur trade, the emphasis fell on transforming native people by setting an example of Christian behaviour.

Also, some young native people were sent to Paris to receive an education. The French hoped that these native people would be overwhelmed with their immersion into French culture. They envisioned that they would adopt the Christian culture and be willing to spread the message of change through Christianity. However, this was an unrealized ideal since it met with fierce opposition from the French crown and government. They required the promotion and expansion of the Roman Catholic Church overseas, including in the St. Lawrence Valley. Additionally, the French regime promoted the development of agriculture instead of trade.

While the Protestants were making efforts to develop the fur trade, Samuel de Champlain was

making plans to bring more Roman Catholics overseas. He urged the French king to send plenty of Roman Catholic Frenchmen from the streets and all kinds of orphanages. De Champlain wanted to spread the Roman Church through immigration, but his plans did not meet with any success until 1632. In that year, de Champlain was appointed governor of New France and his plans began to fall into place. In his mind colonists were to work the land and he also urged the Six Nations to become farmers. Hence, repeatedly he overtured the French government to publicize the availability of free farmland. He also encouraged the exploration and development of more farmland in the St. Lawrence Valley. The Jesuits endorsed his plans, but the trade company did everything to resist.

Meanwhile, Pierre Du Gua de Monts died and Guillaume de Caen replaced him. He was a Huguenot as well. De Caen charged the trade company to follow the articles of the Edict of Nantes – that meant that there was to be a certain degree of toleration for the Reformed religion. That is why “chanteries” continued along the St. Lawrence River at places such as Cap Tourmente (just downriver from present-day Quebec City).

Nevertheless, church buildings were not erected by the Huguenots. Moderate church politics prevailed. Because the Reformed people obeyed the Roman Catholic government, one does not find anywhere a Huguenot church building from the seventeenth century in the St. Lawrence Valley. Yet, the Reformed believers did seriously worship our Lord God.

De Champlain was powerful and had some say in all sorts of developments. Still, the trade company was able to push its trade and mild ecclesiastical politics forward until 1629. Many people, especially aboriginals, detested de Champlain’s Roman Catholic politics, and his policies of migration and agriculture. As a consequence, the trade company worked together with First Nations to help English merchants and the English crown get a toehold in this area in 1629. For a brief period, the French Roman Catholic authorities were driven out and the English took possession of the St. Lawrence Valley, including Quebec City. Quebec had been established as the capital of New France through the efforts of the Jesuits. Meanwhile, elsewhere the Scottish took Acadia and established the colony of Nova Scotia. We’ll look at that history in our next instalment.





Rev. George van Popta
is minister of the Jubilee
Canadian Reformed Church
at Ottawa, Ontario
gvanpopta@gmail.com

Canticle

O Come Now, Holy Spirit

1. O come now, Ho - ly Spir - it, send forth Your heav'n - ly light,
2. You are the great Con - sol - er, sweet Guest of hurt - ing souls,
3. O bless - ed Light from heav - en, our dark - ened hearts now fill
4. Wash all that is cor - rupt - ed, drench eve - ry - thing scorched dry,
5. You are the sev'n - fold Spir - it on whom we do re - ly

re - splen - dent, with - out lim - it, in all its ra - diance, bright.
the gra - cious In - ter - cess - or, whose com - fort we ex - tol.
with eve - ry grace that's giv - en to make us do God's will.
heal all those who are wound - ed, with grace do them sup - ply.
to bless us with the mer - it of Christ our Lord on high.

Come, Help - er of the need - y who gives to us His gifts.
Give rest when we are tired, re - strain us when we stray,
With - out Your in - ter - ven - tion in us there is no health
Bend that which is un - bend - ing, warm all that has grown cold,
Give com - fort to Your peo - ple, and save us at the end.

Fill us with shin - ing glo - ry as You our hearts up - lift.
con - dole us when we're mired in this life's tear - ful way.
for vile is the in - ten - tion of eve - ry - one on earth.
cor - rect all who are err - ing, do not Your love with - hold.
Grant us the joy e - ter - nal when we to heaven as - cend.



Rev. Peter H. Holtvlüwer is minister of the Spring Creek Canadian Reformed Church at Tintern, Ontario
holtvlüwer@bell.net

It's ARPA Time!

In late March, 2012 I had the opportunity to join a number of ARPA members in Ottawa to participate not only in a national conference but also in meeting with various Members of Parliament and Senators. What a pleasure and a blessing to be part of that! The Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA – see their website: www.arpacanada.ca) is growing in resources, energy, and determination to bring issues of concern to the attention of our governing officials and I would urge all older teens and adult members of Reformed churches to consider getting involved in one way or another.

ARPA's work

ARPA is non-partisan, which means it doesn't support or denounce any one political party. Rather, it strives to influence decision-makers of all party-stripes and at all levels of government to consider policies which agree with the norms of God's Word and which in turn will be beneficial for the country (God's law



ARPA Canada board member James Teitsma speaks to delegates at second-ever national conference

is always beneficial for those who follow it). Local or national, ARPA operates on the confessional basis of the Three Forms of Unity. ARPA would be an excellent opportunity in particular for our young people and single people to give of their time and talents to fight the good fight also in the realm of government. We need more voices and more man-power to rally people to the cause of standing up for what is truly right (i.e. in God's eyes) in our country.

Forty-five people from the local ARPA chapters across Canada came to Ottawa and, in teams of two or three, met with MPs and Senators to discuss two main points: the abuse of the human rights commissions, particularly against Christians, and the total lack of any law regarding abortion (did you know we have no law at all!?!). Other issues such as the need for a new law regarding prostitution or even matters relating to Canada's aboriginal peoples were discussed as well. Meetings could be had with some fifty to sixty leaders and most reported a productive session. On the evening of the same day, around a dozen MPs and some of their key staff members came to hear Dr. Cornelis Van Dam speak on multi-culturalism from a biblical perspective. These were all excellent opportunities to influence the thinking of our leaders for good – and they were well-received.

National conference

On the following day, the ARPA representatives met in the second national ARPA conference. Led by the very capable full-time team of Mark Penninga, André Schutten, and Ilse VanderMeulen (part-time), eight goals were laid out for pursuit over the next two years. ARPA is well-organized and tightly focused on its mission to be a salt and light in the sphere of government. The team is also keenly aware of current technologies and strategies for making effective use of them as the seminar on media training made clear. The excellent and highly active ARPA Canada website shows that the team is adept at using the latest forms of social media.

*Niagara ARPA and
Neerlandia ARPA
representatives meeting
with an MP*



During the conference, the various local chapters received opportunity to meet according to their home province in order to begin planning their own provincial conference. Issues such as anti-bullying legislation, the rights of parents to educate their children according to their own religious convictions, and the legalization of prostitution were set out as key topics for future provincial forums.

We need a law

ARPA Canada also unveiled an exciting new campaign headed-up by Mike Schouten of Cloverdale, BC. Beginning May 1, 2012, the "We Need a Law" drive will get underway with the goal of moving Canada to formulate laws to protect the unborn. MPs have made it clear that they are looking for grassroots help in this way. Stay tuned for exciting developments!

ARPA and you!

What ARPA Canada does on the national level is also underway on the local and provincial levels, and it's only for lack of people that more isn't being done. So how about it, young people? Twenty somethings? Or thirty somethings and single? Or retired? What about families taking time to write letters with the

older children even penning them too (what a great educational opportunity!). Or anyone who has some time to give? If everyone gives a little time and energy, by God's grace much can be done to affect change and the load need not be too heavy.

With a dedicated National Board and full-time employees, ARPA Canada does a good job informing local chapters of issues and guiding how best to respond or react. You don't have to be an expert to get started, just an interested, sincere Christian who wants to help raise the voice of Christian conscience within Canada. Contact your local chapter or start one up if needs be (help is available from the Board). May the Lord bless ARPA and all those who labour to make policies which honour him. Let's all get plugged-in and stand up for Christ in Canada today!



ARPA reps from 16 of the 19 chapters who made the trek to Ottawa



Mr. Derek Stoffels is principal of the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School in Smithers, British Columbia
principal@ebenezerschool.com

Personalized Learning

In the world of education there is a movement that has been coming to life over the last few years. The label that is emerging for this movement is Personalized Learning. A Google search of that term will bring up a number of hits that show Ministries of Education are spending time and money on this. British Columbia, Alberta, and New Brunswick are three provinces pursuing this idea. This movement blends a number of popular educational pushes from the last decade such as assessment for learning, twenty-first century learning (technology in education), and differentiation into an appealing sounding package. In plain language, personalized learning is the idea that each student should have lots of choice about what they learn, how they learn it, and where they learn it. At this point details are scarce in BC.

Certain aspects of personalized learning are very exciting, and it is great that people are thinking about education and how to improve it. When you watch videos put together by proponents of personalized education you can't help but get excited at the vision of happy students eagerly pursuing their dreams. However, thanks to my native skepticism, which I like to think can be called Christian discernment, I do have questions. As you read those questions below please do not forget that I do think overall it is a worthwhile initiative to examine critically and adopt the good things from. I think personalized learning can provide wonderful opportunities to improve schooling and equally important, to redefine what really matters in schooling, and therefore should be focused on.

A prominent name associated with personalized learning is Sir Ken Robinson. His 2006 and 2010 (the better one) speeches to the TED Conference (www.ted.com) are widely available on the Internet and the basic thrust of them is that schools need to help kids find out what they most like doing and then let them and help them do it. Creativity is highly prized by Sir Ken Robinson, and in his opinion schools are educating it out of children. Schools do not need reform, he says, but

instead a complete redesign or revolution.

Sir Ken Robinson is only part of personalized learning idea discussion. There are many other people pushing personalized learning. Heidi Hayes Jacob claims in articles, speeches, and interviews, as well as a book she edited (*Curriculum 21: Essential education for a changing world*), that technology has and is changing the world students are growing up in and doing so in ways that mean a whole new way of learning and knowing. This is a paradigmatic or revolutionary shift not just another slight adjustment along the way, she says. There may be some truth to this claim and time will tell. Hayes Jacob is fond of saying that the No 2 HB pencil is public enemy number 1. By this she means that schools letting students use pencils and pens are, in her words, preparing students for 1991, preparing them to be outdated and therefore irrelevant. She wants schools to embrace and incorporate technology letting it shape every aspect of teaching so that students are prepared for the twenty-first century rather than for 1991. There is a contradiction in this which I will discuss shortly.

There is much that is positive in personalized learning. I am in favour of education that is relevant, that is personalized to an individual's God-given gifts, and that involves the parents in planning their children's learning. Active learning versus passive learning is also a good thing to aim for, as is performance based assessment that is done by self, peers, and others. Going further, progress in age-based cohorts (grades) does not really seem to be the most learner-sensitive organizational method for a school. So I do think there may be rich opportunities in personalized learning particularly if the result is significantly increased freedom for schools. That increased freedom seems unlikely, though.

On the other hand I cannot help but see problems with significant portions of the plan. Reality tells us that there are plenty of people who are most passionate about doing as little as possible. What will happen with

those students in a personalized world? Personalized learning is dangerously self-centred, and it narrows education down, producing people passionate about “their thing” but not exposed to or really aware of the rest of the picture. It is like the person who knows the sports section of the news inside and out but doesn’t read the rest of the news and as a result has little to no awareness of other news. The Internet as it currently is only accentuates that tendency as recently talked about by Eli Pariser at another TED conference (well worth watching his speech). Narrow-casting, figuring out what people are interested in and feeding it to them, has grown to dominate the search engines and internet traffic and create what Pariser calls “filter bubbles.” This is unlike broadcasting which ends up sending people information they may not be interested in.

Closely related to this narrowing tendency technology thus far is creating a new definition of community that appears to be very shallow in many ways. Fleeting contacts with hundreds of “friends” on Facebook. Endless tweets sent to faceless people. Can true community be built in this way? On the other hand the Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement show a kind of community that draws energy and support from among other faceless tweeters and Facebook “friends.” In the end, though, personal physical action, not tweets and friending, are required to make a difference. How will community change as a result of technology? The new community is not the same as sitting on a porch quietly enjoying the evening with neighbours and friends. But does that mean good cannot come from this new community?

Personalized learning is also contradictory in its claims about technology, claiming on the one hand that we cannot come close to predicting where technology will be in five years while in the same breath saying schools need to prepare kids for the world beyond those five years and even the twenty-first century! Technology and the immediate is exalted, yesterday is so old it is worthless. The morning paper is yesterday’s news so why read it, just go online and catch what is meaningful, the “breaking news,” a true twenty-first century advocate would say.

If all this is true and if what is technologically current will not be there five years from now then I wonder why bother teaching it never mind exalting it to a preeminent place in education? How can you even teach the immediate effectively? It requires the past to make sense.

In reality I think technology is in many ways just a new way of “dressing.” In one speech from Heidi Hayes

Jacob she says that the oral report marks a low point in civilization. A podcast is the way to go, she says excitedly. To me that is hardly paradigmatic change or a revolution in education. To me a podcast is simply an oral report delivered electronically. In “techno-worshippers” eyes value seems to derive from newness and from the number of users/consumers that desire the technology or app. If blogs are popular then have students blog instead of writing papers she says. But what is fundamentally different about blogging versus writing a paper? Only the manner of delivery, I think. I wonder though why teach blogging or podcasting if their replacement is only a few years away?

There is also a contradictory desire in government with regards to personalized learning and measuring results. The government says on the one hand that it wants students to pursue what they want in ways that they want to. However, there is also this tremendous push to collect all sorts of data on students to measure results, to know that it is working, to show the world that students in our jurisdiction are cutting edge learners, to create accountability, or at least the illusion of it. However can you really build a province wide data collection system while at the same time promoting a broad diversity in student programs? To allow meaningful conclusions to be drawn a data collection system requires centralizing and standardizing of student output. Personalized learning and results based data collection seem to be mutually exclusive goals.

To learn more about personalized learning and what one province’s Ministry of Education’s vision of it is you can go to www.personalizedlearningbc.ca and read the short booklet. This website is a neat example of how technology can be used to combine communication methods. If you appreciate technology at all the website is worth visiting for that aspect alone. Take some time, read about it (read p. 2-3 carefully to get the essential idea), think about it, apply biblical principles to it as you think about it and talk to each other how it might be good for our own school. The newest website www.bcedplan.ca/ provides opportunity to offer feedback there as well. The quest to improve school is never-ending just as the process of sanctification is at least until our Lord Jesus Christ returns.

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 Arthur Kingma abkingma@kwic.com.



Press Release for the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches [Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary] for a meeting held on March 1, 2012

The Board of Governors met at the Seminary Facilities in Hamilton, Ontario on March 1, 2012. Present at the meeting were Archie J. Bax, Hank Kampen (Treasurer), Rev. Richard Aasman (Chairman), Barry Hordyk, Dr. Andrew J. Pol (Secretary), Rev. Willem B. Slomp, Rev. Eric Kampen, Rev. John VanWoudenberg, Rev. John Ludwig, and Karl J. Veldkamp (Vice-Chairman/Corresponding Clerk). Regrets: Lammert Jagt. The Principal, Dr. G.H. Visscher was also present. The meeting was opened by Rev. R. Aasman with the reading of Mark 8:22-38 and prayer.

Memorabilia

In our memorabilia we remembered the recent birth of Joelle Adina Van Vliet, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Van Vliet. The mother of Rev. Slomp was also remembered, as she was recently diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Minutes, Agenda & Officers of the Board

The minutes of the Board meeting held on September 8, 2011, with amendments and clarifications, were adopted. The agenda for the meeting was settled.

Correspondence of Note

- a. Press Release for September 8, 2011 Board meeting
- b. A letter of appreciation sent to the council of the Ancaster Canadian Reformed Church for the assistance provided by Rev. J. Ludwig in leading a course on Church Polity.
- c. A letter sent to the Deputies for Training for the Ministry (appointed by Synod 2009 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia) regarding their inquiries and desire for comprehensive consideration of some form of distance education for the freshmen year.
- d. A letter received from the Review Committee in connection with the Superannuation Fund. This was responded to by the Finance and Property Committee.
- e. An invitation to the Synod of the United Reformed Churches to be held in New York State in July, 2012 was considered. Representatives of the Seminary were delegated to attend.
- f. Letter of appreciation received from Dr. C. Van Dam relating to the open house organized in connection with his fortieth anniversary in the ministry of the gospel.

- g. Request of Dr. A.J. de Visser relating to approval for a sabbatical for him, tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2013. This is approved in principle, subject to the submission of a comprehensive proposal and confirming the availability of a suitable replacement.

Receipt of Reports – Material Agenda Items

- a. **Exit Surveys** – The process for soliciting exit surveys from previous students at the Seminary, the confidentiality safeguards included and the proper process by which the responses were vetted, with the involvement of the Senate was considered. It was acknowledged that the limited sampling size and relatively small community presented challenges in achieving the full intent of the surveys.
- b. **Visits to the Lectures** – The Revs. E. Kampen and J. Van Woudenberg provided their report on the visits to the lectures completed in the fall of 2011. The reports were very positive and presented and received with gratitude.
- c. **Principalship** – The Board affirmed the existing policy of a rotating principalship, whilst concurrently affirming that current circumstances and recent appointments of professors did not allow for regular rotations. It was acknowledged that extensions of current terms may be necessary from time to time. This will be revisited at the Board meeting scheduled for September, 2012, d.v.
- d. **Finance & Property Committee Matters** – Note was taken that the Board should be vigilant in ensuring that compliance documents are signed by all requisite members of the Board, Staff, Faculty, and Senate. It was reported that a review was being conducted to ensure that there were systems in place whereby minutes of the Board and/or Finance and Property – as may be appropriate, are distributed to the Australian Deputies.
- e. **January 2013 Conference** – 450th anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism – The status report on this conference was received [scheduled for January 18-19, 2013, d.v.]. Initial indications suggest a substantive conference of lasting value. At the same time that the conference planning continues, it was confirmed that a website, www.Heidelberg-catechism.com, will be developed and managed by the Seminary.
- f. **Second Annual Theological Conference held at the CRTS on Jan. 13-14, 2012 regarding Reformed Evangelism and Church Planting.** This conference was reportedly very well received and attended. The preaching seminar held as a follow on to

the conference was seen as beneficial to all participants, particularly the students.

g. Reports on the following conferences, where Professors either presented or attended (or both) were received:

1. Bavinck Conference 2011 – Dr. J. VanVliet.
2. British Columbia Speaking Tour, Oct. 22-29, 2011, by Dr. J. Smith.
3. ETS (“Evangelical Theological Society”) Conference, Nov. 16-18, 2011 – Dr. A.J. de Visser and Dr. G. H. Visscher.
4. Society of Biblical Literature, Nov. 19-21, 2011 – Dr. J. Smith.
5. Fellowship of Evangelical Seminary Presidents, Jan. 4-7, 2012. Dr. G.H. Visscher. These meetings were observed as being very helpful to the accreditation process and the continuing presence of the Seminary within ATS.

h. Governance Matters – It was confirmed that the proposal for amendments to incorporate the concept of adjuncts was reviewed by K. Veldkamp and submitted to the Governance committee for their consideration. This will be finalized at the board meeting scheduled for September, 2012. Updates to the College Handbook were received and approved. The governance committee was mandated to develop an orientation policy for new board members, Faculty and staff.

i. Pastoral Training Program – The annual report of Dr. A.J. de Visser was received with thankfulness. The report by the coordinator demonstrated that this program continues to function well for the benefit of the churches and the students.

j. Accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools (Pittsburgh, PA) – Interim reports from the four working sub committees were received

and where necessary guidance and advice was provided.

k. Search Committee – Fifth Professor – This committee provided an update as to their activities and current action, in the full understanding that any recommendation is fully conditional on the synod of the churches to be convened in 2013 approving the appointment of a fifth professor. With the withdrawal of Rev. E. Kampen from this sub committee, Rev. R. Aasman was appointed as his replacement.

l. Board Appointments by Regional Synods – It was observed that the matter of ministerial appointments to the Board of Governors by regional synods was not regularly added as a specific agenda item for regional synods in a timely manner. It was further observed that this is a matter for the convening churches and should be included in the regulations for regional synods. It was left to the individual board members to consider having this matter addressed at their local consistory level so as to bring the matter to the attention of a classis and ultimately to a regional synod.

Next meeting of the Board was tentatively scheduled for September 6, 2012, 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.

*On behalf of the Board of Governors of the
Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches ,
Karl J. Veldkamp, Vice Chairman/
Corresponding Clerk*



Celebrating Sixty Years

Christian Credit Union Serves our Reformed Christian Community

Edmonton, AB – On March 16, 2012 an Annual General Meeting and Banquet was held at the Enjoy Centre in St. Albert, AB to commemorate sixty years of serving our Reformed Christian community. 300 members and invited guests attended the event which included great food and musical performances. Several staff and board members were honoured for their many years of dedicated service. A presentation was made by John Veldkamp, CEO highlighting the financial results and community involvement of the Credit Union in 2011.

Christian Credit Union was incorporated on April 24, 1952 by a group of fifteen people who shared a vision of creating a financial cooperative that would serve the immediate needs of Dutch immigrants. In the last sixty years, the Credit Union has grown to over 5,500 members and 175 million dollars in assets. We currently serve members across Alberta with branches in Edmonton and Lethbridge. Our vision is to promote biblical stewardship of financial resources in our Reformed Christian community across Canada.

We are a full service financial services provider for individuals, businesses, farms, and non-profit

organizations in our Reformed Christian community. We also provide preferred rates and specialized services to churches, schools, and other charities so these organizations can focus their resources on sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"It is a privilege to lead a service organization dedicated to pooling the financial resources of our members so that we can give back to our community. Since 1990, we have given back approximately seven million dollars in benefits to churches, schools, and other charities and we are working hard at growing our business so we can give back even more in the future!"

– John Veldkamp, CEO

Thank you to the many people that have helped make Christian Credit Union a success over the last sixty years. We pray that God will continue to bless our efforts.

To learn more about Christian Credit Union, please visit www.christiancu.ca.

For more information, please contact:
Phil Geusebroek, Marketing Manager
Christian Credit Union
Phone: 1-877-426-0506
pgeusebroek@alberta-cu.com

