

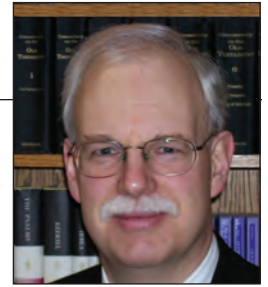


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE
Volume 62, No. 23 • November 15, 2013

Theological College
OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

THIRTY-NINTH CONVOCATION OF THE
CANADIAN REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



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

Seminary: A Spiritual Greenhouse

*The root idea in the word Seminary is that of
being a seedbed, a nursery*

In your hands you are holding the annual Seminary issue of *Clarion*. By printing the speeches and presentations delivered at the convocation held in September, those who were not able to attend are able to get a taste of what took place. Those who did attend will benefit from being able to read once more the things that were said.

So that this issue may truly be a Seminary issue, this editorial will also focus on the Seminary by reflecting on how the Seminary can be described as a spiritual greenhouse. This will bring out both what is taking place in the Seminary, as well as its relationship to the churches.

Word study

Before working through this image to bring out what is taking place in the Seminary, it is helpful to do what Seminary students do, namely, a short word study. This will make it clear that describing the Seminary as a spiritual greenhouse is not simply a convenient image, but it is based on the very meaning of the Latin word from which it originates. That word is *seminarium*. A *seminarium* was a place where people grew *semin*, that is, seed. This means that the root idea in the word Seminary is that of being a seedbed, a nursery, or, as was said previously, a greenhouse. It appears that at some point in the Middle Ages, this term came into use to describe the places where men were trained for ministry in the church. When we see the original meaning of the word, we can understand why the Seminary can be called a spiritual greenhouse.

What takes place in the Seminary

Once we see the Seminary as a spiritual greenhouse, we can use our understanding of what happens in a greenhouse to understanding what takes place in the years students spend in studying there. Three main points come to mind.

In the first place, it brings out that the Seminary is a very sheltered and protected environment. It is true that the brothers who study at the Seminary are members in local congregations and have to go about the business of daily living. This does not take away that in Seminary, there is a degree of isolation. Students are not fully engaged in the affairs of life. They are just like little seedlings in a greenhouse which are sheltered from the elements, living in a carefully controlled climate. This, of course, is done in order to give the seedlings the best possible start. A little seedling put out in the open too soon is vulnerable to being stunted in its growth.

Of course the students coming to the Seminary are not totally like little seedlings in a greenhouse. They will have many years of growing up in the Christian faith behind them. While in one way they may be strong in the faith, motivated by love for the Lord and his church to dedicate their energies to studying, they themselves will realize that they are mere seedlings.

In the second place, seeing the seminary as a spiritual greenhouse brings out how it is a very rich environment. Everything is designed to encourage maximum growth in grace and knowledge for the work of ministry. Students will be fed an extremely rich theological diet as they are immersed in God's Word. The menu includes Bibliology, Dogmatology, Ecclesiology, and Diaconiology. In ordinary terms, that means they continue their study of Hebrew and Greek. They are fed rich diets of Old and New Testament studies. They become exposed to the rich doctrinal heritage of the church. They will also be given a solid overview of the history of the church. Further, they are instructed on how to work with all this information in order to be able to feed the congregation with sound preaching and teaching. They are shown the way of pastoring a congregation.

In the third place, seeing the Seminary as a spiritual greenhouse brings out that it is specialized in its task. The owner of the greenhouse will be growing plants for a specific market. One specializes in flowers, while another in growing vegetables. Applying this to the Seminary, it means that it is also very specialized. It has been set up by its "owners," namely, the churches, for a very specific purpose. That purpose is training men for ministry. This is not just a generic training for ministry but ministry in the midst of the churches. The churches have a vested interest as they want to ensure a steady supply of ministers. So, it is the case of "by the churches, for the churches." By setting up the Seminary, by appointing greenhouse

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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

ADDRESS FOR COPY MANAGER



Clarion
8 Inverness Crescent, St. Albert AB T8N 5J5
E-Mail: veenendaal@telus.net

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.clarionmagazine.ca

2013 SUBSCRIPTION RATES

			Regular Mail	Air Mail
Canada			\$49.00*	\$ 82.00*
U.S.A. U.S. Funds			\$69.00	\$ 92.00
International			\$98.00	\$149.00

*Applicable GST, HST, PRT taxes are extra.
GST/HST no. 890967359RT

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.

2013 ADVERTISING RATES


Advertisements: \$19.00 per column inch
Full Colour Display Advertisements: \$21.00 per column inch. We reserve the right to refuse ads.

PUBLISHER

Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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.

We acknowledge the financial support of the  Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Agreement No. 40063293; ISSN 0383-0438

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

Every year it is our pleasure to bring our readers an issue devoted to covering the Convocation Evening of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS) that is held in September. Issue 23 is that issue. Here you will find reports from the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Rev. Richard Aasman, the Principal, Dr. Gerhard H. Visscher, as well as from Women's Savings Action. In addition, our editorial by Rev. Eric Kampen focuses on what takes place at the Seminary and how that affects our federation.

At Convocation, the keynote speech was given by Dr. Gerhard H. Visscher, and was entitled, "Beginning Well in the Ministry." How can men start out in their ministry most effectively . . . and how can we as congregations be the most supportive of that?

Issue 23 also contains our regular Treasures New and Old column. This meditation beautifully compliments our theme this issue, focusing on the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season."

Laura Veenendaal

- 546 EDITORIAL**
Seminary: A Spiritual Greenhouse
- 549 TREASURES, NEW & OLD**
Always Got Time
- 550 Report of the Forty-Fourth Anniversary Meeting**
and Thirty-Ninth Convocation of the
Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary
- 552 Principal's Report**
- 555 Beginning Well in the Ministry**
- 560 Children of Light and Word and Deed Ministries**
- 561 Presentation of the Women's Savings Action**

workers, called professors, who themselves have grown up in the churches, effort is made to have a safe and fertile setting to nurture and cultivate.

What takes place after Seminary

Plants are not meant to stay in the greenhouse permanently. Rather, they are grown to the point where they can be planted out in the field. This is true also for the Seminary. The day comes when the students leave to be put out into the field. This is one of the ways Paul described the Corinthian church, as we read in 1 Corinthians 3:9, “. . . you are God’s field.” Men spend time in the spiritual greenhouse not simply so that they can go back in the field and grow among the other plants, but that they can take a leading role in looking after all the plants in God’s field. Of course there are other workers, namely, the elders and deacons. There is a special task, however, for those called to be ministers of the Word. That is why they spend four years in the protected and rich environment of the Seminary.

It is at this point that the greenhouse image again is very relevant. Anyone who has bought vegetable plants or flowers in spring knows that you should not just take the plants home and stick them in the garden immediately. In gardening talk, plants need to be hardened off. This means that for a week or so you gradually get the plants used to the unprotected outdoor environment. You don’t put them in full sun for the whole day. At night, especially if the nights are still quite cool, you are wise to put the plants inside. If not, you may lose your plants and you will have to buy them all over again.

This is also true for those who leave Seminary. This vulnerability has been recognized over the years and the churches have tried to address it by setting up a Pastoral Training Program. Students are exposed to the various aspects of ministry by doing some Catechism teaching and spending a summer under the mentorship of a minister. This is like the hardening process. After the experience, the students can again enjoy the protection and nourishment in the spiritual greenhouse. The day comes, however, when the student has to say goodbye to the safety of the spiritual greenhouse. They entered in the hope that one day they would be called to take up a place in one of God’s fields.

Like any seedling planted out in the field is planted with great potential, so it is with the students who leave Seminary. At the same time, it is very important for the plants of field in which they have been placed to minister to realize they have received a new seedling from the spiritual greenhouse. He has been hardened somewhat, but he is still very tender. It can be expected that there are going to be some transplanting pains. Just like a new seedling, it also means that it won’t take much to squash him. This might happen, for example, if all sorts of demands are put on a new minister too quickly so that he does not have the opportunity to develop the very thing he was nurtured to do, namely, preaching and teaching. It might happen when there are unrealistic expectations, such as when a new seedling is compared to a well-established plant in his preaching. It is true, of course, that a minister is to work among the plants in God’s field, but it has to be realized that he too is a plant that needs to be ministered to by the other plants in the field so he can grow into his task more and more. He is therefore going to need good elders and good members. It is one thing to “break in” a new minister, but care must be taken not to forget the little word “in.” With care, one will be properly broken into his task. A little carelessness and it may break a new minister.

This year’s crop

This past September, another crop of seedlings left the spiritual greenhouse in Hamilton. They are in the process of finding their place in one of God’s fields. May our heavenly Father grant his blessing so that they may develop their potential. Also, may our heavenly Father continue to stir up the hearts of brothers so that they will find the way from the field to the greenhouse, so that by God’s grace they may one day return to serve in one of God’s fields. Further, may our heavenly Father bless the congregations calling and receiving a new minister, so that they care for them and provide an environment where they can flourish and grow. And finally, may our heavenly Father bless the professors, as they labour in the spiritual greenhouse to provide workers for God’s fields. As the Lord Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Luke 10:2). C

CORRECTION

On the top of page 496 (Clarion Vol. 62, No. 21) our magazine mistakenly turned a sentence in to a major heading. “Homeschoolers will also be affected” was not meant as a heading, but one more comment noting the effects that legal issues will have on Christian education in Canada. This point was originally made by Bruce Clemenger, President of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) in an August 2013 letter to supporters of EFC.



Rev. Reuben Bredenhof
is minister of the
Canadian Reformed Church
at London, Ontario
reuben.bredenhof@canrc.org

Always Got Time

“Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season.”

(2 Timothy 4:2)

Some fast-food restaurants make it a point of pride that they’re always open: “Eat great – even late.” It’s kind of like that in the ministry. To be a preacher means being available, and prepared to dish out spiritual food in heaping portions. Paul says to Timothy, “Be prepared in season and out of season.”

Paul uses a word that calls up a distinct image, that of a soldier who’s always ready for going into battle. You never know when you’ll have to fend off an attack, or launch an offensive of your own. So you keep your armour on. The same preparedness is vital for a preacher. As he carries out his work, he can’t be lazy, or distracted by whatever’s on YouTube. There’s too much at stake. God’s people need this gospel. So he must be vigilant, preaching “in season and out of season.”

Is there really a “season” for preaching, like there is for duck-hunting? No, preaching is for all times. That’s what the prophets often said: if God has spoken, it must be prophesied. And God *has* spoken, not just the gospel of our redemption in Christ, but wisdom about so many issues of life. There are always opportunities to speak the Word usefully.

What are these “seasons” that Paul refers to? One translation puts our text: “Be ready to preach the Word, whether it’s convenient or not.” The fact is, there can be golden opportunities to preach: like at funerals when we crave a word of hope, or

after natural disasters when we want some perspective. On so many regular Sundays too, we come to church expecting the Word, and we’re glad to hear a message from the Lord.

But there can be times that are “out of season” too, when God’s Word isn’t so welcome. For the Word runs up against the ideas of our culture, where evil is called good. Other times the Word might challenge our beloved traditions and our ways of doing things. And sometimes we don’t want to hear what the Word says about our sin – it’s too direct and makes us uncomfortable.

Here the preacher’s concern for his own reputation can be an issue. No one likes to hurt another’s feelings! And he’s preaching to the very people who provide his paycheque. . . . But none of this may sway him from proclaiming the truth of God’s Word. “Keep preaching,” says Paul.

Timothy surely had times when he wanted to be quiet, or to modify his message. As Paul says in the next verse, “The time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear” (v. 3). It’s often the case that people – even in the church – want to be tickled with novelty or triviality, instead of being fed with the life-giving truths of the gospel. “But keep preaching,” says Paul.

Besides that is hardship. Paul mentions in 4:15 how Alexander the coppersmith “strongly opposed our message.” And there was Paul as he writes this letter, sitting in jail for his testimony to Christ. So it will always be, for the Christian gospel is offensive. And not just when it comes to the definition of marriage or the evils of abortion. More basically, the message of *Christ* offends people: “Don’t tell me about Jesus. That’s going too far.” Centuries ago, Jesus was called a stumbling block – and still he is. Why? Because Jesus calls us to a total humbling of ourselves, simply trusting in his death on the ugly cross as our hope for life, and then gladly serving him as our Lord. From one perspective, there’s a lot not to like about the message of Christ. “But keep preaching,” says Paul.

It’s ours to be faithful, to always abound in the work of the Lord. And here’s an implication for everyone, in pew and pulpit. First, that you faithfully receive the Word whenever it’s preached. Listen prayerfully, and diligently, and humbly, whether you feel like it or not, whether it’s brought dynamically or not so much. We could re-phrase our text to say, “Listen to the Word, in season and out of season.” It’s food for your soul. And then know that spreading the Word “in season and out of season” is for all of us. It’s prepared Christians who’ll make the most of every opportunity, who’ll be ready to speak a wise word, and win sinners for Christ. **C**



Rev. Richard Aasman
is minister of the
Providence Canadian
Reformed Church at
Edmonton, Alberta
raasman@telusplanet.net

Forty-Fourth Anniversary Meeting and Thirty-Ninth Convocation of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, September 6, 2013

Once again it was a beautiful summer day for the CRTS to hold its convocation. The venue was the attractive and practical facility of Redeemer University College. By the time the graduating students, senate, and governors filed in, it was apparent that we had a full house. It was good to witness the joy and thanksgiving of so many church members for the CRTS.

The evening was opened by the chairman of the Board, Rev. Richard Aasman, who read 2 Timothy 2:14-26 and led in prayer. Just before the prayer he announced that the CRTS had learned late the previous day that the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) had granted the CRTS accreditation for the maximum period of seven years. This accreditation acknowledges that our school is functioning efficiently, and is fulfilling its Statement



of Institutional Purpose which is to train men for the ministry of the gospel both in faithfulness to the Word and confessions, and in a scholarly manner. Truly God has blessed our seminary richly. The prayer remembered, among other things, the special needs of the widow of the late Dr. K. Deddens, Dr. J. DeJong and his wife Margaret, Prof. J. Geertsema, Dr. N.H. Gootjes and his wife Dinie, and Sr. W. Faber, widow of the late Dr. J. Faber. Thanksgiving was also expressed for the arrival of Dr. T.G. VanRaalte and his family in Hamilton, and for the fact that Dr. A.J. de Visser is about to have his twenty-fifth anniversary in the ministry. After prayer, excerpts were read from letters sent by the FRC of Albany, Australia and the Redeemer CanRC in Winnipeg.

The floor was given to Mr. Richard Heerema from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. He expressed the love and appreciation of our sister churches for the teaching at the CRTS. The Australian churches support the seminary both financially and prayerfully. The support of the Australian churches is much appreciated.

The principal of the seminary, Dr. Gerhard H. Vischer, presented his principal's report. You can read the entire report elsewhere in this issue of *Clarion*. Dr. Vischer expressed appreciation for the fact that Synod Carman 2013 approved the appointment of a fifth professor. As a result, this evening the seminary community can welcome Dr. Theodore G. van Raalte as professor of ecclesiology. This welcome included Dr. van Raalte's wife Christine and the children.

One of the highlights of the evening was the installation of Dr. Theodore G. van Raalte as professor of ecclesiology. The Form for the Installation of Professors was read by the chairman, to which Dr. van Raalte answered in the affirmative. The Form of Subscription was also read and signed. It is such a blessing from the Lord to receive a fifth professor and to receive someone like Dr. van Raalte who is clearly qualified to this task. May the Lord bless his teaching along with the other professors.

The keynote speaker for the evening was Dr. Gerhard H. Visscher, professor of New Testament and principal of the seminary. In a lively and practical way, Dr. Visscher spoke about “Beginning Well in the Ministry.” Clearly, his address was well appreciated by the audience. The entire speech can be found elsewhere in this issue of *Clarion*.

The climax of the evening was the graduation of three students. We witnessed the conferring of the degree of Master of Divinity on Mr. Ben Schoof, Mr. Calvin Vanderlinde, and Mr. Theo Wierenga. A word of thanks was expressed by Calvin Vanderlinde on behalf of the graduating class.

The Women’s Savings Action, represented by Mrs. Joanne Van Dam and Mrs. Janet Van Vliet, presented a pledge for \$37,000.00 for the coming year. Mrs. Chris



Back row: L-R: Dr. J. Van Vliet Dr. A.J. de Visser
Front row: L-R: Dr. J. Smith, Dr. G.H. Visscher,
Dr. T.G. Van Raalte

Nienhuis is also in this committee but was not present. The point was well made that the money of the WSA is much needed by the Seminary. Seeing a well-developed library that is so crucial to study at the seminary, the church members are encouraged to contribute faithfully to the Women’s Saving Action.

The collection was for the 2014 CRTS conference. During the collection Mr. Jon Kingma played the piano. Together with the organist, Mr. Martin Jongsma, the evening was much enhanced by music and singing praises to the Lord.

Rev. Andrew Pol led in closing prayer. As is customary, the assembly concluded with the singing of “O Canada.” After the program everyone had opportunity to congratulate the graduates and new professor. It was also a time of good fellowship, and of renewing friendships and acquaintances. You are welcome to view a video version of the College evening at www.canadianreformedseminary.ca.





Dr. Gerhard H. Visscher is the principal and professor of New Testament at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario gerhard.visscher@canrc.org

Principal's Report 2013

It's always good to remember that in a seminary, like any other school, the really significant matters are the things that happen in the classroom and, more specifically, in the students' minds. The primary goal of this august institution is, of course, to teach students, to mould their thinking and their character in such a way that they can serve as effective and godly ministers of the Word for the next generation. When there are professors who are able to give such instruction and students willing to receive it, that alone is reason for tremendous gratitude and it makes every dollar spent on theological education worthwhile.

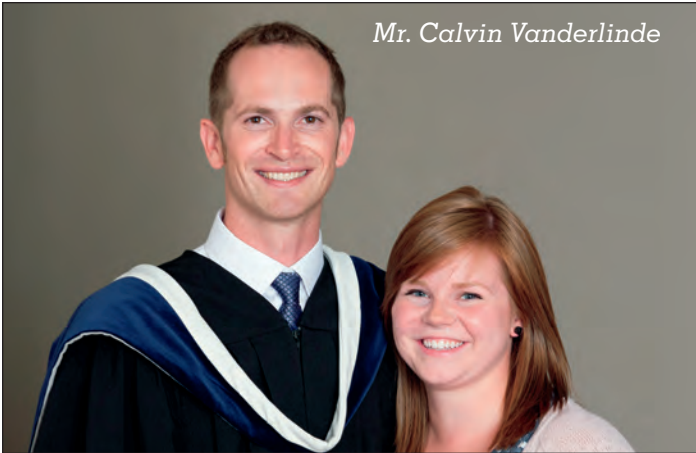
God has, however, been so very good and gracious towards us that the past academic year was also marked by additional blessings. You may recall that back in 2007 already we requested that Synod Smithers grant us permission to receive and appoint a fifth professor for theological instruction. Instead of granting that, the synod sent us on an unexpected path and mandated the Seminary Board to undergo a full assessment and review. That led CRTS down the path to accreditation because we were convinced that the best assessment of our institution could only be carried out by a process of peer review through an organization that thoroughly knows theological education. It meant many hours of study, discussion, and committee work by everyone involved - faculty, staff, and board members - as every conceivable aspect of the seminary was extensively discussed. It meant many significant improvements even as we went through this arduous process. And it meant putting 650 pages of material on the desks of the Association of Theological Schools, and a three-day visit by a learned and professional ATS team in March of 2013. The result of that was more than we wished for as the team, along with some criticisms, expressed much appreciation for CRTS and made a very favorable recommendation to the Commission on Accrediting.

And the final result was that we could proceed to Synod Carman 2013 and receive approval re the appointment of a fifth professor. Thus today, as a seminary community, we may heartily welcome our own Dr. Theodore G. van Raalte, as professor of ecclesiology. Welcome, brother! May you, your wife, Christine, and your children, be abundantly blessed as you find your way among us, in a new home, and a new community. Tonight you probably see not only him smiling, but also our colleague, Dr. De Visser, as he has been relieved of a whole department and can now simply dedicate himself to being the professor of diaconiology.

If Dr. De Visser is also looking somewhat relaxed this evening, that may be because since January he has been enjoying a sabbatical and has received a well-deserved opportunity for rest, reflection, and study. In his place, the students enjoyed the services of Dr. James Visscher of Langley, BC, who after so many years of service very ably taught the necessary courses in both the ecclesiology and diaconiology department. We thank him for his labours. And we also thank Rev. John Ludwig of Ancaster who has helped out in the ecclesiology department by teaching the church polity courses over the last few years.



Mr. Ben Schoof



Students

Tonight, we may present you with three students for the M.Div. degree: Mr. Ben Schoof, who has received and accepted a call to the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church of Surrey, B.C., and Mr. Calvin Vanderlinde, and Mr. Theo Wierenga, who are both presenting themselves to a classis later this month in order to become eligible for call.

Tonight we may welcome two new students. One to the M.Div. program: Mr. James Zekveld, from the Toronto area and the Hope United Reformed Church of Woodbridge, Ontario. And one student has been admitted into the Bachelor of Theology program: Mr. John Boekee from the United Reformed Church in Aylmer, Ontario. Yes, it is one of those rare years in which there are no new students from the Canadian Reformed congregations, but we are still rejoicing over our largest CanRC class ever last year and are confident that that flow will resume again next year. At present we are blessed with a total student body of nineteen young men. May we continue to do what we can to encourage more young men to consider pursuing entrance into one of the most glorious of all callings, the ministry of the Word, and may the Lord bless each of them when he places the desire to do so in their hearts.

Travels

In order that professors can adequately stay abreast of developments that have to do with their fields of study as well as theological education, some travels were again necessary and beneficial. Here's our annual list of "where in the world we've been."

Dr. A.J. De Visser

Attended and spoke at the Western Canadian Reformed Ministerial in November 2012.

Travelled to the Recife, Brazil in December 2012 to teach a course at the John Calvin Institute.

Travelled to the US in April 2013 to attend a seminar at Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, CT, and the Gospel Coalition Conference in Orlando, FL.

Dr. J. Smith

Attended the Canadian Reformed Ministerial Conference in Markdale, ON on May 30, 2013 where he spoke on the structure of the book of Jeremiah.

Attended the Canadian Society for Biblical Studies conference in Victoria, BC on June 3, 2013 where he spoke on the Greek text of Psalm 58.

Dr. J. Van Vliet

Attended the meeting of the Canadian Reformed Teacher's Association in Regina, SK on October 4-6, 2013 where he delivered an address.

Travelled to the Recife, Brazil from May 23 – June 6, 2013 to teach a course on Christology at the John Calvin Institute.

Travelled to Europe for the Heidelberg Catechism Tour from July 10-22, 2013 and spoke on The Threefold Office of Christ and the Christian.

Dr. G.H. Visscher

Attended the ATS Technology in Theological Education Conference in Phoenix, Arizona in November 2012.



Attended the ATS Fellowship of Evangelical Seminary Presidents Conference in Phoenix in January 2013.

Attended and spoke at the United Reformed Ministerial Conference in Dyer, Indiana in June 2013.

Staff

The ongoing work of theological education would be considerably more onerous if it were not for our excellent staff members who continue to do what they can to assist us in every possible way. We thank Catharine Mechelse, Margaret Alkema, and Leanne Kuizenga for their fine work. Also from this place, we want to congratulate Margaret VanderVelde with her recent marriage to Henry Alkema. May the Lord bless you both in every way as you also encourage each other in your respective callings.

Federational seminary

This evening, we are also celebrating the fact that yesterday we learned that we are now a fully accredited school. The accreditation process has been a very interesting one for CRTS. It has meant considerable contact with staff from the Association of Theological Schools, and a visit from several of them last March. One note-

worthy point for our readers is how much appreciation they have for our community. They were impressed with the nature of a federational seminary and the level of support it receives. In a day when many seminaries and colleges in the USA have had to close down under financial duress, it was a relief for them to be able to visit a school without financial issues and with a strongly supportive community. That reinforces our appreciation as well. When seminaries receive governmental support, government interference and regulation is an undesired result. When seminaries are dependent on private support, much of that comes with implicit strings from large donors. But when a seminary is run exclusively “by the churches, for the churches” as CRTS is and ought to be (2 Tim 2:2), it answers to the churches alone. Even the Association of Theological Schools has no intention of thwarting that independence; while it seeks to assist us in the way seminary education is administered, it expects and urges us to maintain our own confessional independence according to our own purposes. And our purposes, of course, are to serve God and God alone. May he continue to direct us as we prepare ministers of the Word for him and for you.



*Back row: L-R: Dr. A.J. de Visser, Dr. T.G. Van Raalte, and Dr. J. Van Vliet.
Front row: L-R: Dr. G.H. Visscher, Calvin Vanderlinde, Ben Schoof, Theo Wierenga, and Dr. J. Smith.*



Dr. Gerhard H. Visscher is the principal and professor of New Testament at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario gerhard.visscher@canrc.org

Beginning Well in the Ministry

This article was the keynote speech at Convocation evening, September 2013.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Board, colleagues, brothers, and sisters:

Beginning well in the ministry – how do we do that?

My primary purpose this evening is really to have one final chat with these three young men who are about to receive degrees and go off into the ministry. I do that, though, in the awareness that you are here too and you might just learn a thing or two about ministry from the things I want to say to them. My secondary purpose is really to spark some kind of discussion among the churches about how we can be church more effectively precisely by ensuring that men starting out and men presently in ministry like them can do their work more effectively.

What I really want to do, in other words, is answer the question: how would I do it if I were doing it all over again? What would I do if it was 1979 again for me? Or: if a professor would have sat me down as a young man thirty-four years ago, what do I wish he would have told me? It's the kind of reflection a man who has entered his seventh decade has once in a while – only tonight I will do this publicly.

The point is that I suspect most young men are not particularly intentional and reflective about what they are setting out to do. They aren't thinking long-term. There is no strategic plan. It's just: well, there are two sermons for next Sunday, there's Council on Monday, Catechism on Tuesdays – let's get to it. For many, that's just how it goes for thirty-five to forty years.

CSO

Let me begin then with some reflection on the nature and purpose of pastoral ministry – how really should you see yourself as you go off into ministry? It seems to me that despite all the expectations of members and

office bearers, pastors ought *not* to see themselves as administrators. Running a church will inevitably involve a great deal of paperwork as committees and ecclesiastical assemblies attempt to make progress, as policies are shaped, as growth and development happens, as budgets are discussed. But ministers are called to an office that is much, much more than pushing paper. We should *not* see ourselves as the Chief Administrative Officer – not even the CEO, the Chief Executive Officer – of the church. We are probably not trained or gifted in these areas. Nor do we need to be. We are not even the Chief Academic Officers, as our task goes beyond academics as well. If we want an acronym for our task, perhaps it should be CSO, Chief Spiritual Officer. In a nutshell, your task as Minister of the Word is to oversee and direct the spiritual lives, direction, and purposes, of the people of God. Along with the elders and deacons, who do this on a part-time basis, your calling is to be on the lookout for all that encourages and all that discourages the people of God with a view to their lives in the face of a holy and gracious God.

The word “spiritual” does however need some degree of commentary, as it is a bit of a waxed nose to which everyone – even those in other religions – gives a different meaning. I believe that Andreas Kostenberger gives us one of the best discussions of the nature of “spirituality” in his delightful book *Excellence: the Character of God and the Pursuit of Scholarly Virtue*. He suggests there that

Spirituality, for Christians, is . . . grounded objectively in the gospel of Jesus Christ and experienced as a reality in the presence of the Holy Spirit with them rather than merely constituting a subjective mystical experience. . . . The New Testament does not define spirituality in terms of solitude or introspection as if a person's spirituality were measured by the amount of time spent in a pursuit of mystical experience of the divine. Times of prayerful solitude must lead to active obedience and service in the world (p. 70).

Kostenberger distinguishes *definitive, positional spirituality* from *progressive spirituality*, suggesting that believers *are* spiritual because they belong to Christ and are indwelt by the Spirit, but they need then to develop that spirituality *progressively* so that they walk in the Spirit and neither grieve nor quench him. Then “spiritual” is not just something you are in your devotional time for fifteen or thirty minutes, but “growth in spirituality is evidenced in the form of active obedience, love, mission, and corporate unity and peace.” “We. . . progress in spirituality as we express love for others in practical and concrete ways, make our day-by-day decisions in obedience to God’s commands, involve ourselves in the fulfillment of God’s mission in the world, and promote peace and unity within God’s church” (p. 74).

***The task of ministers of the Word
is to oversee and direct the spiritual lives,
direction, and purposes, of the people
of God***

Kostenberger then goes on to suggest that the two means that foster the spiritual lives of the people of God stressed in Scripture are: *prayer* and *the study of God’s Word*. Paul calls us to pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17). Scripture is always telling the people of God to be found in the Scriptures. “Solitude and silence become spiritual disciplines only if they foster time to pray and encounter God in the Scriptures” (p. 76).

So this, then, is first, young men. Brothers, *know what you are!* the Chief Spiritual Officers of God’s church.

Priority of preaching

If this is your task, then obviously you must give the highest possible priority to the preaching of the Word of God. If we are not in the first place administrators, we are not in the first place counselors and social workers either. Our first place is to lead people in the praise and adoration of the people of God, through prayer and the preaching of his Word. It’s about the primacy of preaching. There will be many situations of stress and distress that will pull on the heart strings of the minister of the Word, but week after week, in scheduling and planning, he must retain adequate time and attention to the preparation that preaching demands. The time to feed the people of God is when they come together at the feeding

trough that we call worship services; if we fail here the sheep will scatter for food here, there, and everywhere, and bringing them back to where they belong will take a whole lot more effort and time.

It will mean that just as a good manager is only busy with the things that no one else on his staff can do, so we pass on as many tasks as we possibly can to others so that we can concentrate on that which God has uniquely called and trained us to do. And a good council will ensure that their pastor can do exactly that, and will attempt to find for him whatever volunteer or paid staff they can to ensure that he is just dedicated to his unique and challenging task.

I was intrigued by a section in Eugene Peterson’s book *The Contemplative Pastor*, where Peterson is thinking about how the life of a congregation that doesn’t have a pastor still carries on quite fine. He says:

A congregation would go for months, sometimes as long as a year or two, without a regular pastor. And I thought, *All these things I am so busy doing – they aren’t being done in that pastorless congregation, and nobody seems to mind.* I asked myself, *What if I, without leaving, quit doing them right now? Would anybody mind?* I did, and they don’t (p. 34).

In other words, I did quit, and they didn’t mind or even notice. Sometimes we need that kind of attitude.

Very concretely, there are two reasons why it is critically important to give priority to preaching.

1. *Else they might not be there – physically.* I suspect there has never been an age that is less committed to the concept of church, to a body of doctrine than this one. Sheep are prone to scatter quicker today than ever before. The fact is, if you don’t preach effectively, there’s always some preacher down the road who, in their estimation, does it better, and there they go.

2. *Else they might not “be” there – mentally.* Ours is a culture that is becoming increasingly able to create its own context. The electronic gadgetry and social media allows everyone to let in people and things that matter and shut out that which doesn’t. It is a reality of post-modernity that people shape their own reality, by making decisions moment by moment to turn off and to turn on, to let in and block out. It means that every time you preach you have about two minutes to convince today’s generation that what you are about to say is relevant to them and needs to be heard (on this, see my forthcoming article, *Connected Preaching and Theological Education*).

A passage of Scripture that comes to mind in that regard is Acts 6:2. The point in Acts 6 is not that the

widows need to be taken care of, or that deacons need to be installed, but it is the priority of the Word of God and the very real possibility that then as well as today other things might crowd out the most significant task of preaching the Word. “It would not be right,” the Twelve said, “for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables.” It’s not that the apostles were too good for the task of serving. Ministry is serving. But the Twelve decide: “We will turn this responsibility to them and will give *our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word*” (6:3, 4).

You must give the highest possible priority to the preaching of the Word of God

Such is the nature of our age and the urgency of good preaching today that I think there is not a single council that would not be helped by a vigorous discussion on this point.

There is a whole lot of work that the councils (or consistory with the deacons) do which needs to be re-evaluated with respect to the degree that ministers and even they as elders are involved. Council members of large churches especially need to be constantly assessing: is the ministry of the Word being short-changed because the minister is so busy with things that others can do (just as in Acts 6)? Do ministers really need to be engaged in issues that have to do with buildings, borders, budgets, and the like? Is that a wise use of their time and expertise? The fact is: these things tend also to be quite contentious issues, and the minister is usually thought to be kind of an outsider with respect to half these matters anyway. We need to ask the question: what is lost if he “doesn’t” here? And don’t we actually gain if those energies are used elsewhere? And the rationale for doing so is not because these things are not sufficiently “spiritual;” they certainly are, according to the definitions above. But it is because they clutter up the life of the minister (and the elders) and detract from what is central about those offices. I don’t mind admitting that some of the most difficult moments in my ministry years were moments when we were busy with contentious council matters – matters that I would have been wise to stay out of or at least only minimally involved. Consistory is a different matter; there the elders of the flock are busy and much more unified as they wrestle with the questions at the core of the ministry of the Word – how to encour-

age members and families to just live God’s way, and be directed to God’s praise.

So that’s second. Once you know who you are to be, you need to attempt to stay focused on the things that you and you alone are gifted and trained to do. Realize that there are others in the congregation who are better equipped and positioned to take care of the business side of running a church, and some things just work better if you *don’t* get involved in them. And insofar as you might need to be involved, your task is really to keep an eye on the impact such decisions might have on the bigger question of how these things impact people’s spiritual lives before God.

Nature of preaching

Seeing the preaching task within the context of Christian spirituality also helps us, I believe, to see preaching properly. The people of God need a whole lot more than more “information.” They need to do much more than download a whole body of “information” and have their thinking rearranged. If that is enough, then the Enlightenment philosophy is correct and everyone living in our information age should be just fine. In another excellent book, Paul Tripp says, “The ultimate purpose of the Word of God is not theological information but heart and life transformation” (*A Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry*, p. 51). “Biblical maturity is never just about what you know; it’s always about how grace has employed what you have come to know to transform the way you live.” Or, as Greg Dutcher puts it: “If knowing the Bible and understanding theology were reliable measures of discipleship, Satan would be the greatest disciple ever. After all, his knowledge of Scripture is exceptional and he’s been observing the spiritual realm for quite a long time” (*Killing Calvinism: How to Destroy a Perfectly Good Theology from the Inside*, p. 25).

I suspect that there is a tendency among young preachers to aim at issues. Cover all the issues, teach them about all those points, and improvement will be evident. To be sure, that may be helpful to a limited extent. But preaching has to do with the ministry of the Holy Spirit who is in the business of transforming hearts and lives. Preaching is not just issue oriented or topic directed. It really is heart to heart proclamation under the power of the Holy Spirit. Aim for the heart and many more issues will correct themselves than you can address. And the way to connect with the heart of your audience, I suspect, is to make it apparent that you are

speaking from the heart under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Tripp speaks about his many discussions with pastors, and how many of them suffer from bitterness, are “socially uncomfortable,” have “messy or dysfunctional relationships at home,” or struggle with “secret, unconfessed sin” (p. 21). Clearly, the transformation needs to begin with the heart of the preacher himself. Dutcher would say that perhaps he has spent too much time and effort attempting to be a *theologian*, and not enough energy to simply being a *disciple*. And the only way to pastor then is to build this outer wall around yourself and disclose nothing of your own weakness and vulnerability. Marble statues don’t do well with heart to heart communication, do they?

Tripp says at one point:

I think we would be shocked if we knew how many pastors have lost their joy – how many of us get up at the beginning of each week and grind it out, if for no other reason than we don’t know what else to do. For how many of us is ministry no longer an act of worship? How many of us are building a kingdom in our ministries other than the kingdom of God? How many of us are carrying a burden of hurt and bitterness into each ministry moment? How many of us want to escape and just don’t know how? (p. 37)

The pulpit is not left unaffected by the personal struggles of the pastor. At another point, Tripp says the opposite:

I am more and more convinced that what gives a ministry its motivations, perseverance, humility, joy, tenderness, passion, and grace is the devotional life of the one doing ministry. . . . It is my worship that enables me to lead others to worship. It is my sense of need that leads me to tenderly pastor those in need of grace. It is my joy in my identity in Christ that leads me to want to help others live in the middle of what it means to be “in Christ.” In fact, one of the things that makes a sermon compelling is that the preacher is worshiping his way through his own sermon (p. 34).¹

While preaching necessarily involves a great deal of self-control, pastors should not be afraid to reveal something of themselves and of their own lives before God. In another delightful book, John Piper says he discovered why the writings of the noted scholar, F. F. Bruce, are unnecessarily dry; in his biography, Bruce says “I do not care to speak much – especially in public – about the things that mean most to me.” Piper rightly says that he prefers the opposite – he doesn’t care to speak about things that don’t mean the most to him (“Brothers, we are NOT professionals” p. 145-6). That also causes the pastor

to speak with passion on the matters he preaches about; and those around him should know – when the passion is gone, something else is wrong. . . .

When you think about it – this intertwining of the personal and the public life of the pastor is something Paul is frequently busy with when he writes to young Timothy. He does not hold back on notes about his own life (1 Tim 1:12-16) as he urges Timothy about both his public and his private life – “train *yourself* to be godly” (1 Tim 4:7), “watch *your* life and doctrine closely” (1 Tim 4:16), “But *you*, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness” (1 Tim 6:11). I have only taken some quotes from 1 Timothy. There are many more in 2 Timothy and Titus.

Watch all aspects of your own life and walk before the face of God, in your family, and in the company of the people of God

So this then is third, and maybe fourth. Give great priority to the Preaching of the Word. And also for the sake of doing it in an authentic and genuine manner, watch all aspects of your own life and walk before the face of God, in your family, and in the company of the people of God. The CSO of the church must know what it is to be *spiritual* in the true and deep sense of that word.

Setting margins

But how, concretely, do we manage to do all this and more?

Well, one thing to learn right from the outset of a life of ministry is how to set margins in your life.

The point here is that ministry, despite its divine origins and delightful purposes, can be somewhat of a monster, and if you let it go it can consume you, your life, your family, your everything. So you need some ways to keep the monster at bay.

It has to do first of all with *time management*. This is so utterly crucial because in order to preach well, and to reflect adequately on the direction of the lives of the people in your charge, you need time. Ministry can’t be done in a hurry. You can’t be flitting about from place to place, from crisis to crisis throughout the week and then be expected to deliver two wonderful, life-engaging sermons on Sunday. One needs time to be drenched in the Scriptures, to consider prayerfully its message and its

impact, and to determine how best to deliver it. The kind of preaching needed today requires quietness and solitude, concentration and intensity. The truth is: it's really not hard to spend forty hours on two sermons. Just because these men tonight receive an M.Div. degree doesn't mean that sermons are just going to pop out of them at the appropriate time on a weekly basis. It doesn't mean they don't have to study. Sorry, brothers: your studies have just begun. All we've really done is teach you how to do it. That's why if the pastor and teacher of the congregation manages to preach and teach well, anything else he does really must be considered bonus. And a congregation that hungers for great preaching must allow ministers the time and space that this requires.

A congregation that hungers for great preaching must allow ministers the time and space that this requires

At the same time, it requires margin in other ways as well. Every minister, especially in large churches, will discover there are more meetings than anyone cares to attend, more pains and hurts than you can possibly assist with. If the minister is the first go-to man for all the needs of the congregation, he cannot possibly dedicate enough time and attention to the preaching of the Word (Acts 6:3, 4). Therefore, I believe it's also critical that the council and congregation realize that the first address for all the ministry needs is not that of the minister. We must teach the congregation that the first line of responsibility for the pastoral issues that arise is really with the elders and not with the minister. It's not the elders who need to help the minister in the challenges of pastoral ministry, but it's the minister who helps the elders as the needs arise. The elders are not just the ones who sit in the bleachers supervising the harried schedule of a minister who manages to do twenty hours of visiting alongside the forty hours of sermon preparation, and then sit in judgement about that preaching, wondering why it is not better than it is. And I, by the way, am not saying that ministers should leave all pastoral work to the elders; how will their preaching connect with the pew if they do that? But I am saying that the preaching must necessarily come first. I once was taken aback when I learned that it was said of me that I did most of my pastoral work from the pulpit. I was first quite offended because I thought I was quite faithful in that area as well,

but when I reflected on it I realized this is as it ought to be – without centering out individuals, we need to preach to the needs of the people of God and actively engage them from the pulpit.

This means time management, and it means you won't be able to be the social butterfly that some want you to be. As Eugene Peterson points out, with much of this, "The trick, of course, is to get to the calendar before anyone else does." He says:

The appointment calendar is the tool with which to get unbusy. It's a gift of the Holy Ghost. . . that provides the pastor with the means to get time and acquire leisure for praying, preaching, and listening. It is more effective than a protective secretary; it is less expensive than a retreat house. . . . When I appeal to my appointment calendar, I am beyond criticism (p. 31).

If you say to someone, "my calendar is full that morning," they will not have the nerve to say "With what?" But if you say, "I was planning to study that morning," they will think and maybe even say, "Well, you can do that another day."

So too when it comes to family time, the real trick of course is to pencil in family time before anyone else lays claim to it. Maybe you need to pass that calendar on to your wife even before you start filling it in and others start demanding their slots. Because the truth is, and I can't state it strongly enough: Don't ever believe that you have to sacrifice your family on the altar of ministry. If elders need to manage their children and households well before they get to become elders (1 Tim. 3:12), ministers must continue to manage their families well if they are to continue to be a blessing for the people of God. *We won't have strong churches unless we have strong ministries; but we won't have strong ministries unless we have strong families.*

So this is fifth, guard yourself and your ministry by guarding your time and your energy. And this is sixth – actually, it's first: guard your family and be an example also in this most fragile area of our world.

I will leave you with two more brief thoughts. What virtues are most important in ministers? My wife would be quick to single out two especially.

First, brothers, be *humble*. In the words of Tripp: You are most loving, patient, kind, and gracious when you are aware that there is no truth that you could give to another that you don't desperately need yourself. You are most humble and gentle when you think that the person you are ministering to is more like you than unlike you (p. 23).


As a senior pastor told me in the early years of my ministry, “When you are about to use a text to step on someone’s toes, make sure you feel the same pressure of that text on your own toes.” Humility will also mean, by the way, that you won’t go into that new congregation and expect to turn on its head with all the changes you want to make. You are just one office-bearer among many. You need to be a team player. That takes humility and a winning of trust.

And second, brothers, be *passionate*. There is something that’s almost as bad as being a heretic. And that is: being boring. When you think about it: isn’t it heresy to think that the gospel is less than the most exciting news ever told, the best message ever heard? The truth is: “Both passion and boredom are contagious: they pass from teacher to student” (Kostenberger, p. 117). From pul-

pit to pew. I have told our students: “If you’re going to preach like a radio announcer, then please go and become one. You’ve come to the wrong address.” All over the Scriptures, God is passionate and jealous about the gospel. He gives us a message, a calling, which is worth being passionate about.

It’s even our barometer: when I lose my passion, I need to reflect on where my own trouble is, where my own heart is at. Without passion, you are just a talking head, a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal (1 Cor 13).

May the God of all grace bless you in this and cause your years of ministry to be years of joy.

¹ Later, Tripp says: “Bad things happen when maturity is more defined by knowing than it is by being. Danger is afloat when you come to love the ideas more than the God whom they represent and the people they are meant to free” (p. 42). 



Children of Light and Word & Deed Ministries announce their intention to merge



At the initiative of Children of Light (COL) and with thanksgiving to the Lord, the respective boards of COL and Word & Deed Ministries (W&D) announce our intent to merge. Given the similarity of our mission and mandate, the overlap of our respective supporters, the need of COL for administrative services given her growth over the past few years and the nineteen years of experience W&D has to date, the intent to merge is believed to reflect both practical wisdom and an encouraging degree of cooperation among our supporting churches and denominations as we together, in a diaconal capacity, strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the developing world.

Our intent to merge has resulted from several meetings between W&D and COL leadership, two investigative trips to Indonesia by W&D and a recent survey of the COL support base. It is hoped that COL will be fully merged into Word & Deed Ministries by December 31,

2013. COL would cease to exist as a separate charity and continue on as a project as part of Word & Deed Ministries. COL will continue to be managed on the field by the COL Indonesian board, as it always has been in the past.

Both boards wish to emphasize that the merger will not reduce the involvement of current COL volunteers and supporters. Both organizations have developed a culture of enthusiastic involvement and support and the success of the merger depends on this continuing under the indispensable blessing of the Lord. May we together be instruments in his hands to the salvation of sinners and the strengthening of his church both in Indonesia and in the many other countries Word & Deed has the privilege of working.

Inquiries can be directed to Children of Light at children.of.light.indonesia@gmail.com or to Word & Deed at publicrelations@wordanddeed.org.

Presentation of the Women's Savings Action Convocation 2013

Mr. President, Members of the Board and Faculty,
Graduates, Brothers and Sisters:

Tonight we would like to go international and show you some libraries from other seminaries in the world. How do these libraries benefit their communities and how are they financially supported?

Have you ever heard of the Reformed Reading Room in Brazil? Technically it is not really a seminary library, but it is extremely important to the mission work there. The Reformed Reading Room is located in downtown Recife close to a major bus depot. If you get off the bus you simply walk down the cobblestone sidewalks until you see the vertical sign with the green letters "CLIRE" written there. In this room, you may purchase Reformed literature, sit down and read a Reformed book that you have been searching for, or stay to listen to a public lecture. This past spring a website was started to enable people from all over Brazil to purchase Reformed literature online. A good number of the members of the Recife congregations have come to the church through the Reformed Reading Room. God has blessed the work there and the gospel continues to spread. How is this institution financially sustained? Individual donations come from members in our churches.

Off to Scotland now. To Edinburgh where the Free Church College stands high on Presbyterian Ridge overlooking the city. The librarian of the seminary for the Free Church of Scotland briefly answered some questions for us and this is what she told us: All Free Church of Scotland ministers are trained at the seminary and, although some go overseas, most of them minister in churches in Scotland. The Free Church College has also been a training center for students from a number of countries such as South Korea, Africa, Romania, Switzerland, and America. The library is funded by contributions by the members of the churches which cover all library expenses and purchases.



Joanne Van Dam and
Janet VanVliet

Now we would like to take you to the Netherlands. Here you would most likely step off the train to walk to the seminary, or travel there on your bike. The seminary is located in the historic city of Kampen with three of its beautiful city gates still standing. The entrance to the library building is through a gate dating from the 1600s. Although the surroundings may be centuries old, the library is very much from the twenty-first century.

When the seminary was established in 1944, after the Liberation, there was not a single book in the library. But today the library possesses more than 135,000 items. That is quite an astonishing development in almost seventy years. The library today is an excellent resource library. Over the years there have been some major donations, but most books have been purchased. The funds are provided by the women's savings action which was established in 1946 and since that time about three million euro has been collected for the library. Truly amazing that many small amounts have added up to such a large amount!

On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the seminary, the librarian stated what a great privilege and enormous pleasure it is to work in the library – to assist

in the use of the library, but also to keep the collection up-to-date. Both are important! A library without patrons has no right to exist. Thankfully there are lots of patrons – professors and students, ministers, and also other church members. But the value of a library diminishes rapidly when it does not keep its collection up-to-date and it loses its patrons. Thanks to the work of the women's savings action the library can continue to provide its patrons with a respectable selection of the new theological books as they are published. As one professor put it, "For a theologian, books are the tools with which you work."

Could you get off the bus and walk down a Hamilton sidewalk to our own seminary library? Of course. Although you cannot purchase books there, you may certainly sit and read that book you were searching for. You could even sign it out and take it to your comfortable home. Just like you could hear a lecture at the Reformed Reading Room, you can go to a conference hosted by our Seminary. Most importantly, our library serves to aid our professors, students, and church members in their research as they study the treasures in God's Word.

We are very blessed to have a system of representatives in each congregation from Ancaster to Yarrow faithfully collecting money each year for the Women's Savings Action. Our seminary principal does not have to travel throughout the churches asking for donations or sending out mass letters appealing for your support. Rather, once or twice a year, you will see little announcements come into your bulletins. Thank you so much for responding to those announcements and showing your support to the seminary. Since the Women's Savings Action was started in 1969, approximately \$900,000 has been collected! Like the library in Kampen, there have been some major donations as well, but the vast majority of the books have been purchased using the funds from the Women's Savings Action. Since 1969 more than 33,000 items have been added to our library. Praise God for his goodness to us in providing the tools we need to train men to enter the harvest field!

With great thankfulness we can tell you that this year an amount of \$35,798.66 was collected. Mr. Principal, it gives us great pleasure to present you with a pledge for \$37,000 for this coming year. C

ADVERTISEMENTS

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

BIRTHS

For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations. Psalm 100:5

With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we are pleased to announce the birth of our son

ANDREW GERRIT VANDERMEULEN

born on September 29, 2013

to **James and Mary-Ellen Vandermeulen**

1st grandchild for Gerry and Anita VanDoornik and

10th grandchild for Jack and Frances Vandermeulen.

120 Minikada Bay, Winnipeg, MB R2C 0G7

WEDDINGS

We, Keith and Linda Elzinga, are thankful to the Lord and very happy to announce the marriage of our son

FRANK to LUCY

daughter of Hinne and Pauline Bootsma, on July 20, 2013

The happy couple's address is:

F. and L. Elzinga

11 West Street, PO Box 930, St. George, ON N0E 1N0

