

# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE  
Volume 63, No. 17 • August 29, 2014



**WHY CANADIAN REFORMED?**





*Klaas Stam*  
Minister emeritus of the  
Canadian Reformed Church  
at Hamilton, Ontario  
[cstam@sourcecable.net](mailto:cstam@sourcecable.net)

# The Canadian Reformed Churches: “What’s in a Name?”

---

*It was a name officially chosen by the churches  
for a very specific reason*

---

A while ago I read in a church bulletin the question of why our churches are called “The *Canadian Reformed Churches*.” One might find these adjectives unnecessary or misplaced. Why did we not choose the name “The Reformed Church(es) in Canada?” I understand that question, which I myself sometimes also raised. It is good to look (again) at the history of the name “Canadian Reformed Churches.”

The name did not come falling out of the sky. Neither was it given by revelation. It was a name *officially* chosen by the churches for a very specific reason. Some may have a desire to come up with a more *general* name that does not carry all kinds of baggage or history. A more “neutral” name would perhaps draw more inquirers to the church.

Perhaps. The word “Reformed” is for many unclear and suspect. Some immediately think of election, predestination, discipline, and narrow-mindedness. Simplification would help to avoid all kinds of wrong assumptions. But at the same time we see in many places a renewed interest in the Reformed faith. Some are discovering the work of Calvin for the first time.

Okay. But before we get embroiled in a discussion about what is the proper name, let’s first look at the history of this name. So we go to [ancestry.klaas.ca](http://ancestry.klaas.ca). Bear with me for a while, you might find an interesting, distant relative.

## **The winter of our discontent**

When many post-war immigrants went to Canada in the early fifties, they had already gone through the church struggles that took place in The Netherlands during the war. They soon discovered that the Christian Reformed Churches had taken the side of the Dutch churches, who were responsible for and in agreement with Dutch doctrinal decisions regarding the covenant.

It was a difficult time for our forebears. They not only had to find suitable work and learn a difficult language, but they also had to find a faithful church to serve God according to his word. However, not only was the climate cold (especially on the Prairies and in Ontario) but also the church climate was freezing. The Christian Reformed Church did not receive “liberated” members (unless they accepted Synodical decisions). Unity with others, especially the Protestant Reformed Churches, could not be found.

The first winter which some of the fifties immigrants endured was difficult. Let’s just say that it was a winter of discontent in more ways than one. The winters were still very cold in the 1950s. They experienced low incomes, insufficient housing, and no church address where they would be welcomed. Fortunately I was too young to remember any of these difficulties.

## **By what name?**

Out of need, people started to come together in small house congregations. Here and there churches were established and office bearers were elected. At first there were no ministers, and so these maligned immigrants had to do things for which they were not really trained.

One of the decisions that had to be taken was: “By what name shall we call these churches?” There were two main considerations. The name had to reflect the faithful character of these churches. They had not started something new but simply continued to be what they were before: churches of the Reformation, also known as *Reformed churches*. This was a name that also other churches had chosen. But the new immigrants were not about to let that name slip away. It was precious.

There was already a "Reformed Church of Canada," which was part of the larger Reformed Church of America. That name could not be taken. There were many variations of the name "Reformed," like Christian Reformed; Protestant Reformed; Free Reformed, Netherlands Reformed; and even some Presbyterian churches which also added "Reformed" to their name. These names were not suitable either because they already denoted specific denominations.

So what did they do? They wanted to keep the name "Reformed" because it was essential and foundational. And so gradually, almost by a process of elimination, they began to use the name *Canadian Reformed Churches*.

I found two interesting notes on the name "Canadian Reformed." During a meeting of all male members of the "house congregation in Lethbridge, Alberta, on April 13, 1950 it was decided that they would institute an official church." This indeed took place on June 16, 1950

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

"What's in a name?" asks Rev. Klaas Stam. Why do we call ourselves the Canadian Reformed Churches? His editorial looks at the history of our federation's name. Rather fittingly, we have short article from the Hofsink family, who recently celebrated sixty years in Canada by making an anniversary trip to where it their journey began.

Also in this issue, Rev. Eric Kampen discusses the short comings of playing "Dutch Bingo," and intends to write a series of articles which allow our readers to get to know churches with which the CanRC has Ecclesiastical Fellowship

Speaking of Ecclesiastical Fellowship, this issue contains a report from Synod Ede in The Netherlands, as well as the address delivered by Br. Gerard Nordeman on behalf of the Subcommittee for Relations with the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.

In Issue 17 readers will also find our Treasures New and Old column, as well as Clippings on Politics and Religion and You Asked. There is both a letter to the editor and a Further Discussion article. We also have a book review.

*Laura Veenendaal*

- 430 EDITORIAL**
- 433 TREASURES, NEW & OLD**
- 434 Dutch Bingo**
- 436 Report Visit: Synod Ede 2014**
- 439 Canadian Reformed Address to Synod Ede**
- 442 CLIPPINGS ON POLITICS AND RELIGION**
- 443 LETTER TO THE EDITOR**
- 444 FURTHER DISCUSSION**
- 446 YOU ASKED**
- 447 Sixtieth Anniversary of the Hofsink Arrival**
- 449 BOOK REVIEW**

## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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

## ADDRESS FOR COPY MANAGER

Clarion  
8 Inverness Crescent, St. Albert, AB T8N 5J5  
Email: [veenendaal@telus.net](mailto: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](mailto:clarionadmin@premierpublishing.ca)  
**Advertisements** [clarionads@premierpublishing.ca](mailto:clarionads@premierpublishing.ca)  
**Website** [www.clarionmagazine.ca](http://www.clarionmagazine.ca)

## 2014 SUBSCRIPTION RATES

			Regular Mail	Air Mail
Canada			\$49.00*	\$ 82.00*
U.S.A. U.S. Funds			\$69.00	\$ 92.00
International			\$98.00	\$154.00

\*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.

## 2014 ADVERTISING RATES


Advertisements: \$19.50 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

and the name chosen was “the *Free Reformed Church*” (see Rev. W.W.J. van Oene, *Inheritance Preserved*, page 75).

A few days later, a consistory meeting of the Free Reformed Church at Lethbridge was held, where also the Rev. J. Hettinga was present. He was in Canada on a visit as president of “the (Dutch) Association for help to Immigrants and Emigrated Persons.” He “advised the consistory of Lethbridge to change their name from Free Reformed Church to *Canadian Reformed Church*.” The reason for this was that the new (immigrant) churches needed clarity and purpose as to where they stood. In this way the new churches would preserve the inheritance they had received.

### **The first classis**

So the name “Canadian Reformed Church” was first used in Lethbridge. The next church to take this name was a church plant at Edmonton. Soon elsewhere (in Georgetown, Orangeville, Ontario) this name was shared.

The churches were at that time still too small in number and resources to have a national (Canadian) synod. But the churches in the west did organize a *Classis* Canada. On September 13, 1951, this Classis decided that from then on the name “Free Reformed” would no longer be used but that the name of the churches would be “The Canadian Reformed Churches.”

Let me share with you why this first Classis Canada decided to adopt the name Canadian Reformed Churches. I am quoting now from the *first yearbook* of the Canadian Reformed Churches (p 45). The name *Canadian Reformed Churches* was chosen for a reason. “With this name we express that our churches do not want to be or form an extension of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands or of wherever, but want to be independent, Canadian, national churches who see their task as directed from the Lord God.”

Savour these words, for they are historic and important, “Independent, Canadian, national churches.” Why did we form independent churches? We did so because there was no other church we could join. Why did we call it a “Canadian” church? We did so because we live and work in Canada and want to function as churches in this new land. Why did we call it a “national” church? We did so because this church is important for the *entire* country, a *mari usque ad mare*, from sea to sea (based on Psalm 72).

### **What’s in a name?**

There are those who perhaps find a name unimportant. Shakespeare makes a passionate Juliet say “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” Some might say that a name is a meaningless convention. There is perhaps some truth to this. Any designation can be questioned and criticised. Not every name is properly lived or clearly understood. It’s not hard to have a good name and a bad reputation.

But a church that is faithful to God will be very committed to its name. A church that is part of the Canadian Reformed Churches should bear that name thankfully and proudly. For it is by grace through faith what we are. Our fathers sacrificed much so that we could today be members of faithful churches.

A name identifies who you are and from where you come. Through the prophets the Lord reminded his people of their origin and purpose. “But now, this is what the Lord says- he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you *by name*; you are mine” (Isa 43:1). This indicates in the least that a good name is a reason for comfort and joy.

*Canadian Reformed Churches*: a federation of free churches, thankfully living in Canada, joyfully belonging to Christ, still upholding the Reformed confessions, standing on the foundation of prophets and apostles. That’s what the Classis Canada meant on September 13, 1951. This meeting of a small classis was followed by multiple blessings. Anything less would be baldly generic and totally unacceptable.

Soon there was also a classis in the eastern part of Canada (Ontario). The two classes in time grew together to form a federation that bore the name “the Canadian Reformed Churches.” This, too, was not an easy process, but that falls beyond our present scope. In none of the original sources that I have at my disposal did I find any major criticism on the name “Canadian Reformed.”

### **General Synod Hamilton**

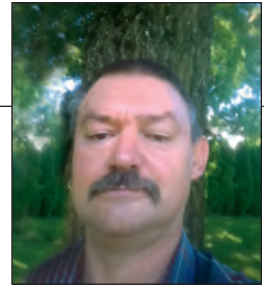
There is a little but important postscript to this matter. Synod Hamilton 1962 dealt with a request from Rev. G. van Dooren, who had objected to the name “Canadian Reformed Churches” and advised that the name be changed to “The Christian Churches in Canada.” The adjective “Canadian” should be removed because any idea of a state church needed to be prevented.

Rev. van Dooren informed the advisory committee of Synod Hamilton that he no longer supported his earlier suggestion to drop the word “Reformed.” He still felt, however, that the adjective “Canadian” needed to be removed to avoid any notion of a state church.

Synod decided that the adjective “Canadian” did not imply any political notions of a national state church, but “simply expresses that our churches have been established in Canada” (*Acts, Synod Hamilton 1962, Appendix [Bijlage] IV, p 98*). The word “Reformed” did not mean any Canadian reformation but the Reformation that took place in the sixteenth century.

Synod considered that a change of name was necessary only when urgent reasons were brought forward, which was not the case in 1962. Synod Hamilton referred to the Classis Lethbridge and decided that the name “*Canadian Reformed Churches*” be maintained. The circle is round again. I think that was the last of it.





*Richard Eikelboom*  
Minister of the Canadian  
Reformed Church at Yarrow, BC.  
[reikelboom@shaw.ca](mailto:reikelboom@shaw.ca)

# Our Daily Bread

**"Give us today our daily bread."**

(Matthew 6:11)

Jesus taught us to pray for our daily bread. Today we don't need food for tomorrow, but instead we need to trust that our heavenly Father will provide for us tomorrow again. Now, many of us do our work and then we get paid, weekly or bi-weekly, or maybe only after a job is completed. So we cannot budget from day to day. Instead we must think ahead and plan at least from paycheque to paycheque. We also have numerous regular financial commitments – to the church, the school, our mortgage, etc. – which make it impossible for us to think about today in isolation. We might wonder then whether it still makes sense for us to pray for our daily bread.

But Israelite farmers harvested the grain once a year, in May. In July and August they harvested the grapes and the summer fruit. And when that was stored in the barn it had to last until the following season, unless the following year was a sabbatical year, in which case the farmer had to manage his food supply for two whole years. True, the Lord gave the Israelite farmer bread for every day. But the Lord didn't ration it out for him, day by day. So Jesus didn't teach his disciples to pray for their daily bread just because they received it every day. Likewise for us to say that praying for our daily bread isn't necessary

anymore because we live in a different world with credit cards and food banks would be nonsense.

Why did Jesus teach us to pray for our daily bread? Clearly Jesus expected that after the farmer had finished praying he would go to his barn and take from his barn the bread that the Lord had already given to him, possibly even many months before. Praying for our daily bread is not so much about God giving it to us each day, but more about us being thankful each day! It means praying: "Father, the food and drink that appear on our table today we did not earn by ourselves, and it does not really belong to us! Instead, it came to us from your gracious hand and it is still yours, even today. We acknowledge this humbly, and we thank you for it!"

Praying for our daily bread will also make us content. Because we first pray that God will give us our daily bread, and then we open our eyes and we eat the daily bread that God is giving to us in response to our prayer. So praying for our daily bread is a confession that whatever he gives to us is always enough, and it is always exactly the right amount! God clothes the lilies of the field and feeds the birds of the air; He gives to all his creatures exactly what he wants them to have. Who can pray, "Give us today our daily bread," and

then be dissatisfied? That is only possible when we pray in unbelief, when we don't trust our heavenly Father to love us and provide for us.

The world makes it difficult for us to pray in this way, however. At the breakfast table we confess that our heavenly Father graciously gives us what he knows is good for us. Yet all the advertising today for "no down-payment," "no repayment for six months," and "zero percent financing" comes to us with a different message. This advertising says that it doesn't matter how much God gives you. Don't let him cramp your style! Don't let him decide how much is good for you or how much you can have! But God teaches us that whatever he gives us is our daily bread, and it is sufficient.

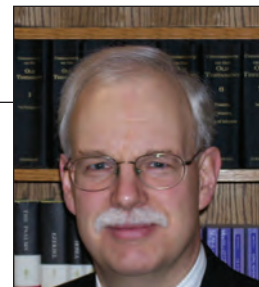
So praying for our daily bread means we also confess to God: "In your infinite wisdom and fatherly grace you have decided what is good for us, and how much we should have. Teach us to believe that whatever you give to us – or withhold from us – is good! Work in our hearts by your Spirit and make us content!" Our heavenly Father commands us to do our work, and then to pray for a blessing over our work. May all his blessings move our hearts by causing us to grow in thankful dependence on him.

C



---

# Dutch Bingo



*Eric Kampen*  
Minister of the  
Canadian Reformed Church  
at Orangeville, Ontario  
[eric.kampen@canrc.org](mailto:eric.kampen@canrc.org)

Dutch Bingo is a popular Sunday game played by Reformed people. If the information on the Internet is reliable, it appears that Dutch immigrants to America invented Dutch Bingo in the mid nineteenth century. You may have played it without even realizing it. It is usually played right after a worship service. The game starts when you see an unfamiliar face and you are bold enough to introduce yourself. Once you hear the other person's last name, you say, "Are you related to so and so?" The game only has to go for a few rounds and within a minute, Bingo! You have made a connection with one another because you know the same people, or perhaps you discover you share a common relative or even the same set of great-grandparents. Three or four names have lined up and you have made a connection.

Critical for Dutch Bingo to work is that the name you hear sounds Dutch. If it does not sound Dutch, if the person you are speaking to is a male, the game can be saved by asking the maiden name of his wife. If that is not Dutch either, however, well, then, what was meant to be a nice game to serve as an icebreaker can suddenly turn into an icemaker. The unwritten rulebook for Dutch Bingo is not clear on how to handle this. The result is that for some, the lack of a Dutch name is the end of the game and you move on to speak to someone else. If the name is not Dutch, you can't talk about very much. After all, the game is not called *Dutch* Bingo for nothing.

---

*When you think it through, Dutch Bingo  
is not really a Reformed game*

---

When you think it through, Dutch Bingo is not really a Reformed game. Every Sunday we confess that we believe a "holy catholic Christian church." The word "catholic" expresses how this church is not a community

based on race but on grace. This means that the most basic question to be asked is, "Are you related to Jesus?" We might assume that the answer is "Yes," considering the person has come to church, but then again, we could be talking to a visitor who just walked in off the street. If we meet someone else who says that they know Jesus, then we have a Bingo! We have made a connection. The conversation can continue from there. Should a person indicate they don't know Jesus, we know that we have to steer the conversation in a different direction, so that they may come to know Jesus.

The nature of life is, however, that a conversation usually involves getting to know more about a person. To make sure we do this in proper way, we can redeem *Dutch* Bingo and make it *Reformed* Bingo. Should we meet someone whose last name does not sound Dutch, then the conversation can easily continue to find out something about the person's church family. After all, the reason they attended a Reformed church is probably because they recognized it as part of their extended church family. Perhaps they belong to a Reformed church with German roots, such as the Reformed Church in the United States, or they belong to a Presbyterian Church, such as the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. If that is so, then again we have a Bingo! While there is no connection in terms of race, there is a connection in the gospel of grace. If we know a little of history, we know that Reformed churches are Presbyterian in church government and Presbyterian churches are Reformed in doctrine. It just so happened that the term "Reformed" has become applied to Reformed believers from the European continent and the term "Presbyterian" to Reformed believers primarily in Scotland and secondarily in England. The conversation does not have to progress very far before you realize, "This is family! We speak the same language of faith, although our spiritual accents give away our country of origin."

It is when everyone learns to redeem Dutch Bingo by making it Reformed Bingo on a personal level that we can anticipate making some progress at the federation level. When one peruses the Acts of general synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches going back to the 1960s, however, it becomes apparent that fondness for Dutch Bingo is deeply engrained and has affected contact with other church bodies. It is understandable that in the first years after immigration, Dutch Bingo set the pace for relationships with other church bodies. A relationship with any church rooted in the Liberated Churches in The Netherlands was almost automatic. At the same time, there is evidence that already among that first generation there was awareness that Dutch Bingo was not Reformed. The evidence is in the way the Canadian Reformed Churches initiated contact in the early 1960s with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). The Acts of subsequent synods indicate that not everyone was ready to play Reformed Bingo. Extensive reports were written to determine if a Presbyterian Church truly could be considered Reformed. The Acts of synods contain extensive study reports and interaction with appeals. Ecclesiastical Fellowship was finally established in 2001, but that did not end the discussion. Article 62 of the *Acts of Synod Carman 2013* indicates that some have seen this breach of Dutch Bingo at the federational level as signs of the Canadian Reformed Churches having become a false church, justifying separation. Others show reluctance to let go of Dutch Bingo by suggesting that there should be two levels of relationships, namely, a sister church relationship for churches with which you can essential-

ly play Dutch Bingo and Ecclesiastical Fellowship for others (Art 119). Furthermore, committees dealing with churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship receive mandates to revisit old issues especially with churches that fall outside the parameters of Dutch Bingo, which are prone to make these churches feel as unwelcome or inferior partners in the relationship (e.g. Articles 21, 43). While it is true that there are only a small number of voices that call for the maintenance of Dutch Bingo, as those few voices are incorporated into committee mandates, they become the public voice of the church federation.

All these are symptoms of how Dutch Bingo continues to live in the churches. We need to learn both at the personal level and the federational level that this is not living out our confession of one holy catholic church. It is possible that one of the reasons for hesitation to embrace Reformed Bingo is a lack of knowledge of the other players. There are informative websites and there is a wealth of information on the pages of the Acts of general synods as well as committee reports. Personal review of the material is beneficial but it will take quite some time to be ready to participate in the conversation where it is now. For that reason, there will be benefit in a series of articles that will pay attention to the churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches have Ecclesiastical Fellowship, especially in North America. In future articles, the Lord willing, I plan to pay attention to the history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Church in the United States, and L'Eglise Reformee du Quebec, and how the relationship of Ecclesiastical Fellowship with these churches was established.

C



# Report Visit: Synod Ede 2014, Foreign Delegates Week, March 24-29

Most of the foreign delegates arrived during the day on Monday the twenty-fourth. This in itself was not as simple as it may sound. It so happened that on that same day fifty-eight heads of states from all over the world arrived in The Netherlands under tight security for a summit meeting on nuclear safety. Schiphol airport was closed for regular passenger travel. Also several roads were closed between Amsterdam and The Hague, causing traffic congestion and frayed nerves for many, including the organizing committee of the Foreign Delegates Week of Synod Ede of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (RCN). I was fortunate to have already arrived the Friday before, missing most of this excitement.

We are thankful the Lord provided traveling mercies to all who attended. Delegates from the United Reformed Church in Congo were first denied visa by the Dutch Government, but they later received permission to enter The Netherlands after all. The delegates from the Presbyterian Church of Uganda were not so fortunate and were not permitted entry. On a sad note, the delegates from the *Nongu u Kristu u I Ser u shar Tar* (NKST) in Nigeria sent word that in one of the villages several of their church members had been murdered, which prevented them from attending. It turned out that I was the only delegate attending from North America. The OPC and URCNA had decided not to enter into sister church relationships with the Reformed Churches liberated (RCN). The RCUS sent a letter indicating they would not attend but sent greetings.

The first evening was spent getting acquainted with fellow delegates and meetings with deputies for foreign relations of the RCN (BBK). We were informed of some of the discussions that had already taken place at Synod Ede such as the Theological University Kampen (TUK). Synod

dealt with the final version of the revised church order. While the church order itself is already more detailed it will now also have a set of regulations as an appendix in which further direction is provided for specific situations. The church order can only be changed under strict conditions. The regulations are more easily changed. Further one may notice a decentralization giving the local consistories more freedom to implement and decide on various matters that once fell under the federation and spelled out in the church order. The phrase “from a rule-based to a principle-based approach” was used.

I had an opportunity to talk about the concerns we, as CanRC deputies, have about the direction the RCN is going with interchurch relations and the functions of the deputies. Synod Harderwijk 2011 confirmed the understanding of deputies BBK that they do not have to speak about synod decisions. If sister churches have concerns they should approach RCN synods directly with these. The CanRC way is to appoint deputies to speak and act for the churches between synods. The deputies keep the churches informed of their activities and report to the churches six months prior to the next synod.

On Tuesday, March 25 we travelled by bus to the church in Ede-Zuid where the Synod was held. Here we attended a conference with the BBK. Br. Klaas Wezeman, chairman of the BBK, opened the meeting. Rev. Piet Meijer led the devotions. Rev. Wim van der Schee gave an introduction on *Second Baptism & de facto withdrawal*. In recent years, a movement has arisen within church life in The Netherlands that strongly advocates adult baptism. A concrete consequence of this development is that also within the RCN members seek a second (adult) baptism outside their own congregation. Church consistories that are involved are faced with the question: how do we deal with such



members? Should this second baptism be regarded as a *de facto* withdrawal from one's own congregation? And if not, how should we deal with them? Should they be placed under discipline, with the ultimate possible consequence that they are excluded from the Kingdom of God? This topic was given into general discussion, with various opinions expressed by the foreign delegates.

A second topic introduced by the BBK was the question how they should proceed in the future with a growing list of sister churches and ecclesiastical contacts worldwide. They proposed to limit the actual full sister church relationships to the approximately thirty-two federations currently in a sister church relationship and to maintain contact with the others (approximately twenty-five) by means of participation in networks e.g. International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). These forms of relationships are to be regularly evaluated for each federation to see if they are sustainable and of value.

After dinner the final topic, the BBK position regarding sending female delegates to synods of sister churches. It was interesting to see that by far the majority of foreign delegates were against this practice. Later in the week when this proposal was discussed at Synod, again several delegates, including myself, spoke objecting to this. While the BBK felt strongly that the sister churches should respect the customs of the RCN, some Synod delegates responded that it would be more proper for the BBK to respect the wishes of the hosting churches.

Ironically, the day was closed with devotions (Scripture reading, a lengthy exposition on the passage read, and prayer) led by a female member of the BBK. Several foreign delegates were unhappy about this and some spoke of provocation. Not a happy ending to an otherwise good day of discussions, where although not always unanimous agreements were expressed yet brotherly harmony prevailed.

On Wednesday, March 26 we travelled by bus to the city of Rotterdam. We were treated to some sightseeing experiences including a lunch in the Euromast. A couple of Rotterdam city guides explained various landmarks and provided an extensive account of the history of this in many ways unique city which is also one of the largest seaports in the world. In the evening we met with a number of representatives of the Zendingen Hulp en Toerusting (ZHT) and De Verre Naasten. These organizations support mission aid and relief functions around the world.

Thursday, March 27 saw us again ride the bus, this time to Kampen. Here we listened to a number of presentations by several professors and lecturers of the Theological University:

- Dr. Stefan Paas – The Calling of the Church in the secularized Netherlands and Europe
- Dr. Hans Burger – Hermeneutics in the (post-)modern Netherlands
- Dr. Hans Schaeffer – Homiletics: Living Proclamation of the Gospel

*The foreign delegates attending Synod Ede with the deputies BBK of the RCN  
(Deputies BBK are the deputies appointed to maintain contact with foreign sister churches)*



- Dr. A.L.Th. de Bruijne – Theology for Serving in the Church and doing Academic Research: Double Responsibilities
- Dr. Jos Colijn – Presentation of the International Programs of the TUK

Each presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

In the evening the foreign delegates attended a worship service called by the consistory of the church at Ede-Zuid together with the congregation of Ede-North during which also the Lord's Supper was celebrated. Various ministers took part in the service; the liturgical part of the service by the local pastor, the Rev. J.M. van Leeuwen, Scripture reading the Rev. Daniel Kithongo (African Evangelical Presbyterian Church Kenia), sermon by the Rev. Hiralal Solanki (Presbyterian Church of India). Obviously this was a very emotional experience where people from more than twenty different countries from around the world could be together in worship and the celebration of the Supper of our Lord. The singing of the Hymn "The Church's One Foundation" also reflected a more profound meaning.

Friday, March 28 was the day when the foreign delegates were welcomed by and participated in Synod Ede. The report and recommendations of the deputies for contact with foreign churches (BBK) was dealt with. The matters referred to above (sister church relations and contacts via networks, and sisters as official delegates to synods of sister churches) were adopted by Synod with some minor changes. Regarding sisters being delegated, Synod did say that BBK should take local practices in consideration.

Throughout the day various foreign delegates addressed Synod with greetings and, in several instances, words of concern about the direction the RCN is heading. In particular the Scripture critical approach and hermeneutics currently expressed by the TUK, and reflected in the report of the deputies Male/Female in the Church (M/F). My address on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches is elsewhere in this issue of *Clarion*. Several Synod delegates spoke in response. The chairman of Synod, the Rev. P.L. Voorberg noted the large number of expressions of concerns from sister churches around the world. He stated that Synod should be mindful of these and not dismiss them carelessly.

Saturday, March 29 was a continuation of Synod with more discussions on the BBK rapport. One delegate asked the chairman if it would not be desirable that Synod delegates could enter into a more specific dialogue with for-

eign delegates regarding the concerns expressed. Later in the day, after some consideration, the chairman informed the meeting that the moderamen had decided not to allow this at this time but to first as Synod delegates discuss the letters of concern from the sister churches.

An emotional moment occurred when the Papua Indonesia delegate Rev. Yan Richard Wambraw spoke greetings on behalf of the GGRI-Papua. This church federation had come about as a result of mission work by the RCN and CanRC missionaries. Our own Rev. H. Versteeg still visits these churches on an annual basis. The RCN had entered into a sister church relationship with the GGRI-Papua three years ago at Synod Harderwijk. This was the first time delegates were present at a synod of the RCN. It is amazing to witness God's grace when people, who not all that long ago lived in total isolation and a pagan culture, could speak about their faith and share in Christian fellowship with brothers and sisters from around the globe.

In the afternoon, after the close of Synod, the two delegates from our Australian sister churches and I had an opportunity to meet with three members of the advisory committee dealing with the letters of concerns our churches had sent. Also in attendance were the chairman and first clerk of Synod and two BBK deputies. We could have a very good and open discussion about the concerns expressed in these letters. The Dutch brothers showed sincere interest and asked numerous questions. Whether it will have the desired results will remain to be seen. We'll have to leave this in the hands of the Lord.

Of course much more could be said about the visit to Synod Ede. While some Synod delegates spoke words of appreciation regarding the concerns expressed, I have the impression that the majority of the delegates are content with the direction the churches have taken. Especially the message from Kampen is very clear. We live in different times and in order to be relevant in this world we need to adapt to the times we live in. We were extended warm hospitality by our Dutch brothers and sisters. However, in spite of times of good fellowship, we could also notice a creeping estrangement. We were repeatedly assured of the Dutch churches' desire to remain faithful to the Word and that as brothers and sisters we should trust each other. Yet, in the deliberations at Synod and comments made privately it has become clearer that we are growing further apart. We pray that the Lord will watch over our sister churches and cause them to remain faithful in a secular and post-modern country.



# Canadian Reformed Address to Synod Ede (March 2014)

## ***Dear members of Synod Ede,***

On behalf the Canadian Reformed Churches, I bring you greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. We are thankful that once again we could receive an invitation to join you for a few days with other foreign delegates at this synod of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. It provides an opportunity to give expression and meaning to the bond we have as sister churches. It is clearly evident, also here in this building, that the Lord continues to gather his church from the four corners of the world. Obviously, I speak metaphorically.

Since meeting with you in Harderwijk three years ago we, the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC), continue to experience the rich blessings of our Lord and Saviour. As of December 31, 2013 the number of congregations had grown to fifty-five, of which four are in the United States, and the total membership currently exceeds 18,000.

The churches are blessed with sixty-two ministers in active service. Of these, nine serve as missionaries or evangelists, and five are professors at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS).

A good number of retired ministers and professors continue to serve the churches as well with preaching, writing, and speaking engagements.

The churches continue to be active in and support of mission work in Brazil, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Asia. Missionaries and evangelists are also active in three urban centres in Canada with specific focus on Canadian native people, people of Chinese extraction, and the less privileged. The churches also fully support a minister in “L’Église Réformée du Québec” (ERQ) in his work of evangelism and translating Reformed material.

We are very blessed to live in a country where it is still possible for God’s people to gather and worship in freedom each week, and where we can still openly practise our faith. However, as in The Netherlands, also in Canada we see a rapid growth of secularism in a post-modern culture. The Christian faith is under attack and Christianity is more and more being marginalized.

The unity process with the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) continues, all be it at a very slow pace. Nonetheless, joint activities between the CanRC and URCNA at a local level in Canada have grown, and the churches are benefitting from regular pulpit exchanges. We anticipate some decisions from URC Synod 2014 that would indicate a desire to move forward in the process towards organic unity. A major difficulty continues to be the inability for the two federations to agree on how best to deliver theological education.

The churches could convene a general synod in Carman, Manitoba last year. Some significant decisions were made that will affect our church life and worship services.

While since 1995 most churches had used the 1984 edition of the New International Version (NIV), Synod Carman recommended the English Standard Version (ESV) for use in the churches.

Synod could also adopt a final version of the *Book of Praise* which should serve the churches well for some time.

Another matter of significance is the decision of Synod to reverse the decision of the previous synod that left the matter of women participating in the voting for office bearers in the freedom of the local church. Synod Carman considered the voting for office bearers as a matter belonging to the churches in common and decided that the churches should return to the voting practice as it officially was before 2010, namely, male communicant members only voting.



Regarding the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, Synod accepted the recommendation of the Board of Governors to appoint a fifth full-time professor. This resulted in the appointment of Rev. Dr. T.G. van Raalte as Professor of Ecclesiology.

Our relationship with you, our Dutch sister churches, also received considerable attention. It was good to have two deputies BBK, Rev. Kim Batteau and Br. Klaas Weze- man, attend this synod as official delegates. They could participate in the discussions of the advisory committees and address Synod regarding our relationship and matters of mutual concern.

We are very disappointed with comments in the report of Deputies BBK regarding the work of the CanRC Sub-committee for contact with the Dutch churches. Deputies BBK state in their report to your assembly that the CanRC deputies in their report to Synod Carman 2013 voiced objections to developments in the RCN and that “many of these objections have been based on personal observations within our churches, and not on the documents on the basis of which the churches have agreed

to be mutually accountable.” Brothers, this is not true. Every single issue reported on, as mandated by our prior synod, was carefully researched and based on primary documents published by the RCN such as Acts of broader assemblies, the TUK, and individuals employed by the TUK. In each case we listed the sources. When questioned by the chairman of Synod Carman 2013, your delegates confirmed that the information in the report is factual and correct and based on official documents.

In their report Deputies BBK further state that Synod Carman based its position “on the analyses provided by their own deputies, and the judgements that followed. Independent testing by the synods (of these analyses and judgements) remains in the background. This promotes a lack of clarity as to whether we are dealing with personal views of the deputies, or with the judgement of the synods.”

It should be understood, brothers, that the Canadian deputies sent their report to the churches six months prior to Synod Carman, and that all fifty-five churches had an opportunity to voice any objections to or disagree-

*Foreign delegates with the thirty-six Synod members*



ment with the report. Of these, twenty-one consistories interacted with the report but none disagreed in any way. Therefore it should be clear to you that the decision of Synod Carman is not based on personal opinions of deputies, but on the wholehearted opinion of the Canadian churches and Synod Carman itself. The specific objections and concerns do not necessarily need to be spelled out here, but can be found in the *Acts of CanRC Synod Carman 2013*, Article 148.4.3, posted on the website of the CanRC.

In the end, Synod Carman had the Christian duty to write you an official letter of admonition. This in accordance with the *Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship* which states that the churches shall assist each other in the maintenance, defence, and promotion of the Reformed faith in doctrine, church polity, discipline, and liturgy, and be watchful for deviations.

We had hoped for an opportunity to discuss these matters in more detail with the deputies BBK. However, it was made clear to us that deputies BBK do not consider it their mandate to hold such discussions which they believe to mean defending synod decisions. Unfortunately Synod Harderwijk confirmed the BBK understanding. We hope that this does not mean that contact and dialogue between our two federations now needs to take place in the form of letters from and to synods of the respective federations and that the role of deputies BBK has been reduced to being bearers of greetings and best wishes.

It is fitting to reflect that in this the year of our Lord 2014 we mark a number of historic events.

- It was sixty years ago (1954) that the Canadian Reformed Churches could come together for the first time in a General Synod assembly.
- It was seventy years ago (1944) that the Lord led the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (RCN) into a liberation from synodical hierarchy and a binding to unscriptural doctrines.

Just recently I came across a book commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Liberation, titled *Vrijmaking – Wederkeer* (Liberation – Return) edited by D. Deddens and M. te Velde.

It is interesting to note that the years preceding the 1944 Liberation were filled with disagreements about various theological opinions and a weakening and backsliding in the life of the church. Remarkable are the words of the chairman of Synod Rotterdam 1917, Rev. J.H. Landwehr. In his opening address he noted that church awareness (*kerkelijk besef*) had notably declined

## CALLED

Called by the Grace CanRC of Kerwood, Ontario:

**Candidate Jeff Poort**

Called by the Free Reformed Church of Launceston, Tasmania:

**Rev. W. Bredenhof**

of Hamilton (Providence), Ontario

## CHURCH NEWS

among many. “And” he said, “there is something else that comes with it. Of course, the church has to take note of the *times* (culture) in which God places her. But now for the last number of years it has been preached with a certain pathos that the church needs to *adjust* itself to the times she lives in. Undoubtedly this is meant well, but expressed in an unfortunate way. Because the mission (*roeping*) of God’s church does not lie in *adjusting*, but in *giving leadership*, in *directing*, in *witnessing*. And, if I am not mistaken, it can be seen here and there, that under the slogan: *the church needs to adjust itself to the times*, the times more and more exerts an influence on the church, than the church exerts on the times” (p 13). These words, freely translated by the undersigned, were spoken 100 years ago. This brings to mind the words of the Preacher: “What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”

As was also expressed in our address to Synod Harderwijk three years ago, the Canadian Reformed Churches do wish to convey to this assembly the seriousness with which we regard the developments in your midst. It grieves us to say these things, but on behalf of your Canadian sister churches we exhort and beseech you to maintain the dominant place that Scripture has always had in coming to decisions. Scripture must always be our norm, not current cultural manifestations or the times we live in. Also adherence to the confessions must remain a big priority, also when we speak with others in ecumenical settings.

We need each other, brothers. The pressures of unbelief are growing all the time, also in Canada. May we continue to be partners in contending “for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude 3) and may we continue to be a blessing to each other. May the Lord our God give this assembly everything it needs to stay true to his Word.

Thank you.

*Delivered by Gerard Nordeman on behalf of the Subcommittee for Relations with the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.*





*Cornelis Van Dam*  
Professor emeritus of  
Old Testament at the  
Canadian Reformed Theological  
Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario  
[cvandam@canrc.org](mailto:cvandam@canrc.org)

## Christians Fleeing Iraq

There are few places in the world today where the political landscape is changing the Christian presence in a nation as dramatically as in Iraq. Christianity has been part of Iraq from the first century. According to tradition, the apostles Thomas and Jude brought the gospel to this area, making Iraqi Christians among the oldest continuous Christian communities in the world. Many still worship in Aramaic. In 1987, Christians comprised about eight percent of the population, but their number has been decreasing, especially after the 2003 American invasion. Immediately before that event, Christians represented over five percent of the population with numbers estimated at about one and half million. But now their numbers are fast dwindling, especially with the arrival of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). Indeed, a recent news article on The Clarion Project website carried the title “Iraq: Massive Exodus Leaves Christians on Brink of Extinction.” What follows are quotes from this article.

Before the arrival of the Islamic State, many Christians had fled from persecution and sectarian violence north, to the Ninevah plain. Christians in Iraq view the Nineveh plain as their ancestral homeland. Many of them claim to be descendants of the original Assyrians, who once had an empire in the region based around their capital city of Nineveh.

Christians have continued to flee Mosul and the surrounding areas since the arrival of ISIS. The American based organization, Christian Solidarity International (CSI), is cooperating with the Assyrian group, Hammurabi Human Rights Organization, to provide aid to Christian refugees from the Islamic State.

One Christian city, Hamdaniya, 20 km from Mosul was shelled by the Islamic State without warning. Marwa, an eyewitness told CSI, “The shelling started at 3 p.m. on Wednesday (June 25), when I was looking after the children. I’d been very nervous since ISIS took Mosul, but the shelling started without warning. The shells landed every

thirty minutes, and the Kurds were returning fire. We stayed up all night and left at 7 a.m. on Thursday. Most of the people left before us. We have no idea why this happened, or what has become of our home.” Almost all of the city’s 50,000 people fled.

Reverend Dr. Andrew White is chaplain of St. George’s Anglican Church in Baghdad. As part of his newsletter, he sent out an appeal to his supporters in England and to Christians around the world to support Iraq’s community in light of the deteriorating situation. “The Iraqi army is surrounding Baghdad and shots can be heard from St. George’s church every night.” He said “The situation is so dire, and we need help more than ever.”

“Iraq is where Christianity started in the very beginning and Christians are now being persecuted. Numerous churches have been burnt down, and countless Christians have been forced to flee or killed. Even Christian graves are being desecrated and knocked over. The hatred is hard to understand.”

He described the difficulties in helping the dispossessed caused by the sheer volume of refugees. “We are trying to help some of the families that have fled to Erbil in northern Iraq, but the need is just so great it is difficult. People are left with nothing but the clothes they were wearing.”

This great tragedy unfolding in Iraq potentially has repercussions for the entire world. After all, ISIS has not only declared itself to be a sovereign state, but its Iraqi Jihadist leader has announced that he is to be known from now on as Caliph Ibrahim, emir of the faithful in the Islamic State. This means the rebirth of the Caliphate, which is more than a country and is to encompass every Muslim on earth. This self-proclaimed Caliph basically demands total submission and obedience from all Muslims. In his view those who do not do so are not true Muslims. Clearly, Caliph Ibrahim’s ambitions go far beyond Iraq.





## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

---

### Dear Editor,

In your *Readers Forum* of June 20, Brother George Helder writes about the church parish and (as he claims) the biblical necessity to maintain strict boundaries between congregations. In years past I might have agreed with him but I do so no longer. Helder makes broad sweeping statements without much defense.

He claims all churches have boundary agreements approved by their classis. I, for one, have never heard of a classis decision that adopted and approved a boundary. Before new churches are to be instituted often a suggested boundary is set in place, and those who live within or beyond it are asked if they would join the new church. Those who do not join continue to be members of the original church though they live in the new parish. This practice demonstrates that there are no strict boundary decisions to which the “[c]hurches must continue to hold each other accountable and demand observance of the established parishes by its membership.” Criteria for the institution of a new congregation does not include a classis-approved boundary.

Helder also suggests that allowing church members to cross boundaries is a “tacit acceptance of the doctrine of pluriformity.” If the author is referring to Kuyper’s doctrine based on Neo-platonic philosophical ideas of the church, I think he is wrong. If he is referring to the idea that the church is not a “franchise” where everything looks exactly the same from congregation to congregation, but rather has many forms, I suppose he’s right. I used to think that it was a good thing if every congregation seemed to “look” exactly the same. I have come to learn, however, that congregations have history, character, and vision. This history, character, and vision is different from place to place. Churches, therefore, will come to look very different from each other. I accept that kind of pluriformity of the church. Rejecting Kuyper’s philosophical pluriformity does not imply institutional uniformity!

Moreover, as the church of our Lord Jesus finds expression in time and place, a member might flourish in

one setting and not in another. We might imagine new Christians remaining members of the congregation in which they were discipled even though they might have moved across a parish boundary. Or we might imagine a senior moving into a parish where the congregational singing is led by piano and guitar and who might rather flourish and be blessed in a church where the singing is led by the traditional pipe organ. I find no fault in that.

History also proves that the proper view of the church (ecclesiology) is *not* under threat if we do not maintain boundaries, as the author claims. He asserts that this doctrine was re-established in The Netherlands through the Secessions of 1834 and 1886 and the Union of 92. However, after the Union, there were A (1834) churches and B (1886) churches. These local congregations had very different characters, though often they were in the same cities. The Union Synod didn’t redraw boundaries and say for example, “Everyone east of this line goes to this Union church, and everyone west of this line goes to that Union church.” No, A and B churches flourished side by side with very different characters in one federation under common confessions and church order. The very history the author calls upon to bolster his opinion demonstrates the weakness of his thesis.

When our churches and the URCNA unite (DV) I cannot imagine that we would redraw church boundaries and assign the members to specific congregations. As Helder notes there are three URCNA congregations overlapping the eight Hamilton and Burlington CanRC congregations. The desired union will demonstrate the pluriform and multifaceted character of the church! And I embrace that.

John van Popta 



*Letters to the Editor should be written in a brotherly fashion in order to be considered for publication.*

*Submissions need to be less than one page in length.*

John Ludwig  
Minister of the  
Canadian Reformed Church  
at Ancaster, Ontario

# 1 Corinthians 11: Headship of Husbands or Man?

## Introduction

In a series of articles entitled, *Should Sisters vote for Officebearers?* Dr. G. Visscher dealt with the question, “Does the Bible teach ‘the headship of man?’” (Vol 63, No 11) This was prompted by the decision of General Synod Carman which decided that the churches should return to the voting practice as it officially was before 2010, namely, voting only by male communicant members. Carman based this decision on Scripture by considering, among other things, “The Bible teaches that man is the head of his wife (Genesis 2, Ephesians 5: 22-33). . . The Bible shows that this position of headship extends to the position of man and woman in the assembly of God’s people (1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14: 33b-34, 1Timothy 2:11-13)” (*Acts General Synod 2013*, Art 110, Consideration 3.5, p. 118). Dr. Visscher disputes the use of 1 Corinthians 11:3 by GS. This is the key verse in that chapter because here Paul states the general thesis, the foundational principle, which governs the entire discussion that follows, “Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of *the woman is man*, and the head of Christ is God” (NIV, emphasis mine). In Dr. Visscher’s opinion, this passage of Paul about headship is restricted to husbands, as one also finds in the ESV, “But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of *a wife is her husband*, and the head of Christ is God.” Dr. Visscher concludes, “The headship of husbands is true; the general comprehensive headship of man is a myth.”

## Culture and grammar

What arguments did Dr. Visscher present in order to defend his view? Two arguments: a cultural one and a grammatical one. Concerning the first, he accepts the conclusion of Bruce W. Winter, a conservative New Testament scholar and Director of the Institute for Early Christianity in the Graeco-Roman World, that the head-covering which Paul commands women in Corinth

to wear during worship is the wedding veil. Therefore the references to “women” throughout this passage should be limited to “wives.”

The wearing or not wearing of a head-covering, however, is clearly a culturally bound practice, and so attempts are made to interpret Paul’s injunctions in light of Corinthian culture. Unfortunately, available evidence on head coverings in the first century is not conclusive. Contemporary art and literature suggests that women only sometimes wore their hair covered when in public. What is more, it is entirely possible that Paul’s instructions ran counter to common liturgical practices in Corinth. That’s why one NT scholar wrote, “The evidence seems to indicate that, in the first century among the Romans, both men and women covered their heads at worship, while among the Greeks, both men and women uncovered their heads when they worshiped. Thus the tradition which Paul advocated in 1 Corinthians 11 was, contrary to popular opinion today, not grounded in the social customs of Corinth, but opposed to them” (Ralph Bruce Terry, *A Discourse Analysis of First Corinthians*, 31). The attempt to draw interpretive conclusions from the cultural setting is really a dead end. The assertion made by Bruce W. Winter in *After Paul Left Corinth* that “any reference connecting a woman and a veil would immediately alert a first-century reader to the fact that she was a married woman” (p 127) is not adequately supported by ancient sources. It is one thing to seek a more lucid understanding of the biblical content by investigating the cultural situation of the first century; it is quite another to interpret the New Testament to the point that our zeal for knowledge of the culture obscures or takes precedence over what is actually written.

Concerning the second, the grammatical argument that Dr. Visscher raises, it too is inconclusive. He argues against the interpretation of the definite article (“the man”) in verse three as denoting “the genus, the class, man.” I did not fully understand his reasoning - which he admits is overly tech-

nical – because he wrote that “the definite article is there before the word ‘head.’” In my Greek New Testament, however, the definite article is there before “man.” Literally it reads, “. . .head of woman [is] *the* man.” Paul gives the subject (man) the definite article, so the straightforward reading of the verse is, “The man is the head of the woman.”<sup>1</sup> Since Greek uses the same word for man and husband (*aner*), and the same word for woman and wife (*gune*), ordinarily a pronoun is used with the Greek words when they have the sense “husband” and “wife” (i.e. *her man* means *her husband*, and *his woman* means *his wife*), but there are no such pronouns here. Dr. Visscher actually makes that for five of the six texts that he lists which describe married women “the additional word ‘*idion*’ (their ‘own’ husbands) is used to emphasize that this subjection has to do with being subject to their own husbands (and not the husbands of another woman).” Since word study, grammar, and culture do not help us in interpreting “man” and “woman” it is the context alone that determines the meaning.

## Context

For several contextual reasons<sup>2</sup> we must understand 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 as pertaining to the relationship between men and women in general – married or unmarried:

- a. In the first part of verse three we read that “the head of every man is Christ.” There is no restriction here. No one would dare to assert that Christ is only the head of married men. After this all-inclusive statement follows another. In the same breath Paul says, “. . .the head of the woman is the man.” Again, a general expression. The Apostle is not talking about the relationship between one man and one woman, but about man and woman as such.
- b. Paul is not referring only to married men when he says in verse 4, “Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head.” It does not make sense to limit it to married men. What he says applies to all the men in the church, whether a widower, bachelor, or husband.
- c. If “man” does not mean “husband” in verse four, we would not expect woman to mean “wife” in the following verse, “And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head. . . .” We would expect the terms to be correlated in sense when they occur together.

- d. In verses 8 and 9 Paul proceeds to make arguments based not upon the special circumstances of marriage but upon the *creation* of man and woman, “For man did not come from woman, but woman from man, neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.”
- e. The point he makes about the head-covering and the long hair of women (verses 6 and 15) would apply to all women. It does not make sense to limit the meaning of “woman” to “wife” in the phrase, “...it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off” (v 6a), and so the conclusion, “she should cover her head” (v 6b) cannot be restricted to married women either.
- f. In verse 12 the phrase “man is born of woman” cannot mean “the husband is born of the wife.”

Hans Conzelmann, in his commentary *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, therefore rightly observes that although “interpreters often allude to the marriage relationship” in their discussions of this passage, “it is not questions of marriage that are being discussed here, but questions of the community. It is a case of the nature of man and woman as such. Paul marshals a number of arguments; the argument concerning the status of the two in marriage is not mentioned” (English edition, p. 184.).

## Conclusion

1 Corinthians 11:3 is a myth buster. It reveals that there is, indeed, a general comprehensive headship of man. Synod Carman was correct in referring to this text in its considerations when stating, “The Bible shows that this position of headship extends to the position of man and woman in the assembly of God’s people.” In fact, it extends to all of society and applies to everyone whether believer or unbeliever, but especially to God’s church because there men and women, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, seek to live in accordance with his living and abiding Word.

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Dr. Visscher is referring to the first time that “head” is used in this verse, “The head of every man is Christ” and that the definite article is understood to be carried over and thus precedes the other two instances where “head” is used in the same verse. That’s possible, but it doesn’t necessarily preclude the interpretation of “man” as the genus, the class.

<sup>2</sup> For several of these arguments I’m indebted to an insightful study by J. Van Bruggen, *Emancipatie en Bijbel: Kommentaar uit 1 Korinthe 11* (Ton Bolland, 1979).



*From time to time Clarion will publish longer responses to articles received.  
The decision as to which responses to publish will rest with the Editor.*





*William den Hollander*  
Minister emeritus of the  
Bethel Canadian Reformed  
Church of Toronto, Ontario  
[denhollanderw@gmail.com](mailto:denhollanderw@gmail.com)

# Q

Can you please explain what Hebrews 8:10 means in the context of Hebrews 8, the book of Hebrews, and the rest of the Bible?

# A

In the epistle to the Hebrews the (unknown) author speaks extensively about the covenant. We don't know exactly who his addressees are: messianic Jews in Jerusalem or in Judea and Galilee, or a congregation with Christians from the Jews and Gentiles, second generation Christians

around the year 80 A.D.? He indicates that they're losing hope and courage, yes also that some are in danger of leaving the faith, or falling back into the Jewish life of the old covenant. The author exhorts them to remain faithful to Christ and to find in him the full assurance of their faith and salvation. His letter is more like a sermon than an epistle, in which he includes quotes and reference to the OT. In chapter 8:1 we find the *theme* and main focus of his topic: in Christ we have a terrific high priest who does his daily work for us with power and glory in his heavenly sanctuary! In this central chapter of his epistle he includes the most extensive quote from the OT, the prophecy of Jeremiah in chapter 31 about the new covenant! Jeremiah's prophecy is of fundamental importance for the life of the NT church under Christ, the high priest of the new covenant. It shows the bridge God would lay across the breach Israel caused by its disobedience (8:8): a new covenant!

In Hebrews 8 the author shows that the old order was inadequate as a way of restoration of the communion with God. The Sinai covenant and the old priestly service ran stuck on the sin of God's people and were unable to accomplish the atonement and renewal necessary for this restored communion. This had become evident very much in the captivity of God's covenant nation. At that time, however, Jeremiah had comforted Israel with the promise

of a new and better covenant, a covenant of atonement, forgiveness of sins, and the renewal of hearts, which will open the way to a new life in which it will apply to each and everyone of God's people, "I will be their God and they will be my people." In Hebrews 8 and 10 the author shows that this new order in the eternal covenant of God will be possible thanks to the perfect sacrifice of Christ! In other words, the *old* covenant refers to a period in the eternal covenant the LORD made with Abraham (the Sinai covenant till the captivity), while Jeremiah announces the coming of a *new* covenant, a better covenant, with a *better* and *more powerful* way of atonement, reconciliation, and renewal of heart and mind; of life and communion with God!

The author shows that Christ is the Mediator of this new covenant, who takes away the sins committed during the first covenant because the sacrifices of animals couldn't remove them (9:15); his priestly service worked retro-actively. His sacrifice is the firm foundation for this new covenant so that God will not remember the sins any longer nor sees them as covenant breakers. His sacrifice once offered at the cross is the only ground of our salvation! As Christ himself put it at the institution of the Lord's Supper, "This is the new covenant in *my* blood!" Paul also calls himself the apostle of the new covenant, alluding to Jeremiah 31:31 (2 Cor 3:6; cf. Rom 11:27; Jer 31: 33, 34). God abolished the old to establish the new (10:10). Christ is the bridge over which sinners may approach God with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, their hearts sprinkled to cleanse them from a guilty conscience and having their bodies washed with pure water (10:22).

It's this one sacrifice that lead to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which is the unifying truth of God's

Word and the NT sacraments as well. Our baptism, administered to the believers and their seed (in accordance with the principles of the *eternal* covenant made with Abraham), testifies that Christ's sacrifice made an end to all shedding of blood for the atonement of our sins and the reconciliation with God, and signifies the washing away of our sins and the renewal of our life. In the Lord's Supper, also, we celebrate the new covenant in his blood, the covenant of reconciliation and renewal!

Thus we see the continuity in the covenant of grace, the *progression* from the old to the new covenant in Christ's blood, and the bridge to the new world, opening

the way to the celebration of the communion with God on the new earth, where God's faithful covenant children will be gathered around the throne of the Lamb (Rev 22:3). That will be the fulfilment of the restoration of the communion with God.

*Is there something you've been wanting to know?  
An answer you've been looking for?*

### **Ask us a question!**

Please direct questions to Rev. W. den Hollander  
denhollanderw@gmail.com  
23 Kinsman Drive, Binbrook, ON L0R 1C0



---

# Sixtieth Anniversary of the Arrival of the Hofsink Family in Canada

*Hanna Lengkeek  
(née Hofsink)  
The oldest of the  
eight Hofsink siblings*

The year 2014 is a very important one for the children of John and Swanette Hofsink. The family arrived in Canada in 1954, which of course is now sixty years ago. Last year some of us started thinking of how we could best celebrate this important milestone and where it should be. It was decided that we should all travel to Québec City, where we first set foot on Canadian soil.

On May 25, 1954 the Hofsink family left Holland to start a new life in Canada. We sailed on the *Castel Felice*, an Italian ship, and arrived at Québec City on June 3. Our family enjoyed coming up the Saint Lawrence River and never forgot how impressive the city looked. This was Canada?

Our parents and their eight children were in for a lot more memorable experiences. Once on land and through Customs and Immigration we were directed to the Railway

Station, the *Gare du Palais*. Such an impressive building we had never seen. The train tickets were purchased in advance, so we started the long trek across Canada, to Northern British Columbia, to a small village named Houston. We were welcomed there by our father's two uncles, who were our sponsors. It was quite a culture shock compared to our previous life in Holland.

The following year there was an addition to our family, a sister who had Canadian citizenship before any of us! She was later diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and never walked or spoke. Because of all the love by her family she lived to be fifty-two years of age and she died about seven years ago.

And there we were again, all eight of us with our spouses, arriving on the second and third of June 2014.



*John and Swanette Hofsink's departure from Rotterdam (children standing in the same order as other photo; the baby is Sophie).*

We stayed at the Quality Inn and Suites in Lévis until Saturday morning, June 7. Of course we thought it was fun to cross the Saint Lawrence River by ferry and check out Québec during the next three days. Photos were taken at the Railway Station that proudly waited for our return after sixty years.

Our youngest brother still lives in Houston and two more siblings live in British Columbia, three in Alberta, and two in Ontario. We all love Canada and all of its beautiful nature and history as it is described in our national anthem.



*Hofsink siblings – Back row (l to r): Sonja (Van Bostelen), Betty (Scholtens), Ben, Sophie (Vanderleest), Hanna (Lengkeek), Jennie (Hooimeyer). Front row (l to r): John, Barry*

Our parents could not have picked a more wonderful place to move their family to.

Too bad they had now passed away and could not celebrate with us. We had the opportunity to reminisce and remember them in the evenings though when we all gathered at the hotel after dinner. We listened to presentations on the many memories of our parents on our voyage across the Atlantic and the long trip by train across Canada in 1954.



The hotel had been so good to offer us the use of a private conference room to meet and one of us could close with daily devotions, including the singing of hymns and psalms. Now, we have all returned to our places of residence, thankful that we could celebrate this special occasion together. One Psalm we read in closing, Psalm 46:11 summed it up so well where it reads: "The Lord Almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our fortress!"







*John Smith*  
Professor of Old Testament  
Studies at the Canadian  
Reformed Theological  
Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario  
[jsmith@crtsc.ca](mailto:jsmith@crtsc.ca)

### **Genevans for Pianists**

**Sheet Music: Psalmen Davids:  
Koraalvoorspelen & Harmonisaties voor Piano  
of Orgel. Boudewijn Zwart. Bell Moods, 2013.  
36 pages. ISBN 978-90-821526-0-9**

**CD: Psalmen Davids Piano. Boudewijn Zwart  
BM1734. 2012. Made by Sony DADC Austria**

Accompanying congregational singing in Canadian Reformed worship services was for many years virtually the exclusive domain of organists, whether well-trained or not so much, but over the past decade or two, pianists have increasingly been called into service. Initially many had to do their best with chorale books written for organ. Not seldom the result was that pianists played Genevans when they had to accompany the singing but turned to other genres for pre- and post-service music and during the collection. One can hardly blame them for preferring music actually written for their instrument! It's no easy task for pianists to find quality sheet music suitable for Reformed worship services. Thankfully the situation is beginning to change, due in large part to the diligent efforts of talented musicians in our own circles who have generously donated time and talents to produce Genevan arrangements for piano. It's a lot of work, and there's always room for more, so the purpose of this review is to introduce a little help from across the pond.

Boudewijn Zwart is a well-known pianist, organist, and carillonneur in The Netherlands. For those who enjoy a bit of Dutch bingo, he is the son of Jaap, nephew of Willem Hendrik and Dirk Jansz, and grandson of Jan Boudewijn. He has published a small collection of preludes and harmonizations. The collection includes nine Genevans: Psalms 4, 5 (64), 13, 17 (63, 70), 18 (144), 22, 23, 38, and 42. Six of these are recorded on the piano CD, which includes an additional twelve Psalms. Zwart plays precisely and sensitively, and his piano CD has become a favourite in our home of a Sunday morning or a quiet evening. I especially like the *Preludium* on Psalm 4 and the *Trio* on Psalm 42, both written in baroque style. The composer has included explanatory notes that explain his compositional choices in light of the text of Scripture. These notes also attest to his personal faith and his desire to give glory to God.

Zwart has also produced a double-CD set for organ, which includes arrangements of forty-three Psalms, so one may expect that more sheet music is forthcoming. All of the above products are available, either via the author's own website ([www.bellmoods.com](http://www.bellmoods.com)) or from the Canadian distributor, Inheritance Publications (<http://www.inhpubl.net/>).

