

# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

VOLUME 50, no. 10

MAY 11, 2001

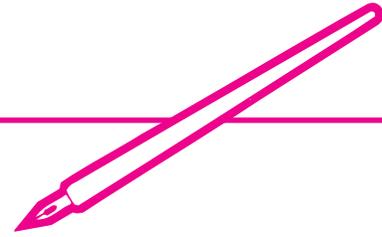


*The interior of Neerlandia  
Canadian Reformed Church  
- site of General Synod 2001*

Numbers

10:1-10

By N.H. Gootjes



## Between true church and sister church

We believe that the church exists worldwide. This is expressed in our Belgic Confession: "This holy church is not confined or limited to one particular place or to certain persons, but it is spread and dispersed throughout the entire world. However, it is joined and united with heart and will, in one and the same Spirit, by the power of faith" (Art 27). The Heidelberg Catechism says something very similar: "I believe that the Son of God, out of the whole human race, gathers, defends and preserves for himself, by his Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith, a church chosen to everlasting life" (Lord's Day 21). The Son of God does not limit his work to one race. He works in many nations to bring together his people.

We see this in the international contacts we may have as Canadian Reformed Churches. The reports of the Committee for Contact with Churches Abroad inform us about churches in all parts of the world, not only in the Americas but also in Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. We are thankful that everywhere in the world faithful churches exist, and that we can keep in contact with them.

In these contacts with foreign churches, we use two different words. We speak of true churches and we speak of sister churches. The question can be asked why two different expressions are used. What is the meaning of each?

*We are thankful that everywhere in the world faithful churches exist.*

### True church

The meaning of the term "true church" is clear, for it is explained in our confessions. In Article 29 of the Belgic Confession, three marks of the true church are mentioned.

The first mark concerns the preaching. The first mark is the pure preaching of the gospel. This word "gospel" does not mean a particular book of the Bible such as the gospel of Matthew or the gospel of John. The gospel is the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, as it can be found everywhere in the Bible. God has revealed this in the many books of the Old and the New Testament. This is preached in agreement with God's will.

The second mark is the pure administration of the sacraments. There are no additions to the sacraments: only baptism and the Lord's Supper are administered. When there is a baptism, this is done in agreement with God's Word. And

when the Lord's Supper is celebrated, it is done according to the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The third mark is maintaining church discipline. Sin is not condoned in the congregations. It is pointed out and countered in the preaching. And if hardening in sin is found in some people, they are admonished and disciplined.

If these things can be observed in a church, it is a true church. It is marvellous to discover how Jesus Christ has faithful churches all over the world. Jesus Christ is King in heaven and works at the church and with the church. He continues to bring them together and to maintain them.

*A church can be called true church when these divergencies exist. But it cannot be treated as a sister church as long as they exist.*

### Sister church

The designation "sister church" does not have the same confessional weight as the designation "true church." This term cannot be found in any of our confessions. It is an indication used for churches with which we have established an official relationship. Such a relationship is only established with churches we have learned to recognize as true churches.

Within our churches we call this official relationship "Ecclesiastical Fellowship." Other words are also used, for example the term "fraternal relations." Personally, I like the name "sister church." It brings to mind the close relationship brothers and sisters have. They feel related even when they are living far apart. The name has a biblical connotation, for the apostle John uses an expression which is very close. He wrote his second epistle to a church which he called: "the chosen lady and her children" (2 John 1) and he conveyed the greetings from "the children of your chosen sister" (2 John 13).

The rules for the Ecclesiastical Fellowship can be found in the Acts of Synod 1992. I will quote the first and most important of these rules:

The churches shall assist each other in the maintenance, defense and promotion of the Reformed faith in doctrine, church polity, discipline, and liturgy, and be watchful for deviations.<sup>1</sup>

ment presented to Synod 1900. Although the reason was not given right away, our Canadian Reformed Churches have recognized the marks of the true church in the OPC since 1977. It is not a perfect church, but it is a church where the true preaching of the gospel is maintained, the sacraments are administered as Jesus Christ has instituted them and where church discipline functions.

### *What's inside?*

During the history of our churches here in North America, we have had and have developed many contacts with other churches. It is not uncommon to hear expressions like "true church" or "sister church." Sometimes we might wonder what these terms mean and whether there is a difference between them. Dr. N. H. Gootjes addresses this matter in his editorial. While speaking about relations with other churches, it is also fitting to discuss the topic of attestations in connection with admission to the Lord's Supper in another church. Rev. T. Van Raalte discusses this in his second and concluding article on the matter of attestations.

We are also enlightened by several press releases of different classes, a report on Guelph's new minister, and a new CD. We are always reminded of how the Lord's work progresses and of the hidden talents which continue to come to light.

Recently I was asked whether the editors agreed with everything published in *Clarion*. Of course we have certain standards. However, not all the articles represent views shared by the editors, nor do they represent the official view of the federation. At the same time, we like to keep an open forum and feel that different views have a right to be aired.

RA



Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd., Winnipeg, MB

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

Editor: J. Visscher  
 Managing Editor: R. Aasman  
 Coeditors: J. De Jong, N.H. Gootjes, Cl. Stam

**ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:**

CLARION  
 26 Inverness Crescent, St. Albert, AB T8N 5J3  
 Fax: (780) 418-1506 E-Mail: raasman@canrc.org

**ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:  
 (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):**

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.  
 One Beghin Avenue  
 Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2J 3X5  
 Phone: (204) 663-9000 Fax: (204) 663-9202  
 Email: clarion@premier.mb.ca  
 World Wide Web address: <premier.mb.ca/clarion.html>

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES  
 FOR 2001**

|                   | Regular<br>Mail | Air<br>Mail |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Canada*           | \$38.00*        | \$62.00*    |
| U.S.A. U.S. Funds | \$40.00         | \$54.00     |
| International     | \$62.00         | \$93.00     |



\* Including 7% GST – No. 890967359RT  
 Advertisements: \$12.25 per column inch

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

**Cancellation Agreement**

Unless a written subscription cancellation is received we assume you wish to continue to subscribe. You will be invoiced prior to the subscription renewal date.

Agreement No. 1377531  
 Publications Mail Registration No. 09907  
 ISSN 0383-0438

**Copyright © Premier Printing Ltd.**

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

**IN THIS ISSUE**

Editorial – Between true church and sister church  
 — N.H. Gootjes .....230

Treasures, New and Old – Cords of Sin  
 — J. Moesker .....233

Attestations do serve a scriptural purpose (2)  
 — T. Van Raalte .....234

Ray of Sunshine .....236

A New Herald in Guelph — Miriam Verburg .....237

CD Review — G. Nederveen .....238

Education Matters .....239

Press Releases – Classes Northern Ontario,  
 Ontario South, Pacific West .....242

Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty .....244

The OPC is not a sister church. The reason for this is a list of “divergencies,” differences between the OPC and the Canadian Reformed Churches. They are the following:

1. Lack of agreement on the meaning and application of “confessional membership.”
2. Lack of agreement on the supervision of the Lord’s table.
3. Lack of agreement on the relationship of the OPC with the CRC.

The third of these issues was resolved when the OPC ended its official relationship with the CRC. The issues of confes-

***The term “true church” speaks about the character of the church.***

the and to deal with the content of these agreements and the changes made to them by Synod Fergus, 1998. Rather, the question of the function these issues have acquired must be considered. The two divergencies form the dividing line between sister church and true church. A church can be called true church when these divergencies exist. But it cannot be treated as a sister church as long as they exist.

This is a remarkable procedure, to say the least. A true church preaches the true doctrine, but a sister church has to go beyond that (“confessional membership”). A true church has a pure administration of the Lord’s Supper, but a sister church has to have something in addition (“more than a verbal warning”).

This gives the impression that a sister church lives on a higher, more biblical level than a true church. It is obvious that something went wrong here. Somehow we have become so much involved in this discussion that we treat the designation “sister church” as a more confessionally Reformed church than a true church. The conventional designation “sister church” becomes more important than the confessional designation “true church.” This will not have been

the intention, but that is how the terms function in our relations with other churches.

We should return to the original meaning of these terms to get out of this rut. In fact, they approach the church from different angles. The term “true church” speaks about the character of the church. The question is asked whether we can notice that this church “governs itself according to the pure Word of God, rejecting all things contrary to it and regarding Jesus Christ as the only Head” (Art 29 of the Belgic Confession). The term “sister church” relates to an administrative issue. It indicates the churches with which we are able to maintain contact. They are not churches which are more Reformed than others, and for which more stringent rules should be made. They are Reformed churches which we have met under God’s providence and with which we are able to establish a relationship for mutual benefit.

Our understanding of the place and function of the term “sister church” may be in need of reformation.

<sup>1</sup>See *Acts General Synod Lincoln, ON, 1992*, 33

<sup>2</sup>See *Acts General Synod Fergus, ON, 1998*, 157.



By J. Moesker

## Cords of sin

*When the evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast.  
(Proverbs 5:21)*

Ever hear of Houdini? Years ago he used to tie himself up or let himself be locked in places. Then he'd try to loosen himself or pick the lock to let himself out. Imagine someone tying himself up with rope so tightly that he couldn't get himself loose again! You'd think he were crazy, wouldn't you? Why would you tie yourself up like that? There's nothing like being free! The sad thing is that we all have a tendency to do that. Not physically, but spiritually. Because of our sinful nature, we want to tie ourselves up until we can't get loose again.

That text quoted above speaks of tying oneself up with sin. It actually has two images in it. The first part speaks of the evil deeds of a wicked man ensnaring him. The idea here is of very fine, almost invisible nets which people in the Middle East used to set out to catch doves or pigeons. They would scatter some grain, and then the birds would fly into those nets and become entangled in them.

Get the picture? The first time a certain sin is committed, it's pleasant. However, there's still the feeling of guilt. The second time is easier. The conscience doesn't resist as strongly anymore. The third time it's easier yet. It's justified with some excuses. It becomes easier and easier to do the wicked deed. At the same time it becomes harder to resist. Eventually the conscience falls silent and the evil deeds have ensnared or captured that person. He or she would have a harder and harder time giving it up. Even though it's not really as pleasant as before anymore, the person is captured by the sin.

The second phrase of the text speaks in terms of the cords of sin

holding that person fast. Someone who gives in to a sin and continues in it becomes completely tied up by his or her sin. A person's sinful thoughts and desires, as it were, make a rope of his sin. And as that person continues in that sin, he wraps those cords of sin round and round himself until he can't move anymore. He ends up becoming completely tied up, unable to loosen himself anymore. Continuing in a sin results in that sin eventually tying you up hand and foot more and more so that you can't escape it anymore.

Continuing in sin doesn't give the satisfaction promised but only entraps and enslaves. That can take place even with the language you use. A person starts to use unsavoury language with other people at work, maybe to show off. Once begun, it eventually becomes harder and harder to stop using that kind of language. Or think of relationships. Someone falls into a sinful or abusive pattern in a marriage relationship and it becomes a destructive way of life which entraps you, holds you fast.

That's the harvest of sin. In Romans 1 the apostle Paul writes about the wicked and states that because they rejected the truth, God gave them over to shameful lusts. The more people continue in any sin, the more God gives them over to that too, until the cords of sin completely hold that person fast.

Maybe you've become ensnared by evil and are now bound by cords of that sin, so that you're all tied up and you can't get yourself out and you don't know what to do. Maybe you realize that, but figure you can

never be free of that sin anymore. Don't give up! Those cords which hold you so tightly that you can't move can still be broken! You need to get down on your knees and go to Jesus Christ in humble repentance. He alone has the power to break the cords and set you free from those self-made bonds of sin!

Jesus Christ let Himself be bound with cords in Gethsemane. He even let Himself be nailed fast to a cross. And He, the Son of God, let that happen to Him so that He might untie us and free us not only from the guilt but also the power of sin. We see that not even a sealed grave could hold Him anymore. He suffered, died and rose again so that sin might not longer reign over our mortal flesh.

If we go to Him in true, humble repentance, his Spirit will break the entanglements and cords of sin. Instead we will more and more be bound to Him with cords of love. And the question should be easy to answer, shouldn't it? What would you rather be: completely tied up by cords of your sin or completely surrounded by cords of God's love? C

*In LINK with you*



Check out Clarion's website at:  
<[premier.mb.ca/clarion.html](http://premier.mb.ca/clarion.html)>

Churches Note: We invite you to link Clarion's homepage to your church's homepage.

---

# Attestations do serve a scriptural purpose (Part 2)

By T. Van Raalte

## Introduction

In the previous article the scriptural basis for an outside attest was ascertained. The practice was well known among the New Testament churches. The idea of needing a witness for confirmation is also thoroughly scriptural. Those who can witness to one's Christian character need time to observe the Christian walk.

At the same time, whoever would celebrate the Lord's Supper is called to examine themselves. The attest does not take away the need for self-examination.

## Self-examination in 1 Corinthians 11:26-32

Self-examination is the duty of all Lord's Supper celebrants. Unfortunately, some people think that this negates the use of attestations and that the examination by others is also ruled out.

Regarding self-examination and its basis in 1 Corinthians 11, I would first remark that the text says nothing about members who were *visiting* Corinth. It is written to the congregation members who are settled in Corinth and who are under a body of elders. The thrust of the admonition comes in verse 28, "Let a man examine himself." Note, however, that the emphasis is equally on "testing" and on "himself." The problem was that no one was doing any kind of examination and the apostle Paul tells them where all examination starts – you first examine yourself before you can take the speck out of your brother's eye (Matt 7:1-5). The Corinthians were factious and thus fell into the trap of judging each other without ever judging themselves (1 Cor 1:11-12; 11:18).

1 Corinthians 11 was written to instruct the members to stop pointing the finger at others, stop thinking too highly of themselves, and start examining themselves.

## Guarding the table and self-examination

It is not helpful to pit the scriptural teaching about self-examination over against the scriptural teaching about elders keeping watch over the flock and

thus guarding the table (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2; 1 Tim 5:17). These two principles go together, not against each other.

*Self-examination* is a calling for every attendee of Lord's Supper. The CanRC in no way impinge on the call for members or guests to examine themselves when we use written attestations. This calling stands. It is explained in the form for Lord's Supper, and is applied in the sermons (*Book of Praise*, p. 595). If anything, the practice of *interviewing* visitors impinges on self-examination, for it is the elders who are now perceived to be doing the examining and making the decision! The very questions that serve for *self-examination* in the form for Lord's Supper are often used in interviews.

*Attestations were never devised to replace self-examination.*

Here is the main problem: to mix the whole question of self-examination into the question of the giving of attestations misses the point. Attestations were never devised to replace self-examination. That is not their purpose. If they were, why would the congregation and visitors be reminded to examine themselves at each Lord's Supper celebration? The attestation is the valid witness and testimony of others to the godly doctrine and life of the person named, and their communicant status in congregation "x." It is a way of stating that the person about whom this attest is made, is able to examine themselves as a mature Christian. On this basis the elders of congregation "y" can admit the guest. Upon being admitted, that guest still has the duty of self-examination, no matter how godly they are, so that the sacrament may strengthen their faith, rather than be for their judgment. Each and every celebrant has to examine themselves, not one excepted.

The attest vouches that the visitor has been tested and observed and is able to meet the prerequisites for table fellowship, namely, to proclaim the

death of the Lord, to examine themselves, and to recognize the body of the Lord (1 Cor 11:26, 28, 29). They have learned how to examine themselves, for it is evident in their godly walk that they do so.

## Goal of self-examination

The goal of self-examination is that we should know our sins and then be sorry for those sins, repenting unto God. Whether we come as a visitor or belong to the congregation where the Supper is being celebrated, we are always called to examine our hearts and lives for sin before taking part in this Supper. The apostle Paul did not tell the Corinthians to examine themselves in order to stay away from the table, but to examine themselves in order that they might repent and might therefore not be judged by God – "But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under [God's] judgment" (1 Cor 11:31).

A "literal" translation of 1 Corinthians 11:28 would be, "And let a man examine himself and thus let him eat from the bread and let him drink from the cup." If the apostle Paul meant this self-examination to determine *whether or not* one attends the table, he would have written verse 28 as follows, "And let man examine himself and thus let him decide whether or not he should eat." The point is, Paul assumes that the congregation members ought to be there, gathered round the table, taking part. He is teaching them what necessary steps they ought to follow before taking part.

If they fail to test their own lives, find their sins, repent of those sins, and turn to God, they only increase their judgment by taking the token of covenant blessings which does not belong to them until they repent. If they do test their own lives, do expose their own sins, and do repent, then the Supper is given by Jesus Christ to confirm to them that their sins are really and truly forgiven, as certainly as they partake. The goal of self-examination is to attend rightly, not to stay away.

The apostle Paul wanted the Corinthian congregation to experience

the rich blessings of covenant communion with God and the token of his blessings in the Supper of our Lord. You would think that he would have told them to stop celebrating the Lord's Supper because they were so divisive and factious. But instead he positively instructs them how to improve the situation.

### Being safe

I think that it is scriptural to require an outside attest from guests who desire to join the congregation for Lord's Supper. This ought to come from the elders under whose jurisdiction they reside, in whatever form (phone, fax, perhaps email, preferably a signed attest).

*The goal of self-examination is to attend rightly, not to stay away.*

I would say that we are being "safe" by not admitting guests who have no way of providing an outside attest to their doctrine and life. By saying "safe," I mean that the danger of the wrath of God upon the whole congregation (Josh 7:1-5, 11-12; Ps 50:16 and 1 Cor 11:30) is a greater motivating fear to the church than the fear that one true believer might not be built up in faith *by eating and drinking*.

Keep this in mind: true believers can be built up by listening and seeing, even if they are not touching and tasting. The celebration of the sacrament is not without meaning for the children and visitors who observe it!

### Achan and Corinth

When Achan sinned by taking some of the things devoted to destruction, he brought the whole nation of Israel under the ban, not just himself (Josh 7:1, 11-12). As a result, the whole company of about 3000 men suffered defeat and thirty-six of them were killed. God did not say to Joshua that Achan had sinned, but that *Israel* had sinned. Until Israel removed that sin from among them, they were under God's wrath. This underlines the importance of congregation members following Christ's commands in Matthew 18. God fully involves us in the rooting out of sin from our midst (Lord's Day 31). Undoubtedly someone else in Israel knew what Achan had done but they had failed to reprimand him or take him before the elders. Therefore the whole nation suffered until they located the source of this sin.

At the Lord's Supper we are in a similar situation if we eat and drink with unrepentant sinners when we know of their sin. We all would fall under the ban and become liable to destruction. That is exactly what was happening in Corinth when they sat together around the Lord's Table. Many of them were weak and sick; some had even died (1 Cor 11:30).

Those who emphasize that this is the *Lord's Table* and therefore no true believer should be withheld, ought to derive a very different conclusion from the fact that it is the *Lord's Table*, namely that it must therefore be kept holy! True believers will be built up by observing the sacrament, even without taking part.

### The Lord's Holy Supper

The holiness of fellowship with a holy God requires every consistory to be vigilant about whom they allow to receive the tokens of God's covenant blessings in Jesus Christ. They may not declare to open unbelievers that they are right with God by administering the sacramental signs to them when God himself says they are not right with him so long as they do not repent.

When believers are admitted to the table, they are commanded to examine themselves so that they may eat and drink in faith. The calling to self-examination stands, for a visitor and local member alike, all the time. Because the table fellowship is set apart from all living in sin (is holy), the elders must guard admittance and the participants must all alike examine themselves. Then the sacrament will be administered for the benefit of all, for the relief of their souls, and the increase of their unity with Christ.

### URC's History in the CRC

It is instructive for the members of the United Reformed Churches that it was not all that long ago that the Christian Reformed Churches were using written attests, similar to the present process in Canadian Reformed Churches.

In their church order commentary, I. Van Dellen and M. Monsma write, "we take a decided stand when testing those who ask to be admitted to the Lord's Supper."<sup>1</sup> They elaborate that, "Unless one or more Consistory members know [the visitor] personally, he should if he is able, bring someone with him who can give testimony regarding his faith and life" (256). Van Dellen and Monsma are of the opinion that if someone finds this procedure too much trouble, "his desire is not very strong," and he should "merely worship sympathetically and

prayerfully, without seeking permission to partake" (256).

They further emphasize that to go to the Lord's Table in another church, the members ought, "to be reputed to be of a godly walk," and should "be able to give witness" regarding their godliness. "This witness was to be delivered by means of a certificate of membership, an attestation, or a Church letter" (256).

*The elders must guard admittance.*

They also make the point that soundness in both doctrine and life needs to be certified for local baptized members to make public profession of faith and attend the Supper. They then ask, "Then why should not both be required of those coming from elsewhere?" (257).

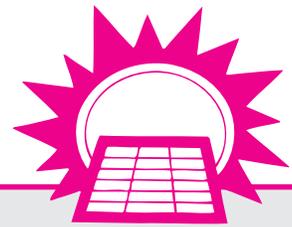
Letters of recommendation were in constant use in the CRC, according to their description, both to visit Lord's Supper and to move from one congregation to another (257). Finally, Van Dellen and Monsma maintain that those who are not of similar confession should celebrate the Lord's Supper with people who share their views. That is, Baptists do not belong at the table in a Reformed Church, but in a Baptist church (252, 255).

### Conclusion

An attestation does serve the scriptural purpose of providing a legal witness to the doctrine and life of its bearer. Its bearer carries the witness of Christ's appointed overseers. What an honour! In continuing this practice in the CanRC, we are doing more than simply following a tradition.<sup>2</sup> Good scriptural grounds for the practice can be adduced. It is good to know why we do things as we do. This enables us to evaluate and criticize our own practices, and defend them to others. Knowing the principle informs the practice. It should keep us from being overly rigid about the exact manner of the practice, while never rejecting the principle behind it.

<sup>1</sup>The commentators are Christian Reformed, commenting on their own church order circa 1940. I. Van Dellen and M. Monsma, *The Church Order Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1950 (3rd ed.), p. 252 (references hereafter will be in the text).

<sup>2</sup>We are following a tradition from both Europe and North America, and I would say, a good one. For the historical continuity with the early Reformed churches in the matter of attestations, see R. Faber, "Admission to the Lord's Supper in the early Dutch Reformed Churches," *Clarion* 49 no 23, p. 516-519.



By Mrs. Corinne Gelms and Mrs. Erna Nordeman

*“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11.*

## Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Encouragement! What does this word mean? It means to give courage to another person. It also means to inspire with courage, giving hope and support, to spur on, or to urge someone on. Throughout our life we all have received many words of encouragement from our parents and/or caregivers. This encouragement begins with a heart of love and caring. It is shared through the words which we say to others, through our attitudes, and by means of our actions.

In the later verses of 1 Thessalonians 5, we can read how Paul gives many examples of how we can encourage others. As parents and caregivers, and others in respective offices, we may at times find it difficult to encourage one who is constantly “in the dumps.” Indeed we all must be sensitive to the need for encouragement, and how we offer supportive words or actions. We must also be able to distinguish between those who are being idle out of laziness and those who are timid or shy or who fear doing something wrong. Encouragement can be given to the timid by reminding them of God’s promises. He remains faithful to them and will never break his promises.

As for those who are weak, support can be given by loving them and above all by remembering them in prayer to our heavenly Father.

In verse 15 we are taught that we should not take revenge against those who have done something wrong against us. Rather we should do good to them, and always be kind to them along with everyone else. We must all remember that even when we face difficulties or insults, it is still God in control of everything. He knows all our thoughts and plans and whatever will happen in our life here on earth. There may be times in our life when everything seems to be going against us. Is it not also at these times that we sometimes may think that God’s love and nearness is not around us? Thus we tend to give up on our obligations to the Lord. This kind of thinking is definitely not in accordance with God’s Word.

In the following verses, namely 16-18, it shows us that our joy, prayers and thankfulness should not go up and down like a roller coaster with our feelings or circumstances. Obeying these three commands – being joyful, praying continually, and giving thanks – can be

difficult to do and often goes against the grain of our sinful human nature. Therefore we must also realize that to live as a Christian is not done in our own strength, but through the power of God. See Lord’s Day 9, question and answer 26 and 28.

Herein also lies the importance of beginning *every* day in humble prayer before the Lord; to thank Him for all his goodness and to ask for help and guidance in all that we say and do. For to encourage someone, we must do it out of love just as Christ encourages us to – out of his love by his Word and Spirit. The more that we strive to do God’s will, the easier it will be to be joyful and thankful.

*I know in whom my hope is founded  
Through ever-changing day and night  
Thou has me with Thy love surrounded;  
Thou art my Rock, I trust Thy might.  
When once life’s evening veils enshroud me,  
I’ll bring, though worn by ills and strife,  
For every day Thou hast allowed me  
Thee higher praise, O God of life!*

Hymn 63:2

## Birthdays in June:

**17<sup>th</sup> Joan Koerselman** will be 44  
Box 1312  
Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0

**20<sup>th</sup> Daniel Stroop** will turn 20 years old  
193 Diane Drive  
Orangeville, ON L9W 3N3

**30<sup>th</sup> Beverly Breukelman** will be 39 this month  
2225 - 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
Coaldale, AB T1M 1G4

Congratulations to you Joan, Daniel, and Beverly. We hope and pray that God will bless you in this new year with much health and happiness.

Greetings,

Mrs. C. Gelms and Mrs. E. Nordeman  
Correspondence Address:  
548 Kemp Road East  
RR 2 Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2  
1-905-563-0380

---

# A New Herald in Guelph

By Miriam Verburg

After waiting for a short period of six months, the Emmanuel Canadian Reformed Church at Guelph was able to gladly lay out its welcome mat for its new minister, Rev. J. VanWoudenberg and his family. Rev. Louwarse, the counsellor for Guelph and minister at Fergus, installed Rev. VanWoudenberg in the afternoon of January 7, 2001, in the presence of a very full and joyful auditorium. He chose sections from 2 Chronicles 17, 18 and 19 as the basis of his sermon, focussing specifically on 2 Chronicles 19:9 and 10 for his text. He explained how necessary a minister is for a church and what a blessing the minister is for the church. His theme stressed that through the ministry of the office bearers, Christ our King keeps us free from the wrath of God. This can be seen in the installation and message of the office bearers.

The purpose of installing a minister according to the text in 2 Chronicles 19:9 and 10, is to lead the people, to set an example of serving faithfully and wholeheartedly in the fear of the Lord. Jehosaphat was shown as an example of a man who strived to serve the Lord faithfully and wholeheartedly. He cleansed the land of the Asherah poles and went through the land encouraging the people to repent and return to the Lord. The message the minister brings to the people is teaching them to seek the grace of Jesus Christ. The minister and office bearers must teach and warn the congregation not to sin against the Lord, as they will be held accountable according to their office.

After this installation service, a number of representatives from Orangeville, Elora and Fergus read letters of congratulations to the congregation at Guelph.

The following Sunday morning, Rev. VanWoudenberg preached his inaugural sermon to his new flock. He taught his new congregation how important the preaching is in the task of minister. He used Isaiah 52:1-2 as



*The VanWoudenbergs enjoying the entertainment.*



*The children's choir.*

a backdrop, and focussed specifically on Romans 10:14-15 for the theme of his sermon: Paul unfolds the glory of the preaching. In this we see the glorious role, character and implication of the preaching.

The glorious role of the preaching is to give us knowledge about God. The very human activity of the preaching is what stimulates the faith, and whatever helps us during the week is backed up and comes from the preaching. The important character of preaching is the

heralding of good news to the congregation. The minister as the herald/servant does not come with his own message, nor does he come on his own initiative, but he is sent by God and therefore he is responsible to Christ. Preaching is the matter of good news being brought to the people by God's servant. The preaching brought by God's servant, the minister, implies that Christ will return again. Rev. VanWoudenberg stressed the fact that because Guelph has a minister again, this shows that



A skit presented by the Gems "A gathering of nuts at the wooden mountain."

Christ will return again. The main task of the minister as the herald is to announce that Christ will return again. Therefore, as congregation we should sit up, take notice of the preaching and prepare ourselves for Christ's return.

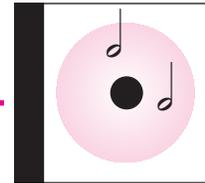
Within the same week, the congregation was able to welcome its new

minister and family in a less formal manner with songs, skits and presentations of various gifts. A common theme appeared to be bread and jam, and trains. Among the gifts received, the VanWoudenbergs received an enlarged map of Guelph to help and encourage them to navigate around the

royal city, a map being necessary not only because they are new to the city, but more specifically because of the unique placement of most streets in Guelph. Another special gift was an album entitled "Glimpses of Guelph." This album contained important and interesting information about the members of the congregation, thereby allowing the VanWoudenbergs to familiarize themselves with their new congregation.

Before the evening was ended, a special message was given by Guelph's previous minister. The new minister and his congregation were actually able to hear Rev. A. Pol's own voice over the phone lines and amplified through the microphone. He welcomed the VanWoudenbergs to the Royal City and encouraged them in their new tasks as new members to the congregation, and even as new residents to Guelph. After the festivities, everyone was invited to mingle, meet and celebrate with each other God's gracious providence to his church. C

## CD REVIEW



# CDs: The Music of Peter Koning

By G. Nederveen

During the last three years, five CDs have been issued under the title *The Music of Peter Koning*. Each CD contains original piano compositions that include preludes, nocturnes, sonatas, scherzos, fugues, and improvisations. The latest CD, Volume Five, also contains a Sonatina for Violin and Piano. Mr. Koning has been writing music for his own use and enjoyment for many years, but it was not until his retirement that he began to publish his works. A write-up on the composer relates the following: "Peter M. Koning hails from Leiden, Holland. A

'late bloomer,' musically speaking, he did not receive formal piano training till he was fifteen years old. A few years later he started to jot down musical ideas and thus started his first feeble steps on the thorny path of composition." In the early sixties he accompanied the congregational singing in the Canadian Reformed Church at Ottawa. He has composed and published twenty-three Chorale Preludes for Psalms based on the Genevan melodies.

All five CDs have their own charm and reveal a distinctive style that be-

trays the work of one composer. While I enjoy listening to each CD, my preference is still Volume Two, mainly because of track four. It contains a Ballade which he wrote in 1965 after the death of his father. If you enjoy piano music you will be certain to find something to your taste. To order any CD contact Peter M. Koning, 5517 Romanwood Cr., Burlington, ON L7L 3N2. Phone: 905-634-9479. E-mail: p.m.koning@hwc.org. The cost is \$15.00 Cdn per CD which includes shipping and handling. C



## Reforming schools in the sixteenth century

by K. Sikkema

The second half of the sixteenth century was a time of dramatic changes in the Netherlands. Calvin's *Institutes* and his message about the importance of properly teaching the youth of the church were well received, and Reformed perspectives became a driving religious and political force among the population. The government of Charles V, however, had appointed eager Roman Catholic clergy to supervise the state schools, to examine their teachers, and to approve their textbooks. Philip II, who succeeded his father in 1555, was even more vehement than Charles V, insisting that Roman Catholicism should be the only religion in his realm.

*It would be unthinkable that God's claims on the children of believers gave room for leaving them in the hands of the teachers of the false religion.*

In 1567, when Rev. Guido de Brès was hanged for his faith, Reformed people already realized that the schools, just like the church and society, needed reformation. As early as 1561, he had echoed Calvin that the "whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in Scripture at length" (BC Art 7); that by baptism we are "set apart from all other peoples and false religions, to be entirely committed to Him whose mark and emblem we bear" (BC Art 34); and that all "must submit themselves to the church's instruction and discipline, bend their necks under the yoke of Jesus Christ, and serve the edification of the brothers and sisters, according to the talents which God has given them

as members of the same body" (BC Art 28). To the leaders of our forebearers, it would be unthinkable that God's claims on the children of believers gave room for leaving them in the hands of the teachers of the false religion. Rev. de Brès had articulated their faith well, and it essentially demanded that they have unity between home, church, and school. For the remainder of the sixteenth century the issue of reforming education repeatedly came on the agendas of ecclesiastical assemblies.<sup>1</sup> This article explores the impact of the reformation on elementary education in those years.

### Synods 1565-1578

Around 1560, Guido de Brès was a beloved preacher among the small and secret flocks of faithful in the southern Netherlands. It appears that he was present at Regional Synod of Antwerp in May 1566, which adopted his Confession of Faith and stressed that parents should be exhorted not to send their children to schools steeping them in "wicked conduct or doctrine." The matter came up again at the National Synod of Emden, 1571, which decided that each classis should ask every church whether they took good care of the elementary schools. At the very beginning of the federation of Reformed churches, while still persecuted by the Spanish rulers, the brothers in exile set out to establish the church orderly principles that covenant children need an education that befits their covenantal status and that consistories have a task in this regard.

Starting in 1572, as Spanish rule was rejected in many Dutch cities, a start could be made with reforming education. Reformed people in Classis Walcheren felt that the absence, poor qualifications, or heretical beliefs of some school teachers "spoiled the youth," and asked Regional Synod Dordrecht of 1574 for advice. Synod suggested that ministers should urgently and persistently seek government permission and funding-provisions to establish good schools, and to

appoint teachers where needed, "who subscribe to the (Belgic) Confession, subject themselves to the church's discipline, and who teach the youth the (Heidelberg) catechism and other useful things." They should also ask their local government to reject and dismiss teachers who would not accept this and to appeal to higher authorities if their requests went unheeded. At the time, our fathers felt that it was the government's task to reform existing schools in the religious sense and qualitative sense.

*Freedom of conscience before God must be an important principle in education – especially after many years of Spanish and Roman Catholic moral constraint.*

Incidentally, the same synod had allowed official witnesses to present children for baptism, in part to ascertain that they would be taught well if orphaned, or if parents could otherwise not be present for the administration of baptism. This practice fitted the understanding that not only the parents, but the whole covenant community (that is, the church) carried the responsibility for training the child, and underlined the unity of home, church, and education. At baptism, we also recognize the whole congregation as witnesses and as jointly responsible.

The National Synod Dordrecht of 1578 worked on a church order and questions for church visitation. It agreed that the churches should be exhorted and reminded to work toward the establishment of schools in which children would not only learn languages and arts, but also the Christian catechism, and be led toward the proclamation of God's Word. The apparently slow progress of reforming the schools (and the brothers' frustration!) was

caused in part by the lack of drive of some local governments toward that goal, but also by the staggered nature of transferring political loyalties from Spain to Reformed provincial governments. We appreciate their struggle, as it is not unlike the one our parents had when they established our schools.

### Political support and inertia

The largely Calvinist northern and western provinces of the Netherlands united politically against Spain in the Union of Utrecht in 1579, and most of them promptly turned their attention to reforming the schools. They agreed that teachers should be tested with proper exams before certification, and then be paid an adequate salary from existing charitable resources. After all, "it is not of little import to the building of the republic and the well-being of the land that the youth from a young age on be well trained in the fear and right knowledge of God and in all good arts and morals." Teachers must diligently teach their students "reading, writing, arithmetic etc., as well as the Lord's Prayer, the Apostolic Creed, and the Ten Commandments."

The provinces regulated that freedom of conscience before God must be an important principle in education – especially after many years of Spanish and Roman Catholic moral constraint. The ongoing struggle against Spain was fought to obtain just that freedom! This also implied that "the papists must be spared as much as possible, and be won over by gentleness and good behaviour." In effect, the partnership between church and state facilitated the development of Reformed education, while the treatment of Roman Catholic stragglers hindered rapid progress.

The National Synod Middelburg of 1581 explicitly elaborated on the training for the ministry, while maintaining the need for Reformed elementary schools. Its church order stipulated that "the Congregations shall see to it that there are Professors and Schoolteachers who do not only teach the liberal arts and languages, but also Theology and the Catechism, and who instruct their listeners and disciples in the fear of God," and that classis should ask "whether the poor and the schools are provided for." It charged deputies to work toward this at the elementary, high school, and university levels with a detailed seven-point instruction: "As each city has distinct possibilities, Clas-

sis shall see to it what can best be done and obtained from the government (for the examination of school teachers, KS), in order that faithful and capable people will be appointed." The churches were trying to establish how best to maintain the unity of home, church, and school, while securing quality staff and preserving good relations with and support from the government.

*Everyone in the communion of saints was responsible for everyone else's growth in serving God.*

### Proactive progress

The Synod of the Hague of 1586, repeated several items from previous synods, and approached the Regent (the Duke of Leicester) with a concept school-order. It stipulated that, for the benefit of the young people in the church, churches should make sure that ministers and school teachers, as well as their widows, orphans and their houses, should be honestly provided for; that Papist, Libertarian, Anabaptist and other enemies of the truth and the fatherland should not be appointed to teach at elementary schools; that pious and confessing teachers should be appointed – with careful consideration of who shall appoint those male or female teachers, and how and where their compensation would come from. Unmistakably, the synod sought to establish guarantees from the government that the education of the youth would be Reformed in the schools, just like it was at home and in the church.

Finally, the National Synod of Dort of 1618-1619 viewed the training of a Christian as a lifelong process, which only ends with his life on earth. This synod clearly took the different tasks of the homes, schools, churches, and Christian magistrates as an all-encompassing joint-effort approach to the one purpose of "diligently teaching the Christian youth (from an early age on) in the fundamentals of the true religion, so that they may be filled with godliness." The synod essentially envisioned a situation akin to the Old Testament covenantal model, in which everyone in the communion of saints

was responsible for everyone else's growth in serving God.

For that education to be effective, not just anyone could be given the "divine office" of teacher. In fact, they had to be "people of good name and fame, honorable vessels, examples of good morals and manners, being able to write with a good hand, subtle of senses, not of course demeanour, and having a complete mind to serve their charges." A teacher must always be a "hero of piety, faithful with his wife and children." It is not surprising that teacher selection commonly became a task of the consistory in that time.

### Conclusion

During the latter half of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century, our Dutch forebearers were concerned with the need for reforming the schools. They rejected false religions, and understood that the training of the youth of the church toward Christian maturity had to be a concerted effort of home, church, school, and (the now Reformed!) state. As obstacles were removed and opportunities presented themselves, there indeed grew a unity between home, church, and school in which the promises parents had made at baptism were not thwarted by educators of a different persuasion. Today the communion of saints still benefits from that unique example with which the Lord blessed the Reformed churches in the Netherlands.

<sup>1</sup>F.L.Rutgers (1980, reprint). Acta van de Nederlandsche synoden der zestiende eeuw. Dordrecht: J.P.vandenTol.

## Peregrine Survey

by K. Sikkema

The unsettling season of teacher-hiring is hopefully past us in most cases. There may still be outstanding vacancies, as this was another year in which (beside the usual shuffles) our resources had to be stretched for principals, teachers' college staff, and new vacancies. May the Lord also provide in those situations in which a full complement of staff is not yet in place for this year, and grant wisdom to make choices that do not put the Reformedness or the quality of education in jeopardy. While Reformed education is a great gift and blessing, and worthy of great effort, the gathering of the

church of our Lord Jesus Christ does not depend on it. Christ gathers his church, and He asks us to show our thankfulness by doing what is right and responsible.

Meanwhile, the work of educating the youth of the covenant continues unabated. Parents seek to do the best they can in keeping their baptismal vows, also by sending their children to Reformed schools. Teachers busy themselves with the tasks of lesson preparation and delivery, evaluation and correction. They use extra hours to develop new programs or revise existing ones; they put extra efforts in those areas that are beyond the immediate call of duty, and in many cases continue to develop themselves professionally as individuals or in staff-oriented activities. They give their energy to students in their respective classrooms, or as individuals, and meet with the community and the parents in various ways and venues. School boards and their committees work to enable teachers to do their tasks by providing suitable buildings, materials, and student transportation. Principals lead their respective schools to the best of their abilities, guiding their staffs and communities through sometimes complex educational mazes and school needs, and executing the needful tasks their hands find to do. These are all blessings, and may the Lord continue to bless us.

*Parents seek to do the best they can in keeping their baptismal vows, also by sending their children to Reformed schools.*

An exciting milestone has been reached in Ontario, where the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies agreed in March to establish and finance a 60% part-time position for a Reformed curriculum writer. It also appointed a committee to consider the feasibility of making this a full-time position in the future. This allows Miss Judy Kingma's work in Church History (Grades 1-4) to be continued and completed. A generous donation has been received from the west coast to help fund this, but the member school boards are also committed to carry the associated expenditures.

Dufferin Christian School of Carman shared the rationale, value, purpose, and aims of a science curriculum with its community, and included general goals of Reformed Education for good measure. This sharing came in the context of their work on a new elementary science curriculum.

Smither's Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School is making progress on identifying the elements of its vision: "Looking ahead with Confidence and Joy." The school intends to offer grades 1-11 for the coming school year, and to add grade 12 again in the following year if sufficient staff can be found. May its efforts to find fitting staff be blessed! In keeping with the theme of the year (1 Tim 4:12), the school has been selecting and celebrating students of the month "who strive to live out the Word of God," and "for their efforts to live faithful lives, lives worthy of imitating in some way."

Flamborough's Covenant staff and board are studying Daniel Vander-Ark's *From Mission to Measurement*, which turns out to be a good vehicle to enhance the community's discussion about school's vision and goals. Some of these studies were shared with grades 7-12 teachers at a recent Guido Feeder School Principals' Meeting as well. The school also submitted itself to a formal school evaluation during January and February of this year, and undoubtedly learned a lot about itself.

Calgary's Tyndale school continues to enjoy its sixteen new Pentium computers. It also enjoys 100% participation at parent/teacher conferences, and a lot of volunteer help. The Alberta government is fully funding the creation of their band program. As Calgary's "initial dissonance" dissipates,

we hope some joyful melodies will come drifting our way across the prairies! Coaldale Christian School uses the same funding to upgrade its remedial and learning assistance programs and its library.

Coaldale recognizes the protective hand of God when "the front wheel of our Taber school bus suddenly fell off while Mrs. Selles turned off the highway toward the school . . . We know that there are no accidents with the Lord and our thanks and praise are to Him who kept all our students and driver from harm!"

*Teachers busy themselves with the tasks of lesson preparation and delivery, evaluation and correction.*

In Fergus, a recent membership meeting did not carry the proposal to add grades 11 and 12 with sufficient majority. Fergus school is serving as the base-host for a fall-concert tour of the music group of the "Grijdanus" Reformed Community of Schools in Zwolle, the Netherlands.

Finally, Trinity Western University is awaiting the Supreme Court's decision on what they have presented as a challenge to "protect religious freedom rights." The ruling was previously expected this spring, but may be delayed if the nine justices have dissenting opinions.

*Education Matters* is a column supported by the Canadian Reformed Teachers' Association of Ontario. Relate reader responses or articles to-be-printed to Arthur Kingma at [acres@kwic.com](mailto:acres@kwic.com) or to *Clarion*. 



**Subscribe to Clarion**  
or  
**send someone a Gift Subscription**  
via E-mail  
[clarion@premier.mb.ca](mailto:clarion@premier.mb.ca)

Provide full name, address, including postal code/zip code;  
for gift subscription, full address of gift giver and gift receiver.

For subscription rates see Clarion masthead.

We will invoice you on receipt of your request.



## Press Release of Classis Ontario South of March 21, 2001 in Kerwood, Ontario

### Opening

On behalf of the convening church, Rev. H. Versteeg called the meeting to order. He requested that Psalm 33:1, 5 be sung. He then read Psalm 33:1-22 and opened in prayer. Rev. Versteeg welcomed all the delegates.

### Credentials and Constitution

All the churches were represented. Classis was declared constituted. The officers were: Rev. Cl. Stam – chairman; Rev. J. Ludwig – clerk; Rev. R. A. Kok – vice-Chairman.

The chairman thanked the convening church for all the preparatory work. He noted that Rev. Slaa has accepted the call extended to him by the Church at Kerwood, that Rev. Van Vliet has declined the call extended to him by the Church at Smithers, and that the Church at Smithville is still awaiting the decision of Rev. Slomp about the call extended to him. Rev. Stam also welcomed Br. J. Van Spronsen, a student in his third year of study at the Theological College, Br. Van Spronsen's wife, and other guests. After some additions, the agenda was adopted.

### Examination

Br. Van Spronsen has come to this Classis to be examined for permission to speak an edifying word according to Article 21 CO. He presented the necessary documents; it was noted that Br. Van Spronsen has not yet completed his third year of study at the Theological College. He then presented a sermon proposal on Luke 7:11-17. In closed session, the sermon proposal was discussed and was deemed sufficient to continue with the examination. The brother was examined in church doctrine. Again in closed session, the examination was discussed and there was no objection to granting Br. Van Spronsen permission to speak an edifying word for a period of one year. Br. Van Spronsen was informed of this in open session. After he promised not to teach anything contrary to the Word of God as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity, he was given a certificate from

Classis granting him permission to speak an edifying word. This permission will begin upon the brother's successful completion of his third year of study. The clerk of Classis was instructed to ask the Theological College to send a letter to the Church at Ancaster confirming the brother's completion of the third year. The Church at Ancaster will present this letter to the next Classis Ontario South.

### Question period Article 44 CO.

The Church at Blue Bell asked advice concerning the convening of the next Regional Synod East; advice was given. One church asked advice in a matter of discipline; advice was given. The Church at Grand Rapids asked for monthly pulpit supply for the period from July 2001 to June 2001; a schedule was drawn up by the clerk.

### Appeals

An appeal was dealt with in closed session. A second appeal was declared inadmissible because the material was received too late for the delegates properly to consider it and two churches did not receive the appeal at all.

### Reports

Reports of the church visitation to the Churches at Ancaster, Blue Bell, Grand Rapids, Kerwood, Lincoln, Rockway, and Smithville were read and gratefully received. The report from the Church at Chatham regarding the audit of the Fund for Needy Students was presented and discussed. The Church at Chatham was discharged with thanks for the period covered by this report.

### Appointments

Classis made the following appointments:

1. Next Classis  
The date of the next Classis: June 13, 2001. Place: Lincoln. Convening church: Grand Rapids. Proposed officers: Rev. G. Ph. van Popta, chairman; Rev. J. Ludwig, vice-chairman; Rev. Cl. Stam, clerk.
2. Fund for Needy Students  
The Church at Chatham was re-appointed as the church responsible for the Fund for Needy Students.
3. Examiner ad Articles 4, 5, and 21 C.O.

Rev. J. Van Vliet was appointed as the alternate examiner in New Testament exegesis.

### Closing

Personal Questions period was held. The chairman judged the censure ad Article 34 CO. was not necessary. The Acts were read and adopted. The Press Release was read and approved. Classis sang Psalm 115:5,6. Rev. Cl. Stam led in a prayer of thanksgiving and closed Classis.

For Classis Ontario South  
March 21, 2001  
K. A. Kok, vice-chairman

## Press Release of Classis Northern Ontario held on March 23, 2001 at Fergus, Ontario

The meeting was opened by Rev. J. Louwse, chairman of the convening church. He welcomed the delegates who had arrived. After Psalm 122:2, 3 was sung, Rev. Louwse read Psalm 122, and led in prayer. Rev. Louwse, on behalf of the delegation, welcomed Rev. J. VanWoudenberg, who had recently been installed as minister of the Word in the Church at Guelph. Rev. J. Slaa, who recently had received and accepted the call to the Church at Kerwood, ON, was congratulated.

The delegates from Elora reported on the credentials. All churches were lawfully represented. The Churches of Elora and Grand Valley had instructions. Classis was constituted. Officers were appointed: Rev. P. Aasman (chairman), Rev. J. Slaa (vice-chairman) and Rev. R.E. Pot (clerk). The agenda was established. The subscription form for Classis Northern Ontario was read and Rev. J. VanWoudenberg signed it.

A report was received from the classical treasurer.

Question Period according to Article 44 of the Church Order was held. The Church of Fergus requested and received concurring advice regarding a matter of discipline. The Church of Grand Valley asked for and received advice concerning a matter of pastoral care. The Church of Grand Valley also asked a question regarding the admittance of members into the congregation, to which Classis responded.

Rev. R. Sikkema, representing the United Reformed Churches, arrived and was welcomed as observer to the meeting. He was given opportunity to speak at a later point in the meeting.

Several proposals and overtures, with grounds, were presented by the churches.

A. The Church of Grand Valley overtured Classis to decide that pulpit supply will not be arranged at a Classis Contracta, unless a proposed schedule for classical pulpit supply be submitted to the churches beforehand, according to the regulations of Classis. The overture was defeated.

B. The Church of Grand Valley proposed that Classis overture General Synod 2001 to change the last line of Article 39 of the Church Order from: "this shall invariably be done where the number of elders or the number of deacons is less than three," to: "this shall invariably be done where the number of elders is less than three." After an amendment, the overture was defeated.

C. The Church of Owen Sound proposed to Classis that letters of call and acceptance not be kept in the classical archives, but returned to the minister and consistory involved, unless Classis feels that there is extraordinary information in these documents that require action by Classis. The proposal carried.

D. The Church of Grand Valley overtured Classis to add to article 6.1.1. of the Regulations of Classis Northern Ontario the following words "recommendations from the Committees serving Classis" to the words "proposals and letters of appeal" as those documents which should be received by the convening church of Classis at least four weeks before Classis is held. After amendments, the overture was defeated.

The Church of Elora requested that Classis honourably release Rev. J. Slaa from Classis Northern Ontario, since he had accepted a call from the Church of Kerwood and will be moving to a different classical district (see Art 5 and 9 Church Order). After it was concluded that the necessary documents were in order, Classis proceeded to fulfill Elora's request.

Correspondence. A letter from Classis Central Ontario, March 9, 2001, about the support for the Committee of Needy Churches of Classis

Central Ontario, was read and discussed. Classis decided to mandate the Committee of Needy Churches of Classis Northern Ontario to examine this letter and the history pertaining to it, and come with a recommendation to the next Classis.

Rev. R. Sikkema was given the floor to address Classis as observer from Classis Southern Ontario of the United Reformed Churches. He took the opportunity to greet, encourage, advise and caution the churches. In response, Rev. P. Aasman, on behalf of Classis, expressed appreciation for his words and thanked him for his presence and participation.

Appointments. The convening church for the next Classis is the Church of Grand Valley. Suggested date is June 22, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. in Grand Valley. Suggested officers are: Rev. P. Feenstra (chairman), Rev. B. Berends (vice-chairman) and Rev. P. Aasman (clerk). Classis appointed Rev. J. VanWoudenberg to the committee of examiners and as examiner of Scripture knowledge.

General Question Period was held. Censure according to Article 34 of the Church Order was not necessary. Acts and Press Release were adopted.

Psalm 101:1,2,6 was sung, Rev. P. Aasman led in thanksgiving prayer and the meeting was closed.

*J. Slaa*

Vice-chairman at that time

### **Press Release of Classis Pacific West on April 3, 2001 in the Cloverdale Church building**

#### **Opening**

On behalf of the convening church, the Church at Cloverdale, the Rev. J. Huijgen opens the meeting by requesting the singing of Hymn 59:1, 2, 3 and reading from John 13:1-17. He then leads in prayer. He welcomes all present and mentions some memorable facts.

A report on the examination of the credentials is given by delegates from Willoughby Heights Canadian Reformed Church. The delegates find the credentials to be in good order and report that there are three instructions.

Classis is constituted with the following officers: chairman: Rev. E. Kampen, vice-Chairman: Rev. J. Huijgen, and clerk: Rev. C. VanSpronsen.

The agenda is adopted as presented. There are two items for discipline and one instruction.

Correspondence is received. The Church at Smithers submits a letter stating that the announcements to the congregation before the ordination of candidate W. Bredenhof were made.

Proposals or instructions. The Church of Smithers requests pulpit supply for one Sunday every two months. This is granted. The deputy will arrange this.

#### **Reports**

1. Treasurer of the Classis: the report is submitted and thankfully received.
2. The Church for Auditing the Books of the Treasurer (Cloverdale) submits that the treasury is in good order. The Classis Treasurer will be discharged of his duties for the year 2000.
3. Church for Inspection of Archives (Houston): the report shows that all is well, except that a church visitation report is missing. The Church at Smithers is requested to photocopy the Acts of Regional Synod 1997 and 1998 to be inserted in the archives of Classis Pacific West.
4. Church Visitation Reports: there are no reports at this time.

#### **Question period according to Art 44 CO**

The chairman asks the questions as required. Concurring advice is given in two situations of discipline.

#### **Appointments**

The convening church for next classis will be Houston; the place of meeting will be determined by the convening church. The time of meeting will be June 5, 2001, with October 2, 2001 as the alternate date.

The suggested officers for the next classis are: chairman: J. Huijgen; vice-chairman: C. VanSpronsen; clerk: D. Poppe.

#### **Appointment of deputies:**

1. Committee for Examinations: the same appointments are made, with the exception of the subject "Knowledge of Holy Scripture" which will now be done by Rev. D. Poppe.
2. Church Visitors: the arrangement of last year is continued.
3. Church for taking care of the Archives: the Church at Smithers.
4. Church to inspect the Archives: the Church at Houston.
5. Treasurer: R.H. Mulder (Cloverdale).
6. Church for Auditing Books of the Treasurer: the Church at Cloverdale.

7. Committee for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry: R.H. Mulder, M. VanDriel, J. Winkel (convener).
8. Committee for Financial Aid to Needy Churches: H. Leyenhorst, H. Vandelden, P. Vandergugten (convener).
9. Deputies for Preaching Arrangements in Vacant Churches: Rev. E. Kampen.

10. Appointments of Counsellors to Vacant Churches: the present arrangement for Smithers is continued.

**Personal question period**

A question is asked concerning the support of needy students, as it appears that the students following the pastoral proficiency program address the Committee for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry.

**Censure according to Art 34 CO**

The chairman concludes thankfully that the meeting was held in an edifying Christian way.

**Closing**

The Acts of this classis are adopted and the Press Release is approved for publication. The chairman requests the singing of Hymn 29, and leads in thanksgiving prayer.

*J. Huijgen, clerk at that time*

# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



**Dear Busy Beavers**

School is nearly over for another year and you will be moving on from the class you are in to the next one. Have you enjoyed this last year at school? Did your teacher allow you to do a lot of really fun activities? I know, they always make you do some activities which you really don't enjoy doing, but then the fun activities make up for those, don't you think? What are your plans for the school holidays? Are you going away for a few weeks with your family? Are you off to visit family and friends in another province or another town? Make sure you write to me about it, so I know what you are all doing, because my mail box has been very empty lately!

Lots of love, Aunt Betty

|    |                  |    |                 |
|----|------------------|----|-----------------|
| 13 | Kevin Viher      | 16 | Amanda Feenstra |
| 14 | Rachelle Smeding |    |                 |



**Aunt Betty**  
 c/o Premier Printing Ltd.  
 One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2J 3X5  
 Email: clarion@premier.mb.ca

## Praise

*Many people express their joy, excitement and sorrow by praising the Lord.*

Match the person with his or her statement of praise.

- |                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Mary, Luke 1:49             | a "Blessed by the name of God for every and ever, for wisdom and might are his."                                                                                                               |
| 2. David, Psalm 136:1          | b "I blessed the Most High and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever."                                                                                                               |
| 3. Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:57   | c "Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." |
| 4. Daniel, Daniel 2:20         | d "Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word. For my eyes have now seen Your salvation."                                                                              |
| 5. Jesus, Matthew 11:25        | e "To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever."                                                                                              |
| 6. Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 4:34 | f "I thank You, O Father . because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them unto babes."                                                                     |
| 7. Simeon, Luke 2:29,30        | g "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."                                                                                                              |
| 8. Peter, 1 Peter 1:3          | h "And has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him by glory and dominion for every and every."                                                                               |
| 9. Jude, Jude 25               | i "For he that is mighty has done to me great things; and holy is his name."                                                                                                                   |
| 10. John, Revelation 1:6       | j "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever."                                                                                                                |