

A CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

TO ENCOURAGE, EDUCATE, ENGAGE, AND UNITE

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JUNE 10, 22

# Clarion

*A Resounding Plea  
Rehearsing For Heaven  
Writing About Rights  
Elora Welcomes Wierenga Family*



**Clarion:** a trustworthy and engaging magazine, widely spread and read in Canadian Reformed households and beyond.

To equip God's people for his glory, in faithfulness to Scripture, as summarized in the Reformed confessions, Clarion adheres to the following core values:

Confessionally Reformed  
Loving in manner  
Attuned to current issues  
Readable and Reliable  
In Submission to Scripture  
Open to constructive criticism  
Nurturing Christian living

## What's Inside

In Issue #12 we present you with several meditative pieces. In our regular *Treasures, New & Old* column Pastor Randall Visscher reflects on how we might unexpectedly be presented with opportunities to do the works of God. Pastor Gerrit Bruintjes gets us thinking about how present-day church worship can help prepare us for the glories of heaven and Pastor Marc Jagt leads us into the matter of rights and how to best employ them for the cause of the gospel. Ponder with profit!

Mr. Keith Sikkema is back with the first of a five-part series of stories drawn from church history. This story gives us a front-row seat to the Secession of 1834 through the experiences of a man who was closely involved all the way through, Mr. Douwe VanderWerp. These stories can be read to your children but there is much for all of us to learn from these painful experiences. Rev. William den Hollander (Sr.) is also back with *You Asked*, this time delving into the matter of the Sunday offertory and

the challenges we face when it seems cash and coins are less in our pockets than previously.

In other matters, Mrs. Ilse Vandermeulen writes about Elora church welcoming their new pastor while Mrs. Joyce VanAmerongen shares a review of *Ordinary Men*, a book not for the faint of heart and yet important nevertheless. Two classis press releases can be found near the end of our submissions highlighting one ministerial retirement and the movement of two other pastors. It's a reminder that our federation remains in constant need of young men to be stirred up to study for the ministry of the Word—could there be a young man in your circle whom you could encourage in this direction? And on the page over you'll find our usual editorial penned this time by Dr. Jason VanVliet urging us to maintain the long-valued practice of catechizing our youth. Thanks for reading and may God add his blessing to it!

Peter Holtvlüwer

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## EDITORIAL

# A Resounding Plea

Here in Canada the regular season of catechism instruction is finished. Minds are turning toward campgrounds and cottages. Why bring up this topic now? Well, summers tend to fly by and before you know it catechism classes will start up again. While one pedagogical season is still sufficiently fresh in our minds and before the next begins, we do well to take stock.

Let's begin with a historic plea: *We do herewith affectionately admonish and enjoin upon every one of you, that you do . . . thankfully accept this proffered Catechism or course of instruction, and that you do diligently and faithful represent and explain the same according to its true import, to the youth in our schools and churches, and also from the pulpit to the common people, that you teach, and act, and live in accordance with it, in the assured hope, that if our youth in early life are earnestly instructed and educated in the word of God, it will please Almighty God also to grant reformation of public and private morals, and temporal and eternal welfare.*

You may wonder, "When was that written? And who writes like that?" To be precise, it was written just over 459 years ago by Elector Frederick III, the civil magistrate who sponsored the publication of the Heidelberg Catechism. His writing style is obsolete, but his plea still resounds.

## The motivation

Frederick III's fervour was justified. As he points out in his preface, some of his predecessors also promoted catechism teaching, but sadly not much came of it. If local pastors instructed the youth at all, they presented whatever they personally deemed appropriate and attention-grabbing. According to the Elector, there was no "established, certain, and clear" curriculum consistently taught from congregation to congregation and from generation to generation. *That* was the big problem.

As a result, the next generation was growing up with less "reverence for God," less "knowledge of God's word," and more confusion over "irrelevant and needless questions." Some were even "burdened with unsound doctrines." What a disheartening outlook on the future of the church!

But 2022 is not 1563, is it? No, it is not. For centuries now catechism instruction has been well-established in Reformed congregations. At the baptismal font parents promise before God to have their child "instructed therein to the utmost of your power" (Form for Baptism of Infants). Besides, part of the primary duty of ministers is to "teach the Word of God to the youth of the church and to others whom God calls" (Form for Ordination).


Still, are pastors, elders, parents, and youth still as *passionate* about catechism instruction as the Elector of the Palatinate was? Familiarity tends to breed complacency (or contempt) rather than zeal. Life is busy. Catechism classes easily become "just one more thing," especially when rushing out the door after dinner on a weeknight.

Stepping back to view the bigger picture, though, Frederick III's plea still rings true. Under the Lord's blessing, solid and vibrant catechism teaching contributes significantly to the temporal and eternal welfare of God's people. A few years ago, I was speaking with a most sincere and deeply saddened member of the United Church of Canada. She wanted to compare week-by-week church life in her congregation and ours. As we wrapped up our chat, she concluded with this thought: "Among other things, we've gone wrong by not really giving our youth any catechism instruction." Let's avoid the mistakes others have made.

## The method

Frederick III also suggests how to make catechism instruction work well. First, he refers to "our schools and churches." Interestingly, he does so throughout his preface. His vision is that local principals ("schoolmasters") and pastors would find a way to promote catechetical instruction within their respective realms of responsibility. Can students recite a Lord's Day during their daily devotions in school? Can the pastor step into the school to teach an hour of catechism? Local realities will determine what can, or cannot, be done. But when principals and pastors put their minds together, good things can happen.

Secondly, memory work is not passé. In Heidelberg the youth sometimes recited their Lord's Day before the congregation (!) rather than just before their peers. We won't likely return to that practice, but as one author recently pointed out, "memory is not merely a replicative tool that looks backward [but] also a formative organ and a constructive, inventive tool" (Heath, *Sacra Memoria*, 526).

Finally, as the Elector rightly points out, pastors must "act and live" what they teach. A teacher who lives the gospel doctrine as much as he loves to teach it is a powerful and inspirational testimony to the youth of Christ's church. 



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# The Works of God

*“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.” (JOHN 9:3)*

People like to blame the victim. Human beings seem to have a natural tendency to see people who are suffering and think, “They probably deserve it.” Job suffered horribly. He lost his possessions, then he lost his children, and finally he lost his health, till he was left only a shell of his former self. When three of his friends came to comfort him, they wept aloud at the sight of him. But after seven days of silence, they began to speak with one another, and the perspective of the three friends is clear. Job must have sinned. Job’s suffering must have been in response to something Job had done. They blamed the victim.

Thousands of years later, little had changed. Jesus saw a man who was blind from birth, and his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” The disciples have the mentality of Job’s friends, but just one step further. Maybe the man born blind didn’t sin, and maybe it was his parents who did.

We like to blame people for their suffering. But the universe doesn’t run on a karma-like system. We shouldn’t assume that suffering is a punishment for what someone has done in the past. Jesus tells his disciples, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.” That man’s suffering provided God with an opportunity to demonstrate his love through his Son.

But we shouldn’t assume that the man’s blindness was only about providing Jesus an opportunity to demonstrate the love of God. Jesus doesn’t just speak of a single work of God, but of “the works of God.” That man’s blindness wasn’t just about Jesus being able to perform a miracle, it was also about countless other people having an opportunity to show love and support to someone who would have desperately needed it. This man would have had no source of food or income except begging on the street. Other people were given the opportunity to love and support him by providing for his daily needs.

Jesus goes on to say, “As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me.” Jesus wanted his disciples to recognize that the man’s blindness would have also given them an opportunity to do the works of God. This is true for us as well.

For whenever we encounter suffering, we have an opportunity to imitate our Father in heaven by caring for the suffering individual and alleviating their suffering to the best of our abilities.

Jesus teaches us in this passage that sometimes people suffer so that God’s children might step up and do the works which God has prepared in advance for us to do. Sometimes suffering isn’t about punishing or correcting sin, it’s about giving opportunities for others to show grace and kindness; it’s about giving God’s children opportunities to imitate their heavenly Father and show the love which he has commanded us to show to those around us.

Perhaps you’ve never considered this, but the fact that suffering is random from our human perspective is actually a great blessing. It means we can’t say, “They deserve it,” when people suffer. Not knowing the reasons for an individual’s suffering, leaving that to God’s hidden and mysterious plans, we are left to focus on our task of alleviating their suffering as much as possible.

When we see people suffering around us, our first thought shouldn’t be, “I wonder if they did anything to deserve that?” It should be, “How can I help them?” 🙏

## For Further Study

*A Scripture reading for further study: JAMES 5:10–11*

1. Does God punish believers because of their sins?
2. Do you assume that other people are being punished by God when they suffer?
3. How would you comfort someone who says, “God is punishing me”?
4. How can you alleviate someone’s suffering and help them in their time of need today?



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# Rehearsing For Heaven

GERRIT BRUINTJES

It is Sunday morning. The redeemed are assembled, stand shoulder to shoulder, and prepare to praise the Lamb who was slain, the resurrected Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The psalm is announced. The first notes are played. The music swells. On cue, a choir of redeemed voices fills the air. After a challenging week we gather in corporate worship, heaven is opened and saints below and saints above join their voices in praise to the Lamb. Every Sunday, we taste heaven and rehearse for the glorious final day of his return.

The much-loved hymn, "O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing," celebrates the "great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'" (Rev 7:9-10)

The visual is striking and easy to imagine. Unfortunately, on any given Sunday, such multi-ethnic multitudes are difficult to find. Throughout history, Christians have struggled to find unity in Christ across cultural divides. It is much easier to congregate in mono-cultural groupings and wait for the proverbial time to bridge the divide. Nevertheless, we know this cannot be so. Therefore, we prayerfully look to the cross, capture the vision, and seek God's wisdom and guidance.

The audio is much more difficult to imagine. What does it sound like for a redeemed multi-ethnic and multi-lingual multitude to sing with one loud voice? In this article, we hope to appreciate the great diversity in the multitude praising God, consider its implication for uniting in praise today, and hopefully be encouraged to rehearse well for this heavenly choir.

## The multitude is united

We confess in the Heidelberg Catechism that the Son of God, "out of the whole human race . . ." (Q/A 54), is gathering his church chosen to everlasting life. In Revelation 7, John is given a heavenly vision of this reality. In one "great multitude," he sees people from, "every nation, from all tribes, and peoples, and languages." He sees similarities and differences.

They are similar in many ways. They all stand in humble submission before the Lamb on the throne. They all are dressed in white robes, symbolic of the righteousness of Jesus Christ that is theirs by faith alone, through grace alone, in Christ alone. They all hold palm branches, celebrating the sacrifice of the Lamb for the sins of the world. They are all filled with overflowing praise and with one "loud voice:" they sing praise to the Lamb. They have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father over all (Eph 4:5), and they all join with one voice in unified praise to the Lamb. They are one multitude.





## The multitude is diverse

But John also sees differences. There are people from different nations and tribes, speaking different languages. Why? Because when Christ died and redeemed a people, he did not call them to deny their culture, but to deny their sins (and sinful aspects of our culture). He did not call them to pick up another culture, but to pick up his cross. He did not call them to change their language, but to change the way they used their words. He did not call them to dress in a different cultural cloth, but to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Nationality, ethnicity, culture, or language has not been assimilated or absorbed by one dominant culture but preserved in the body of Christ. Magnificently, the spectrum of diverse peoples found across the world are found in this great multitude. Gloriously, they have been sanctified in Christ (robes washed by the blood of the lamb), while their unique, diverse identity has been preserved. As they stand as one, their diversity has not been destroyed. They remain wonderfully unique.

## The multitude is increasingly visible

By God's grace, churches across our federation are beginning to see some diversity. The work of foreign mission is streamed right into our homes and churches. Refugee sponsorship leads to new members joining the family of God. Guests from different

nations and languages are welcomed at the church doors, seated in worship, welcomed at our meals. And with that, new tastes, new clothes, new colours, and new sounds are introduced in the communion of saints. Seeing God's plan being fulfilled is a great blessing.

In receiving this blessing, how can we use it well to rehearse for the heavenly multitude? As any choir director will tell you, singing in a great choir requires intentional listening to the voices around you. By careful listening as you sing, your own voice will harmonize, blend, and balance with the other voices. As we think of singing in that heavenly choir, we are presented with an opportunity to rehearse well today. Here are a few ways we can make the most of the opportunity God gives us to rehearse for heaven.

## First, appreciate the diversity

Deep in the sinful nature is the constant need to compare and pick a winner. Which is better: blue or red? Spaghetti or pizza? Dutch, Chinese, or Congolese? Organ or piano? Genevan or Scottish psalmody? The sinful nature subtly tries to ensure that its own choice receives the top billing and others are given the warm-up act. Let us recognize that the earth is the LORD's and the fulness thereof (Ps 24:1), and this includes the diversity of nations in their praise of God (Ps 67:3-5). This diversity will join

# Seeing God's plan being fulfilled is a great blessing

in united praise to God. As the psalms prophetically anticipate, "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD" (Ps 150:6).

The psalm section of our *Book of Praise* is an example of one cultural voice (adopted by some others) singing the psalms in praise to the Lamb. As we consider how our churches are to sing the psalms and hymns, let us appreciate the beauty of this voice in the great multitude, while not idolizing it. Your redeemed individual voice, and your redeemed cultural voice, is valued and has a place in the majestic diverse multitude of the redeemed covenant people of God. So do others.

## Second, learn to listen deeply

Sometimes in choir rehearsal, a singer may get exuberantly carried away. A few times, my choir director firmly told me, "If you can't hear anyone else, you're singing too loud. This is not a solo!" The exuberant joy of singing my part could quickly lead to pride in thinking that I had the only part, and that mine was the only song. I had to learn to find my place in the choir and blend my voice well. Just as a choir member must learn to listen while joining their voice to a multitude—so as you gather with diverse redeemed people of God, learn to appreciate the diversity in the multitude by taking time to listen to the song of the Lamb sung from different lips.

How can we do so practically? As God gives us opportunity either through a foreign mission trip, local mission in a diversifying community around us, or through welcoming refugees into our local family of faith—use that opportunity to listen and learn how Christ has and is shaping a different cultural voice. Learn to recognize the song of Lamb by the content of the song and the heart in the song rather than the rhythm or notes on the page. For example, the rich tradition of black spirituals is born from a faith that found hope in God under great unjust oppression; in these hymns we appreciate a people who walked with perseverance through times of suffering.


## Third, learn to rehearse

I recognize that practically here it becomes difficult. As we noted, it is easy to imagine the visual of the multitude, it's harder to hear the audio of one voice from such a diverse multitude. Yet, we know it will miraculously be so. Pentecost, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, brought a unity of hearing to the people (Acts 2:8). Already now we anticipate and rehearse the vision

of Revelation 7:9, which gives us the unity of voice in response—many languages proclaiming in one voice! What the result will *sound* like, we don't know. But, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we begin to rehearse.

Where can we begin practically?

An easy place to find unity is by using songs that have gained global recognition: "Amazing Grace" has been translated into fifty languages, and the newer "In Christ Alone" is globally recognized as well. Also, intentional compositions may seek to blend two cultures. For example, Psalm 72E in the *Book of Psalms for Worship* is an English rhyming to a well-known Zulu tune. Further, we can encourage diverse faith cultures to develop their own voice, rather than adopting ours. The fledgling Reformed Churches in Papua New Guinea held a music conference where local attendees were encouraged to write biblically faithful songs, particularly from the psalms, in hopes of developing the unique Melanesian voice in praise to Christ. Finally, we can practice hospitality as we find new faces in the pew. I've heard of one church with a large Hispanic attendance creating opportunities to sing praise in Spanish. In our sister churches in South Africa, during joint services with local mission church plants, effort is made to include psalmody and hymnody from both backgrounds.

Next time you gather, and the first notes are played, join your voice to that heavenly choir. Rejoice before the enthroned Lamb who was slain. Rejoice in the voice you have received and sing to his praise. And then listen. Listen to those around you—Christ has redeemed them as well, he has given them a reason to sing. Listen globally, and you may hear a voice that sounds different, a rhythm and tune that is foreign, but in the heart and the words, learn to recognize the same Lord, the same faith, the same baptism, the same God and Father of these different brothers and sisters. Perhaps one day, you will find yourself standing shoulder to shoulder next to them. May we rehearse well for that day. 



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# Writing About Rights

MARC JAGT

**T**here's a lot of talk these days about "rights." That includes us Christians, too. And it's easy to have a lot of talk! It's certainly not a simple subject.

We live in a world that champions its rights. After WW2, holding onto "human rights" was seen as the way to prevent another genocide. There's also been the French Revolution and the American War of Independence. Plenty of governments trying to rule in the churches, too. Put it all together and there is a megaphone, in the world, in the church, shouting at us, "Give me freedom or give me death!"

## **Rights in Scripture**

But talking about rights is not a new thing, actually. Our Lord spoke about rights in Matthew 5:38-42, for instance. And so

did the apostle Paul. Closer to the end of his life, he even demanded his rights as a Roman citizen—to be heard by the emperor in Rome.

Let's look, for a moment, at Paul's view of circumcision. It helps us to navigate these difficult waters. Paul's view of circumcision, it seems, was very inconsistent—at first glance. Sometimes he preaches so strongly against circumcision, especially in Galatians. In very frank language, he wishes that those who want to practice circumcision would go the whole way and emasculate themselves (Gal 5:12)! Clearly, this was no little thing.

But later Paul persuades Timothy to get circumcised (Acts 16). Timothy's mother was Jewish, but his father was Greek. So, he had never been circumcised. But when Paul takes Timothy along on a mission tour, he first has him circumcised.



“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead” (PHIL 3:10).

So how can this be? Was Paul just a warm noodle of no convictions? You know he wasn't. Paul has two very different practices. Two branches, you could say, going in opposite directions. But they both grow out of the same trunk.

And what is that? The gospel of the suffering Christ.

### Rights and the gospel

Some were insisting that Christians had to be circumcised. Didn't God even command it? But Paul sees this as an attack upon the finished work of Jesus Christ. In fact, he goes so far as to say, "If you let yourself be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you" (Gal 5:2).

But Paul also wanted nothing to get in the way of preaching Christ. He did not want there to be any other offence—than the cross of Christ. He knew that people are very easily confused about Christians, and he wanted as little confusion as possible. So, at one point he told Timothy to get circumcised.

In 1 Corinthians 9, he talks about how he has all sorts of rights, as an apostle. But he gives them up. "To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law, I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law)." To those who insisted on wearing masks and a face shield, I wore a mask and a face shield. Ok, ok—you did notice I ended the quotation earlier.

This was Paul's passion, his principle: that Jesus Christ would be proclaimed—at all costs. If he had to give something up for that, he did, no hesitation. If he could insist on something, like his Roman rights, so that this would happen, he did it. "On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ" (1 Cor 9:12 NIV).

### Rights today

So on to today.

There certainly are injustices against Christians—even in our own country. We need to be aware we now live in a post-Christian western world where the church is no longer going to enjoy the privileges it used to have. There's a need to be organized and to dialogue with our government about being treated fairly.

But let's also let this guide us, as we navigate these difficult waters: Does what we are doing proclaim the sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ? Does it help to proclaim him to the world, to each other? Then do it—boldly, humbly.

But if it confuses people, if it sends a mixed message, stay away. Give up even your rights. There are things greater than your rights—far, far greater.

As Paul puts it: "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil 3:10).

What a statement: "Becoming like him in his death!" But notice Paul doesn't just want to be any sort of martyr. Paul wants his suffering to proclaim the suffering of Jesus Christ. "Sharing in his" (not just any, not just self-imposed) "sufferings!"

May all we do proclaim the suffering Saviour! 🙏



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## Elora Welcomes Wierenga Family

**E**ven though Reverend Theo Wierenga started his work in September of last year, the Elora congregation organized a festive evening to welcome him, his wife Lidy, and his family in their midst now that restrictions are lifted. On Saturday, April 23, young and old gathered in the church basement for dessert and afterwards a program with several contributions. “The opportunity to be together again as congregation after this long time of COVID is very exciting,” said Greg Vanleeuwen, who opened the official part of the evening. In his prayer he asked our heavenly Father for a special measure of blessing for our new pastor: “That he might have all that he needs to serve faithfully in Elora church and experience the deepest joy in his task and see the Spirit move in this congregation.”

In calling Rev. Wierenga in 2021, Elora was “coveting” what belonged to their neighbours’ as he was then serving his first pastoral charge, Fergus Maranatha—the closest Canadian Reformed Church. Nellie Endeman highlighted some of the diversity of Reverend Wierenga’s previous careers in farming, trucking, and mechanics. “A jack of all trades and a master of . . . divinity!” she said. The boys and girls of the congregation also

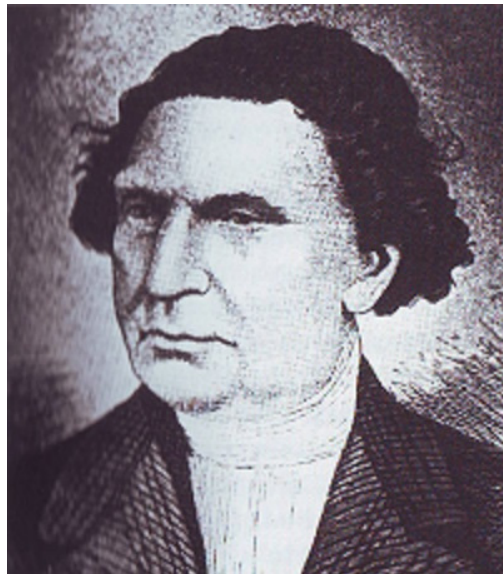
reminded their new pastor of this when, holding stuffed sheep and pigs and toy tractors, they sang about the Wierenga who had a farm with pigs and crops and now Reverend Wierenga has a church with some sheep to shepherd.

Jerry Hutten welcomed the Wierengas officially as chair of Council and gave them a beautiful outside clock to be put on the new deck that was added to the manse. “It’s pretty good if you are somewhere for ten months and they still want to welcome you,” quipped Rev. Wierenga, when he had the opportunity to speak at the end of the evening. He expressed that the family felt quite at home in their new congregation and that he hoped to get to know his congregation even more in the coming years. 🕒



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# Douwe Johannes VanderWerp<sup>1</sup>

## (1811-1876) PART 1

KEITH SIKKEMA

One October day, nearly 200 years ago, several boys and girls cheerfully and playfully trek along the muddy country road towards school. It is little Rick, big sister Nellie, and their friends. They step and slip and glide and slide, laughing and giggling as they go. It is a challenge to stay upright, their *klompen* on their feet and their socks dry—and not to get caked in mud! Step and glide and slip and slide and . . . “Keep your balance!” one of them shouts. But . . . it is too late: Little Joe is falling: his left red *klomp* is stuck in the mud . . . he tries to pull it out, but *sslurrrp* it goes, and he plunges forward face down in the sticky mud. What would mom say!

The friends help little Rick out of the mud, scrape it off his socks, his pants, his coat, his face, his ears, his hair. What a job! Big sister Nellie pulls his little *klomp* out of the sucking muck. *Slurrrp!* She’s got it! In a puddle they all sort of wash their hands, wipe their faces, look at each other, and laugh. Such fun! By the time they are done, none of them are clean, and, *dirty as they*

*are*, they trudge on, step and glide and slip and slide. . . . What will Mr. VanderWerp, the teacher, say?

### School work

Mr. VanderWerp’s eyebrows and curly hair are thick and dark, but his sparkling eyes are filled with kindness and joy. He is the assistant “third class” teacher at the public school in Houwerzijl. From his lectern, on the platform at the front of the class, he looks over his students as they come in and sit down on their wooden benches, and he smiles. Some have mud caked on their skin and clothes; some are dirty and smell because they haven’t had a bath for weeks, and their hair sticks every-which way; some love to talk and some are very quiet; some are curious and eager to learn, and some would rather be at home or in the field helping with chores—but he loves them all.

He remembers when he grew up himself, in Uithuizen, some five hours walking from here. He knows slippery mud roads and

<sup>1</sup> Parts of this story were first presented at an assembly in a Reformed elementary school. An effort was made to present historically trustworthy fiction. *Son of Secession* by Janet Sjaarda Sheeres (2006) was one good source. Douwe VanderWerp began his teaching career in 1829 at the age of eighteen.



tricky puddles, the farmers' fields and outdoor adventures of fishing and chasing rabbits and butterflies. He understands, smiles, and nods; he loves these kids. It is good. They are the LORD's own covenant children. It's his privilege to teach them about his Word and his works. That's what matters most! He may look like a stern teacher at times, but he rejoices deeply when the children learn good things like writing, reading, math, and Bible stories.

Behind his lectern he opens the door in its bottom and reaches in. The children cannot see what he reaches for, but they know and hush up. They turn their faces to their teacher: *He is going to read from the Bible!*

## Bible stories

Mr. Pietersen, the principal, doesn't mind that he has a Bible—but . . . what if the inspector comes?! *Hush* . . . it is a little secret, but it is a good one, and the Bible is full of good news for God's people. It is the Word of God, and you should treat it with respect. When Mr. VanderWerp pulls out his Bible, they will cross their arms, sit very still, and listen, think, and remember.

He opens it to 1 Samuel 24 and tells the story about the LORD and David. The LORD loves David, and David loves the LORD. David will be the next king, and the LORD has promised that he would give his enemy into his hand.

His enemy is tall King Saul. King Saul is afraid and jealous. He thinks David wants to kill him and doesn't want David to be the next king. He keeps trying to catch and kill him first, and he chases him with his army around a mountain. But David with his men find a cave on the other side of the mountain. They rush to get in, as far as they can, where it is very dark. Looking back, they can see the entrance, but it is too dark for anyone at the entrance to see them.

They're safe! But are they? They can't get out, and it's too dangerous to even try, for Saul is close by. If Saul and his men check the cave, how will David and his men be able to escape, who can help them? They are stuck!

Little Rick raises his hand, "You mean stuck, just like when your klomp is stuck in the muck, Mr. VanderWerp, and you can't get it out—unless someone helps you?" Mr. VanderWerp understands and smiles: He remembers being stuck in the mud when he was a boy! "Yes, Rick, just like when your klomp is stuck in the mud, and someone bigger and stronger than you must help you out."

But he goes on with the story. Now, when David is stuck in the back of the cave, *who can help him?* Goliath?

No, not Goliath—he was God's enemy, and he's dead.

David's big brothers? No, not them, they don't like their brother much.

Must David do it himself then? Must his band of friends help him? They would gladly do so!

But now, it is suddenly getting even darker in the cave, and David's heart goes *thumpa thumpa thumpa*, because someone is entering the cave. Someone tall, someone dignified, someone in a royal robe. . . . Oh no—it is King Saul himself; it is the man who wants to catch and kill him!

## David and Saul

Ssshh! Hold your breath! What does he do? Look! He takes off his robe and lays it down. He squats—Ah—David and his men understand. "Go kill him, David!" they whisper. "Here's your chance! The LORD is giving him into your hands! Kill him, so he can't kill you!"

But David loves the LORD and wants to do what is right. He honours and respects the King. To kill the King would be a sin. What can he do? He takes his sword, he feels its sharp edge with his thumb, and slinks quietly and gently towards the king.

Ssshhh! He is so close to the king's robe now. With his outstretched arm he could touch the king with the sword . . . but David stops at the robe, crouches towards it, touches it, and very gently cuts off a corner. Then he steals back to the dark end of the cave.

"You should have killed him!" his men whisper when he comes back. "This was a golden opportunity! The LORD . . ." David disagrees. "The LORD forbid that I would kill him! He is the LORD's anointed—how could I kill the LORD's anointed?!" As they whisper, King Saul is done, puts his robe back on and leaves the cave. He didn't notice a thing!

God protected David!

Now David rushes out of the cave, taking the corner of the king's robe with him, outside the cave. He looks around and sees Saul, on the way to join his soldiers again.

David shouts, "My lord the king!"

King Saul turns, and sees David bowing down in respect—but then David looks up to the king and asks him, "Why do you listen to men who say I want to harm you? I could have just killed you in the cave, but I didn't because you are the LORD's anointed! Look, I cut a corner off your robe; I did not and will not kill or harm you—I swear! I am but a dead dog, a flea—what harm could I do you? May the LORD judge and deliver me from your hand! He is stronger than I am; he will rescue me!"

King Saul is in shock. Can this really be true? "Is that your voice, David, my son?" he cries. He cries, for the LORD makes him suddenly realize how wicked he has been, what a miserable sinner he was for trying to kill the LORD's servant, who certainly will be the next king! "You could have killed me but didn't. You

are more righteous than I am . . . may the LORD reward you for what you have done! You will certainly be king, David, and when that happens, please swear to me by the LORD that you will not kill my children and destroy my family!”

The LORD loves David, and David loves the LORD, and he promises the King, “I will do as you asked.” Then Saul goes home, and David returns to his hideout. In his heart he has a song of joy and gratitude: God protected him.

## Questions

Now Mr. VanderWerp asks questions: “Who was David’s enemy in this story? Was it Saul and his army? How were his own men his enemies? They were all stuck in some way. David was stuck down in the cave. Saul was stuck in thinking that David wanted to kill him. David’s men were just as stuck in their thinking that they should kill Saul. For people it is so easy to get stuck in one way or another, not just in the mud, but also in sin and misery and hating others. They need to be rescued from that. How can they be rescued? Here’s a hint: How come David did not kill the King?”

The children must think about that, but Mr. VanderWerp continues, “The LORD rescued David. By his Holy Spirit he made David trust that he was faithful to his promises: David would be the next king. That is how David could tell his men not to kill Saul, and even show Saul that he meant him no harm. Who else did not kill his enemies but instead loved them? The Lord Jesus! He can also rescue us from our sin and misery when it sticks to us like mud!”

Mr. VanderWerp looks at the children. Some may not understand it all, but they all must hear it: “The Lord Jesus when he was nailed to the cross even paid for our sins of not trusting, to rescue us from our misery. ‘God loves us so much that he gave his only Son to die, so that whoever believes in him would be washed clean on the inside and receive eternal life—even if they died.’ When we believe, that is the work of the Holy Spirit in us. If we believe, we know we are safe in the hands of our heavenly Father. He loves us and gives us comfort even when things are difficult, even when we die, because we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The children nod and think they understand. Everyone needs to be rescued from mud and sin and misery. Everyone needs comfort and hope: David and his men; Saul and his soldiers; they themselves. God the Father cares, the Lord Jesus Christ came to our rescue, and the Holy Spirit gives faith. Wow.

## Praise for mercy

Mr. VanderWerp’s eyes also shine with joy. He believes that covenant children should learn all the Bible stories. That is how they get to know the LORD and what he promises them and does for them! That will give comfort in their lives, no matter how hard it gets. They must sing of it also, and Mr. VanderWerp writes Psalm 57:1 and 5 on the board, in his beautiful cursive, because it fits with the story. He explains how it fits with the story, and then asks the children to copy and memorize it:

Be merciful, be merciful to me;

O God, with you I find security.

The shadow of your wings is my protection;

Until the storms pass by, to God I flee—

To God Most high, who charts my life’s direction.

Among the nations I will sing your praise

And will proclaim the wonders of your ways.

For to the clouds extends your love unfailing;

Your faithfulness outdistances our gaze.

Through all the earth your glory be prevailing!

That night, at home, Mom shakes her head about how dirty they are, but Rick and Nellie talk about school while eating their beans and turnips. They share Mr. VanderWerp’s stories, and Nellie rattles on and on about Rick getting stuck in the mud and how Mr. VanderWerp was not angry when they were dirty and how the Lord Jesus rescues us from being stuck in our sin and misery and that they should learn Psalm 57:1 and 5. Their parents like it and they sing it together. They think he is a good teacher, for he loves the LORD’s children, and they love him. They love the teacher. Never mind the muddy clothes.

In the house next door to the school, after dinner, Mr. VanderWerp and old Mr. Pietersen, the principal, smoke a pipe and discuss what the children learned about God today.<sup>2</sup> They are sad that their minister, *Dominay*<sup>3</sup> VanderHelm, has different ideas. He says that Jesus is a good example to follow, but not that you must believe in him to be saved.

That is a problem. 🙄



**Keith Sikkema**

Semi-retired from Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College and still teaches Church History and Foundations of Curriculum courses  
[sikkemak@gmail.com](mailto:sikkemak@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Mr. VanderWerp was single and boarded with the Pietersens.

<sup>3</sup> “*Dominay*” (sometimes spelled “*Dominee*”) is the Dutch equivalent to the English “*Reverend*.” It was the word both kids and adults used to address their minister in the Netherlands.



## CLARION KIDS

AMANDA DEBOER

## LORD'S DAY 10

When Mom puts a scoop of supper on your plate, she provides for you. She gives you what you need: food! Well, God provides for us even more. We call God providing for us his *providence*. Do you see the word "provide" inside the word "providence"? You see, God is in control of his creation all the time. You know that scoop of supper we just talked about? Yes, Mom does provide that for you, but God is the one who is really in control. Can Mom make sure there is enough rain for the bean plants? No, God does that. God also gives Mom strength to buy the food and make it taste delicious. God is even making sure your Mom can buy more food next week! So, nothing happens by "chance" or "luck." Heaven, earth, and all creatures are under God's providence.

Can you think of two more ways God's providence shows in your life? Write those examples on the lines below.

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Fill in the blanks to find comfort in God's providence even when we go through hard times.

**Romans 8:28**

"And we know that for those who \_\_\_\_\_ God all things work together for \_\_\_\_\_, for those who are called according to his purpose."

Colour in the letters that make the word "provide."

PROVIDENCE



## YOU ASKED

## Worship Service Offerings in Today's "Digital" Age

*What is the purpose of the collection during the worship service? We have noticed a trend that more and more people do not put anything in the collection bag as it comes by and instead use e-transfer or some other method for their giving. Is there still a place for the collection in the worship service in this "digital" age? How does this affect the next generation, considering that the children need to be taught how to give and how this is part of our worship before God?*

This is an important question and a matter that's been raised with me by many a deacon, parent, and church member. It's also a good occasion to share the impression and thoughts of ministers on this reality during the liturgical moment of the "offerings" or "ministry of mercy" in the worship services. Many a church member has expressed how deeply this phenomenon irks them, while many a minister has observed this development with dismay or sadness. When the matter is broached with a deacon, minister, or church member, the sole response and explanation is given in the observation of the fact that "people don't have cash any longer, in their pockets, wallets, or in their homes." Hence, it's perceived as just a practical and pragmatic issue. Indeed, it may be observed as well that, practically speaking, despite the changing dynamics in the manner of giving, offering does take place. In many a bulletin that I read, the deacons report that the congregational giving continues to be adequate and generous!

### The offering's purpose

The questioner, however, submits the question with the right preliminary matter: what is the *purpose* of the collection during the worship service? That should be our first thought on the matter; namely, why is there this liturgical moment in the worship service and what's the purpose, the *principle*, of this aspect in the liturgy? After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as we read in Acts 4:32, 34, and Acts 6, the giving took place in different ways and settings too. It's clear, however, from scriptural inferences that in and around the worship services believers took care of the needs and needy of the congregation. In 1 Corinthians 16:2, the apostle exhorts the believers, saying, "Each of you is to put something aside," which is then collected during the worship service. We see this confirmed in the proof texts of Lord's Day 38, in which also the giving of "Christian offerings for the poor"

is included in the liturgical activities in the worship services of the church of God.

Collections are the liturgical aspect of the "offerings" of the congregation. In some of the URC congregations, this special moment is highlighted in the way of an "offertory prayer" prior or a "prayer of dedication" following the collection of the offerings, while the collection bags (plates) are placed on the table in front of the pulpit. In the epistle to the Hebrews (13:16), we find another inference to this specific nature of the collection as an "offering:" "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such *sacrifices* are pleasing to God." Dr. C. Van Dam, in his recently published beautiful book (and treasure trove!) *Worship Matters*, combines this liturgical element of "sacrifices" with the other sacrifice (of our lips) in the prayer of thanksgiving (p. 28). Together they are our "sacrifice of gratitude to God." In 2 Corinthians 9:12, the apostle Paul also implies this connection between "supplying the needs of the saints" and the believers' many thanksgivings to God. It is the "Ministry of Mercy," as a special liturgical "*diaconia*" in the congregation, that stands out as an essential liturgical moment! The congregation brings thanksgiving and sacrifice to the King of the church in her service of love to the needy and others in need of her support. Thus, the motivation for sacrifice is to give a gift to God, "a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God" (Phil 4:18; cf. Heb 13:16).

### Educational aspect

Then, what about the educational value of this liturgical element and sacrifice of gratitude? The Rev. G. Van Dooren, in his book *The Beauty of Reformed Liturgy*, writes,

There is great educational value in the custom that on Sunday mornings Father tells his children what the offertory is for. . . . Equally, the children may know what voluntary contributions are

put aside for the “maintenance of the ministry” (Lord’s Day 38). . . . Children should thus be taught about the first fruits which belong to God (p. 46f.).

Indeed, this educational aspect of the offerings in the worship services has always received its prominent place in the upbringing of the children and youth of the congregation! Although this *principle* may still be applied, it is evident from the present *practices* during the liturgical moment of the offerings that most children no longer participate actively in it.

What we have learned so far regarding this important liturgical *purpose* and *practice* in the worship services may show us that it is time to seriously reflect on this matter and seek solutions for the practice. Let us give priority again to its first and foremost principle of “sacrifices to God” that should be maintained as part of the liturgy in the church of God. Then our approach should be first of all that we seek to *reverse* the trend and *return* to the preparations for the Sunday services, including the practice of setting enough money aside that could be divided among the members of the family.

## Reversing the trend

In order to make this feasible, we may have to distinguish between the essential offerings for the *ministry of mercy* and whatever *other purposes* need to be supported by the congregation (e.g. church, extra collections), which can be supported

by e-transfer or the like. I realize that this may require some special action of securing cash at the bank and saving it up “in a jar,” ready to be divided on Sunday morning. That may seem tough, but never as tough as it was when I was growing up in a family of eleven children and three collections in every worship service (i.e. sixty-six pieces of money a Sunday, and even a lot more for the services on first and second Christmas days, New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, and the Sundays around them . . .). It will be worth the effort (or the “sacrifice”) and a valued educational practice!

Another solution might be in the development of a token-system with tokens of a variety of values according to the financial abilities of the families. Then the family can purchase a certain number of tokens at the beginning of each month (*not* as per the practice in the temple, though, with the tables of the money changers ready on a Sunday morning but more the way the schools now distribute the vouchers!). Thus, they can use them, dividing them from service to service among the members of the family. As long as the “sacrifice of gratitude” is made again by every member of the congregation! 🙏



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## ASK A QUESTION

Is there something you've been wanting to know?  
An answer you've been looking for? Send us your  
most thought provoking questions to explore  
in our **You Asked** column.

Please send quFFestions to **William den Hollander**, *Minister emeritus*  
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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**Re: Sphere Sovereignty/The Four Governments  
(Vol 71, No 7, April 1, 2022)****Dear Editor,**

Kudos to *Clarion* for creating space to air both sides of the COVID-19 response with the aim of finding scripturally faithful common ground. However, the reader may quickly come to the conclusion that the odds are insurmountable that this common ground exists.

The article on *sphere sovereignty* addresses the “COVID-19 pandemic” and the importance of understanding Christian obedience to legitimate rule in overlapping spheres of the kingdom of God. It is focused on communal responsibilities, the common good, general interest, the public health, and the church’s responsibility in that context. It all leads to a poor assessment of how the church fared in presenting the gospel of Christ to the surrounding community.

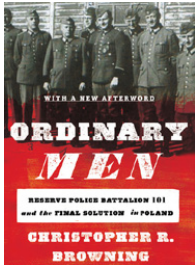
The article on *four governments* addresses “a man-made crisis,” the importance of resistance to tyranny (oppressive rule by one), living in a decidedly anti-Christian world context, the forced dictates binding conscience, de-bunking of the efficacy of mask mandates, and the oppression of government on peaceful protesters. It aligns the government’s activity with that of the tyrannical rule of Hitler in Germany in the 1930s. It concludes that resistance to tyranny is the church’s more pressing and faithful witness to Christ as King to the world.

There seems to be no bridge that can be built that can span this chasm. Perhaps we need a new starting point for the discussion that addresses an important divergence which may pre-date the pandemic. Undergirding this debate about governing authority seems to be differing understandings about the relationship between the church and her community. This has more to do with the law of love (Matt 22:36-40) and the penetrating response of our Saviour to the question, “And who is my neighbour?” (Luke 10:25-37.) Understanding this better together may help us to find some common scriptural ground in these difficult times. 🙏

*Rick Ludwig  
Waterdown, ON*



## BOOK REVIEW



## Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland

Revised Edition By Christopher R. Browning (HarperCollins, NY, 2017) \$17.59 paperback at Amazon.ca

Reviewed by Joyce VanAmerongen

Some of my kids have seen this book lying around and refused to even be curious about it. These excerpts from the first chapter explain why.

In the very early hours of July 13, 1942, the men of Reserve Police Battalion 101 were roused from their bunks in the large brick school building that served as their barracks in the Polish town of Bilgoraj. They were middle-aged family men of working- and lower-middle-class background from the city of Hamburg. Considered too old to be of use to the German army, they had been drafted instead into the Order Police. Most were raw recruits with no previous experience in German occupied territory. They had arrived in Poland less than three weeks earlier.

Major Trapp . . . addressed the men and informed them of their assignment . . . which was not to his liking . . . but the orders came from the highest authorities. . . . The men should remember that in Germany the bombs were falling on women and children. . . . The male Jews of working age were to be taken to a work camp . . . the women, children and the elderly were to be shot on the spot by the battalion.

*Ordinary Men* is a commentary on ordinary men becoming killers of other ordinary men, women, and children. Browning limits his observations to this particular Reserve Police Battalion 101, not only to enable the reader to follow a singular story, but also because these men were pulled from ordinary lives, had not been previously militarized, and yet their killing numbers were as troubling as those from battalions whose men were more "soldier-like." The horror of Hitler's Final Solution, emerging from a series of events and particular social climate culminating in WWII, is brought closer to home by the humanizing of these soldiers. Browning recounts how they went from unwilling

participants to even enthusiastic killers in some cases, seemingly without much coercion.

I wanted to read this book because I wanted to understand the circumstances in which this could have happened. What became clear to me was the depravity and utter selfishness of unregenerate man. The majority of the battalion went along with what was asked of them and, shockingly, felt sorrier for themselves than for their victims because of the "unpleasantness" of their task. Self-centredness, fear, and trust in something other than a Creator God (namely, government) resulted in a nearly complete collapse of a sense of morality. Like Solzhenitsyn, Browning here provides a "warning to the West." These German policemen had been conditioned to view some members of society, particularly the Jewish people, as "others" or enemies to the comfortable functioning of society and so were able to justify their actions to themselves.

This was a difficult read in more ways than one, but nevertheless recommended. As mentioned earlier, it's not for everyone; even my "twenty-somethings" were somewhat triggered by the subject material. We should, however, all be aware of what the "ordinary man" is capable of doing without the tempering influence of a society built on Christian principles. We are, in the Western world, fast losing the remnants of the one we once had. The result is that, more and more, Christians are experiencing a dichotomy between church and world. More concerning, the ubiquitous social media encourages this polarization and we find ourselves fracturing even within the church. *Ordinary Men* illustrates the easy manipulation of the "common man" and would have been a most depressing book if it were not for the saving grace of the knowledge of Jesus Christ as King. We don't know what the Lord is working out as we observe and live through history, but we do know *that* he is working it out to his glory, even as we observe the rising and falling of nations. 🇺🇸

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Classis Northern Ontario (CNO) March 24, 2022, convened at Guelph (Emmanuel)**

On behalf of the convening church of Guelph Emmanuel, br. Tony Lodder welcomed the delegates and opened the meeting in a Christian fashion. It was noted that the delegates of the Arthur Canadian Reformed Church were present at Classis for the first time, and that the church of Fergus Maranatha has extended a call to Rev. Dr. Dean Anderson of the Free Reformed Church of Rockingham, Australia. The deputies of Regional Synod East attended the meeting via video link.

The delegates from Grand Valley reported that the credentials were found to be in good order and Classis was declared constituted. Rev. Eric Kampen was seated as chairman, Rev. Theo. Wierenga as vice-chairman, and Rev. Douwe Agema as clerk. The agenda was adopted.

No special reports or church visitation reports were presented. The chairman posed the questions of Article 44 of the Church Order to the delegates of each church. No church requested advice concerning a matter of supervision. Several churches nominated brothers for the Committee of Appeals. The clerk was instructed to inform those brothers appointed by Classis of their appointment.

#### **Retirement of Rev. Agema**

The consistory with the deacons of Guelph Living Word requested Classis, pursuant to Article 13 of the Church Order, to give concurring advice pertaining to the retirement of Rev. D. Agema. After the required documents were reviewed, Classis, along with the deputies of Regional Synod East, gave concurring advice. Rev. Agema was thanked by the deputies of Regional Synod for his contributions for and in the federation of churches. The chair also expressed thankfulness for the work of Rev. Agema in CNO. He wished Rev. Agema and his wife the Lord's blessing in this new stage of their lives. A certificate releasing Rev. Agema from his duties in CNO will be prepared by the vice-chairman.

The Church of Guelph Living Word asked Classis to appoint Rev. Agema as counsellor, and the Church of Guelph Emmanuel asked Classis to appoint Rev. Onderwater as counsellor. Both requests were granted.

#### **Sundry**

Classis appointed Guelph Living Word church as the convening church for the next classis to be convened on June 24, 2022 at 9:00 am (or the previous evening if there are few items on the agenda). The suggested officers for that classis are: chairman—Rev. Jagt; vice-chairman—Rev. Van Luik; clerk—Rev. Kampen.

No observers from sister churches were present at this assembly. The convening church will invite observers to the next classis and send representatives to other church assemblies if invited.

Question period was held and the chairman thanked the brothers for their brotherly cooperation. The acts of this classis were adopted and this press release was approved. The delegates sang a hymn and the chairman led in prayer of thanksgiving. He declared this assembly closed. 🇺🇸

*Rev. Theo Wierenga,  
Vice-chair at that time*

**PRESS RELEASE****Classis (Contracta) Ontario West  
Held April 1, 2022 via Zoom****Opening**

On behalf of the convening church of Pilgrim-London, Rev. A. Witten welcomed the delegates and opened the meeting in a Christian manner. The following matters were remembered in prayer: current vacancies in the churches, the acceptance of the call extended by Glanbrook to Rev. J. VanWoudenberg, wisdom for Br. T. Veenstra as he considers the call extended to him by Pilgrim (for the outreach ministry of Lighthouse), and the continued welfare of our brothers and sisters in Ukraine. The credentials from the three invited churches (London, Providence, and Ancaster) were found to be in good order. Classis was declared constituted. The body decided to appoint Rev. J. Temple as clerk and Rev. P. Holtvlüwer as chairman.

**Honourable release**

Upon confirming receipt of all the relevant documents, the request of Rev. A. Witten of Pilgrim-London church for honourable release from his ministerial duties in Classis Ontario West was granted. Rev. Witten was thanked for his years of faithful service in Pilgrim and in Classis Ontario West. The delegates commended him into God's care as he takes up his new charge in the Free Reformed Church of Baldivis.

Upon confirming receipt of all the relevant documents, the request of Rev. P. Aasman, missionary of Ancaster Canadian Reformed Church, for honourable release from his missionary duties in Classis Ontario West was granted. Rev. Aasman was thanked for his years of faithful service at Streetlight Christian Ministries and in Classis Ontario West. The delegates commended him into God's care as he continues his labours at Streetlight under the care and direction of Blessings Christian Church in the classical district of Classis Central Ontario.

The meeting was concluded in a Christian manner and declared closed by the chairman. 🗨️

*On behalf of the meeting,  
Rev. Peter Holtvlüwer (chair at that time)*



Job 1:20-22

*The Lord in His infinite wisdom called home*

**Henry (Hank) Pieffers**  
 Sep 15 1947 - May 9 2022

Husband of **Christine Pieffers (Kippers)**

Job & Donna Schenkel

*Shannon & Joe, Jordan, Tristian, Connor, Dylan*

Mathieu & Liza Kosinski

*Jordan & Laurie, Joshua, Jackson, Joel, Maddison*

Brian & Connie Jones

*Rhiannon*

Garret & Nicoline Pieffers

*Olivia & Matt, Kole, Ashton, Parker*

John & Sonya Post

*Leah, Ethan, Kaileigh, Caleb, Reuben,*

*Shane, Adam, Aiden, Lydia*

Roy & Nicole Pieffers

*Lucas, Liam, Ariel*

Alex & Laura Thalen

*Andrew, Scott, Allison, Blake*

Tyrel & Maria Pieffers

*Colton, Carter, Alexa*

Correspondence: A Thalen  
 6507 First Line, Fergus On N1M 2W4

Our faithful God and Father has taken unto himself our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather

**Johannes Hendricus Wilhelmus (Joe) Vanderbrugghen**

Rotterdam, the Netherlands, November 30, 1931,  
 Hamilton, Ontario, 26 December 2021

Joe knew himself to be a child of God by Grace alone. He was a husband and father who was always ready to help. A carpenter by trade he loved helping all his children with various building projects and could usually be found working in his shop. He was also a talented musician and used those talents to the glory of God serving in the churches as organist and choir director for many years. He is survived by Jacoba, his beloved wife of 69 years. He is fondly remembered as the loving father of:

Hank & Harmina Vanderbrugghen - Hamilton ON

Irma & Louis Oosterhoff - Brantford ON

Annette & Andrew Ostermeier - Stoney Creek ON

John & Cindy Vanderbrugghen - Hamilton ON

Esther & John Ludwig - Neerlandia AB

And the cherished grandfather of 21 grandchildren and 37 great-grandchildren.

We are comforted by the lord's promises as found in Psalm 90  
*"Lord you have been our dwelling place in all generations"*

480 Stone church Road East, Hamilton, ON, L8W OB1



**Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School**  
 Smithers, BC  
 www.ebenezerschool.com

*ECRS is a vibrant K - 12 school located in Smithers BC, with 240 students in single grade classes. The school is supported by four local Canadian Reformed and United Reformed Churches.*

Expressions of interest and applications are welcome for the following positions:

- **High School – Effective Immediately**
- **Intermediate Position – 2022/2023**
- **High School – 2022/2023**

**Considering ECRS?**

We invite you to come for a visit. Complimentary flights can be arranged.

**Did you know ECRS offers a bursary program?**

Post-secondary students going into teaching may qualify. See school website for more details.

**Contact our Principal:**

Derek Stoffels  
 (250) 847 3492  
 principal@ebenezerschool.com

*" See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone and the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame." 1 Peter 2:6*

We are inviting applications to fill the possible opening of:  
**Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)**  
 Position to commence on August 1, 2022.

The SERT position is a 60% position with possible additional in-class teaching.

**Possible Grade 1/2 part-time position.**

Cornerstone operates a K-8 school with double grades and currently has a student body of 88 students.

We seek qualified applicants who love to teach and desire to support our community in its mandate to raise our children in the fear of the Lord.

For further details please contact the principal:

**Mr. John Van Iperen**

Phone 519 837 4092 (school), 289-527-2102 (home)

principal@guelphcornerstone.com

Applications should be sent to:

**Cornerstone Christian School**

108 Forest Street, Guelph, ON N1G 1H9

**Attention: Mrs. Anita Van Rootselaar**

**Education Committee Chair**

edcom.chair@guelphcornerstone.com



