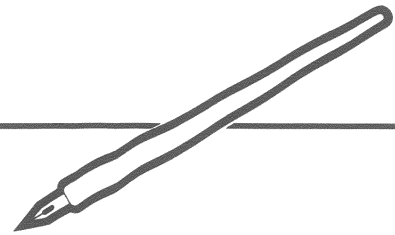




Clarion
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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THIS MONUMENT
ERECTED AND DEDICATED TO
THE GALLANT MEN OF
CHATHAM AND KENT COUNTY
WHO IN THE GREAT WAR OF 1914-18
TOOK UP ARMS ON BEHALF
FOR GOD, FOR KING AND COUNTRY,
FOR LOVER, MOTHER, WIFE AND HOME,
FOR THE LIBERTY OF CANADA
AND THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD.
FOR THIS DEDICATION, 1914-18, THIS DATE
ERECTED 1939



Is it our political calling to join the Christian Heritage Party?

The one side

We are still busy with trying to find an answer to that question. In our first discussion we made a number of critical remarks. In the second editorial we tried to show that our confessions are important as guide and basis not only for our church life, but also for our political thinking and activities, for these confessions say the same thing as (they confess) what God's Word says. Therefore we have accepted these confessions as the "normed" norm for our Christian, our Reformed life in all its aspects. (The confessions are a "normed," not a "norming," norm. They are themselves "normed" by the Word of God, which is the "norming" norm.)

Why did I emphasize the usefulness of our Reformed standards? The reason is that without them one can go in so many directions. It is too bad that it must be said, but it is a fact, that the Scriptures as God's infallible and inerrant Word is both an indispensable and a vague basis. It is indispensable as basis for a Christian. This statement does not need any further explanation or proof. Any believing, faithful, Christian wants to live by what God says in His Holy Word, because that very Word tells him that this is exactly what God wants him to do. Christ Himself lived by what "is written."

Before I continue with the vagueness of this basis, I should like to say also that we must keep things in the right proportions. When fellow-Christians say that they have the Bible, which means God's infallible Word, as basis for their life, and so for their political thinking and action, we can rejoice. We do the very same thing. This places us together overagainst Hindus, Buddhists, Mohammedans, and overagainst all secular humanists and evolutionistic liberals who do not have the Word of God as the norm for their thinking and life.

However, the sad reality is that when, within this circle of Bible-believing Christians, people say that for them the inerrant Word of God is the basis of their life or organization, such a statement and, therewith their basis, is still vague and open to different directions. The cause of this vagueness lies not in the basis as such, in the Word of the Lord, for the Scriptures are clear. The cause of that vagueness lies in our human, also Christian, weakness and sinfulness. Almost every "conservative," Bible-believing Christian will claim that he accepts the Scriptures as the authoritative Word of the Lord. And yet, an Arminian, a Mennonite, a Baptist, a Pentecostal and/or Charismatic, and a Roman Catholic all read and interpret the Scriptures in different ways on quite a number of points. It is this reality that causes me to have some hesitation with regard to the Christian Heritage Party and its basis.

One can state that the confessions are for the church but that we have to forget about these confessions when it comes to a Christian political party in the Canadian situation. Aside from the fact that I do not want to do the latter, as can be clear

from what I wrote, I am afraid that this simply does not work. Christians take their "theological views and opinions," or let me say, their own ways of understanding the Bible, along in life, also in the political arena. They do not leave them behind when they enter the world of politics. Anyway, they should not have such an attitude, although there must always be openness, in humbleness, for a better understanding of the Scriptures and for correction of one's views. If one is a Christian only when it is convenient, and forgets his Christian principles when it does not suit him, such principles are not worth much. Now I suppose that Reformed Christians do have strong Reformed convictions and Reformed principles. They have Scripture and confession.

What I mean is this: we, Reformed Christians, can be against abortion and euthanasia, against homosexuality and the breaking down of the family, and a number of other things, together with Roman Catholics and Baptists and Mennonites, and still others. Here we are one in the negative. But does that mean that we are also one together in the positive? That is not automatically so.

Let me give a few examples. We are in favour of capital punishment. We base this view on the Scriptures, e.g., Romans 13, where the Apostle Paul speaks about the task of the government. To the government is given a sword to exercise God's justice on earth in revenging evil. There are many Christians who strongly disagree with us. They say that the Bible teaches us that we are not allowed to kill. Therefore there should be no capital punishment. When a person is dead, he cannot repent and be converted and saved anymore.

The basic thinking of Roman Catholicism is according to the nature-grace contrast. Nature, which means, this natural earthly life in so many aspects, is neutral. A Christian can fully take part in this neutral, natural life. Besides this natural life there is spiritual life, the grace of God for the soul, the church, and so on. In practice this view means that in the church, and in spiritual matters, one serves God, but in matters of this earthly life one can go along with the so-called neutral world. A Christian church is necessary, but at the same time nothing wrong is seen in membership in an un-Christian labour organization in which Christ is denied as Saviour, as if in these matters of our job and daily bread we can be "neutral." We disagree with this thinking because it is not "normed" by the Scriptures. "Neutral" actually comes down to denying Christ in that certain aspect of life.

Another example is politics. There is now the Christian Heritage Party. This party is born out of frustration. It is established because also the Conservative Party is so totally secularized, so god-less in its politics. However, should it not be so that a Christian political party and the development of Christian, Scriptural political thinking and party-forming should

be a matter of principle rather than a matter of a lack of any good “neutral” party?

I can draw a parallel here with our Reformed schools. The reason why we have our Canadian Reformed schools is not (in the first place) that the public school system is so corrupt. It is rather a matter of principles. As Reformed parents, we seek for the children of the covenant, the children of the congregation(s), a Reformed school education that is based on, and in accordance with, our confession. Therefore, after we had instituted and built up our congregations, the next step was the building of our schools, “to the utmost of our power.”

Now I admit that with respect to the political aspect of our life in Canada we have not acted according to this principle as strongly as in the case of our schools. Although in the past some efforts were made in some congregations, organizing ourselves politically hardly got off the ground. It is therefore such a good thing that in many congregations or areas local ARPA organizations are set up. And I hope that they will all maintain the Three Forms of Unity in their basis.

Assuming now that the basis of the Christian Heritage Party is not “principles based on Judeo-Christian ethics,” but the infallible Word of God, a question is also: will it work? Or will the differences in view and in understanding the Scriptures between the one and the other, between Reformed and, e.g., Roman Catholic, be of such a nature that the ways will separate when it comes to positive building up?

The reader notices that I am just thinking and asking questions. Let us continue and ask a few more questions.

The other side

Must I now come to the conclusion, after all this negative speaking, that I have to be against the Christian Heritage Party? But when I say “no” to it, what should I then do instead? What is the alternative? Should I then do nothing and leave matters as they are, with the argumentation that we live here in Canada, where the situation is so completely different from the Netherlands, and that in this country we can never reach the goal of a Reformed Political Party? Is such an argument sufficient? Is that acting responsibly in the present political situation? Is that what my Lord Jesus Christ wants me to do? I have to ask that question. Our confession points at Christ as the Saviour and Lord of my whole life in all its aspects and duties and callings. That whole life is for Him and His service.

Further, I cannot deny that my Reformed upbringing, my Reformed confessional reading of the Scriptures, tells me that the LORD has given me a political calling and responsibility in this country, besides my other tasks, e.g., in the church and in the matter of school education. A Christian political responsibility is included in my cultural mandate. I must confess Christ as Lord and Saviour for all of life. Therefore I believe that it is possible to have Christian politics and a Christian manner of governing that takes God’s Word as norm and is sanctified by the Spirit of God. As a Christian, I have the duty to stand on guard for the country and nation in which I have a place. I have to confess and witness that God wants to be acknowledged as Lord also by governments. Also governments are called to do His will, whether that is nationally, or provincially, or locally. Christian government and Christian politics is not only possible. It is also a calling. That in the first place.

In the second place, the political parties in our country are purely humanistic. The Word of God, His salvation in Christ, His commandments, have no authority whatsoever in political matters. We appear to be here on that so-called neutral ground in all three existing parties. Are not some of the leaders Roman Catholic?

For me it is not only so that I cannot be a member of any of these existing parties that have representatives in the gov-

ernments, because such membership implies co-responsibility for what such a party does, and stands for, or does not want to stand for. I find it also very difficult, if not actually becoming impossible, to vote for any candidate belonging to either NDP, or the Liberals, or the Conservatives. Not one of these three has anything left of truly Christian, Biblical, thinking. The basic philosophy of all three is that man with his own humanistic reasoning rules. All three also follow the democratic line: what the majority of the people think is right, is right. Groen van Prinsterer showed that democracy is, and ends up in, revolution. And is it not so that in practice Christian members of parliament are bound in their speaking and especially in their voting by the politics and decisions of the party?

Therefore, it would be such a good thing if there was an alternative, a free Christian alternative, overagainst the modern, humanistic, parties. With such a “free Christian alternative”

“ . . . it is possible to have Christian politics and a Christian manner of governing that takes God’s Word as norm and is sanctified by the Spirit of God.”

I mean independent Christian parliamentarians, who are in no manner bound by the decisions of a party caucus of any of the existing humanistic parties, but can freely speak according to the Scriptures. This is also what the Christian Heritage Party wants.

Besides, humanistic philosophy, together with much unprincipled opportunism, causes our governments to give in so easily to loud-mouthed minorities that cry for equal human rights for their (from a Biblical point of view) lawless ideas and practices. Must what is unnatural and lawless have equal rights with what is natural and law-abiding? Should there not be discrimination against that which breaks the law? (A different question is in how far a Christian government should discriminate, e.g., against homosexuality. Is it the calling of a Christian government to sentence practicing homosexuals to death, as the Old Testament Law prescribes? Some say so. But that is another matter.) Such an abiding by, and maintaining of, the moral commandments of God, that is what the Christian Heritage Party seeks. And should we not try to turn the trend? Should not a Biblical witness be heard right there in Parliament, if at all possible?

The reader understands my difficulty. There are a number of positive things in the Christian Heritage Party. But there are also serious negative points. If membership in such a general Christian political party would mean that we have to give up our Reformed confessional thinking and acting, if it would mean that we have to adapt to general evangelical trends, if it would mean that in the Christian Heritage Party we have to stick to political matters and have to bury our theological differences, then my response is negative.

It is highly important that we acknowledge our political responsibility in our country (or let me say: countries, including the U.S.A.). There is no doubt about that. We are called to take up also our Christian “patriotic” duties in this respect. Again, it is this aspect of the establishing of the Christian Heritage Party that I completely agree with. Christ has told His church that it is His light-bearer. It has to let His light shine in the world. That light must not be placed under a bushel. It must be seen. It means that a truly Christian voice should be heard.

I can also appreciate the intent of the new party not to go the way of compromise. That is the way it should be. But just because of that intent, in my opinion, one has to speak about theological, or let us say: confessional, differences. If we are to do more than just fight against abortion and pornography; if we are to form a party with a program for governing the nation, we should know beforehand what that will entail. Does my Roman Catholic fellow-member (to restrict myself to him) agree with me, Reformed member, on the meaning and contents of the statement: we do not want to compromise? Compromise with respect to what: the principles of Judeo-Christian ethics? But we saw that this is a very vague term. Does the party not want to make any compromise with respect to what the Word of God says?

We have to ask such questions, because — let us be honest with that Roman Catholic fellow-member — we confess that the Roman Catholic Church has compromised and still is “compromising” the truth of the Word of God with the acceptance of, and adherence to, its *un-Scriptural* doctrines taken from its specific Roman Catholic tradition, which on so many points conflicts with God’s Word. “No compromise” is a beautiful statement. But the Roman Catholic “reverence” for Mary and the mass are, when seen in the light of God’s Word, “an accursed idolatry.” Does that not have any bearing on political co-operation? At first sight it may seem not, but in the end the conclusion will be that truly Roman Catholic and truly Reformed are still two opposite ways that are worlds apart, just as in the sixteenth century. A true, lasting, solid Christian unity and co-operation in the church, but also in the political arena, is a unity in the truth of all that the Scriptures say.

The difficulty

I wish I could give my full support to the Christian Heritage Party. However, yet I have so many questions. What are we getting into? Groen van Prinsterer said: *In isolation lies our power.* And he meant: abiding by what is Reformed and anti-revolutionary.

And now the difficulty is, when I withhold my vote, my support, what is there for me as an alternative? Doing nothing? Sitting back? Letting things go in the political arena without a Christian witness as far as I am concerned? Here is an alternative to political, increasingly god-less and law-less humanism. If I react negatively to this alternative, I have no input in it. I cannot try to influence it. Yet, I have received so much for nothing; should I not give it to others for nothing? But then really give?

If I react by withholding my active support, do I leave the fulfilment of the Christian calling in this country, of which I am part, to others? And am I myself right in doing nothing, on the basis of the argumentation that I do not have the power, with a handful of other Reformed people, to form a political party and get an independent Christian man in parliament? Is saying “no” and doing nothing the answer? It certainly is not.

Now there is some ways an alternative. That is ARPA. ARPA has Scripture and confession in its basis. ARPA carries the name “Reformed”: Association for *Reformed* Political Action. On this point I have no hesitation. Here, in the first place, I see a very important calling for a Reformed organization for people of Reformed persuasion.

But then it is so that ARPA must not just be an organization for action, which can lead to American-style activism. Sure, there has to be action, but ARPA must in the first place become a *study society*. What is needed in the very first place is study, study, study, Reformed study. The writings of Groen van Prinsterer, of Abraham Kuyper, of Albert Zijlstra, and Joh. Francke, and others must be studied. ARPA must study the publications of the GPV in the Netherlands. It must become clearer what truly Christian and Reformed, anti-revolutionary,

political theory and practice is; what a truly Christian, anti-revolutionary governing of a country means.

If there is not a thorough study in the above manner, a joining of a general Christian party could mean that we become overpowered by a broad-evangelical, American-style, Christian moral activism that thinks that it has to, and can, save America and Canada and the world by turning it into a theocracy, while there is a losing of the distinctively Reformed outlook and lifestyle, which is guided, not by a kind of Christian ideology, but by the sound teachings of the Scriptures as confessed in our standards.

It is true, as Reformed principled people who have the Reformed confessions as basis and guide for our whole life, we have a rich heritage; which, I am sometimes afraid, we are more and more losing through ignorance, through lack of study, which, in turn, makes us susceptible to the influence of a general Christian, social gospel activism, or a moral-issues activism. Therefore, once again, let us study in ARPA. That should be first and foremost.

Conclusion

At certain times and in certain situations, when there was not yet a Canadian Reformed school, there were Canadian Reformed people who sent their children to an existing Christian school instead of to a public school. Others were convinced (sincerely, and not with the hand on the purse) that this was not the right way. Now Canadian Reformed schools have been established. A strictly Canadian Reformed Political Party that can have political results in an election is hardly imaginable. Should we, therefore, join what is obtainable?

I realize that all that I have written regarding the new Christian party sounds rather negative. I wish that I could be much more positive, much more convinced that here is indeed the way to go. Yes, we should not want to be and remain inactive. We should be very active and involved. Indeed, the future of our country, the country in which we live, and in which our children live, and possibly our grandchildren will live, is at stake. We have to do here with very serious matters. There is no doubt about it.

And it is Reformed to see and accept our political responsibility, to care for country and nation. Let us show that care. Let us not remain idle. But when it becomes clear that one cannot maintain a Reformed confessional stand in a political party, that should be a clear indication of the way one should not go. Our confession is not just a Reformed tradition, or a Reformed interpretation of the Scriptures, besides which we can readily accept other interpretations and other traditions. That confession remains for us the “normed” norm based on God’s Word also for our political activities.

Therefore, what I should like to come back to, and emphasize once more, is the great need for Reformed political *study on the basis of the Scriptures (the “norming” norm) and confession (the “normed” norm)* in ARPA. Here I see our first calling. Are there not among us people who are thoroughly Reformed and have political talents? Who are interested in politics? Who sees a calling here? Who are willing to study in this field? We need Reformed leaders like Groen van Prinsterer and Jongeling, also here in Canada, not just for ourselves, but for our country, for our nation! Our country needs Reformed Christians in its political arena!

Let us pray to the LORD for them. And, let us, at the same time, under the blessing of the LORD, make the local ARPA societies Reformed political study and training centers for the fulfilment of our political calling and for the benefit of our country.

J. GEERTSEMA

Entertainment



1. Rejoice always

Are Christians uncheerful and humourless people? Do they lack joy and happiness in their lives? Does a true faith not go together with having fun and making pleasure? Some people seem to think so, and sometimes a contradiction is made between a real spiritual life and enjoyment in everyday life.

It is understandable that such an attitude turns people away from the church and the service of the Lord. If obedience to the Lord and a real Christian lifestyle is synonymous with cheerlessness and joylessness, who wants to be a Christian?

The result of this wrong dilemma is that people sometimes, for a while, try to break out of their traditional way of life, and afterwards put themselves back in what they feel as a straitjacket. This dilemma, although not always manifested in such a clear way, can too often be noticed among Christians. Still it is a false dilemma. Christians should not feel and act as joyless and unhappy people. On the contrary. We as Christians ought to be the most happy people in the world. That is what the Bible teaches us, although it is not always practiced this way.

In order to see things in the right perspective we have to realize what real happiness is. We have to define our joy and cheerfulness. We have to consider why we are so privileged, and how we have to rejoice.

When we read the letter of the Apostle Paul to the Philippians, it strikes us how often the apostle speaks about rejoicing, happiness, and joy. Still he was not in the most favorable position, according to human standards. He was imprisoned for the sake of the gospel and he knew that he, in all probability, would be killed for the sake of Christ.

In his letter to the Philippians the Apostle Paul does not sound like a sad and cheerless person. He speaks constantly about his cheer and happiness. In chapter 1:3,4 he says that he prays with joy, thankful for their partnership in the gospel. In chapter 1:18,19 we read that he rejoices because Christ is proclaimed and that he shall rejoice. He asks his readers to complete his joy (2:2); he is glad and rejoices (2:17), and calls upon

his readers to be glad and rejoice with him (2:18), so that he may be cheered (2:18). He further writes that he will send one of his helpers, that they may rejoice at seeing him (2:28) and receive him with joy (2:29). In chapter 3:1 he calls upon them to rejoice in the Lord. He says that they are his joy and crown (4:1), and that he rejoices in the Lord greatly (4:10). He sums it all up in 4:4 with these words:

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.”

In this very short letter of the Apostle Paul we find sixteen times the expressions joy, rejoice, being glad, and cheered. It certainly does not give the impression that this is a sad man with a low spirit, but rather a “cheerleader” in his own right.

How can this man, in his circum-

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stances, be so happy, cheerful, and rejoicing? It is not ordinary fun or empty, worldly pleasure, but real happiness and lasting joy. It is not spiritual happiness over and against worldly pleasure, but

follows we will pay attention to some aspects of Christian entertainment. Not each and everyone seems to be aware of the required consistency in our life in this respect and the consequences thereof.

is actually meant, or a remarkable coincidence of events, which is noticed only by a few, but which gives the whole matter a different look. Humour is sometimes described as "a smile and a tear," indicating that even under serious and dramatic circumstances a good sense of humour can cause a smile, and that in very happy and enjoyable circumstances a serious undertone can be heard.

Humour has something to do with ambiguity in the proper sense of the word. It is the ability to notice the different aspects of a matter which can be understood in more than one way. Especially the ability to see the nice, even the comic aspects of a matter as well as the seriousness at the same time; to see it in such a way that the one does not go at the cost of the other. Someone who has a good sense of humour can combine joy and sadness in a natural way, without causing tension or feeling a discrepancy between the two. This is a very healthy approach.

We have said that in humour ambiguity plays a certain role. Ambiguity means that a matter can be understood in more than one way. There is also a use of ambiguity which is sometimes seen as humourous, but has little to do with real humour or a good sense of humour. It is the type of ambiguity used in foul language and in dirty jokes. Some people seem to find a childish pleasure in telling jokes or making remarks which are very ambiguous, and can be understood in two different ways. Especially jokes in which an ambiguous reference is made to vulgar and obscene matters seem to be favoured in this respect. Perverted sex and other plain vulgarities are often the subject of such ambiguity. This has nothing to do with a good sense of humour but is rather a prove of a bad taste and a lack of a real sense of humour.

Also in our words, in our language, we have to show that we are Christians. You can notice someone's civilization by the language he uses. It is a very poor performance when someone has a childish pleasure in using dirty words or expressions with a double meaning to refer to vulgar matters. That is a far cry from a good sense of humour.

It is important to keep this in mind when we have to organize entertainment or have to set up a party.

In the next installment we will see what consequences this has for organizing a party in the proper way. That means in such a way that it really can be enjoyed by everyone, that people can have fun, but without losing the Christian lifestyle, and without hurting the feelings of others.

— *To be continued*
W. POUWELSE

PSALM 101

1543/Geneva, 1551

1. LORD, I will sing, the praise of jus-tice voic-ing;
Up-right-ness is the theme of my re-joic-ing.
A song of loy-al-ty and blame-less ways
To Thee I'll raise.

2. I'll wisely tread the pathway of perfection.
When wilt Thou come, O LORD, for my direction?
I'll walk within my house with blameless heart,
From sin apart.

3. No base and worthless thing will I have near me,
And all apostasy I hate sincerely.
Those who in secret other men defame
I'll put to shame.

rather joy, happiness and pleasure in spite of difficult circumstances.

What I mean to say is, that we should not create a contradiction between joy, gladness, happiness and cheer on the one hand, and a Christian way of life on the other hand. The important point is how we express our joy and gladness, and why we are so happy.

We are allowed to enjoy everything in our life. We have to be thankful and should rejoice in all the beautiful things the Lord has given us to enjoy. Not only spiritual matters but "all things for body and soul." We are allowed to laugh, to make fun, to cheer about all the nice things in life. That is what Holy Scripture teaches us. We are allowed to have parties. The first public action of our Lord Jesus Christ was, according to John 2:11, to go to a wedding party and to provide wine, to make sure that the party could continue.

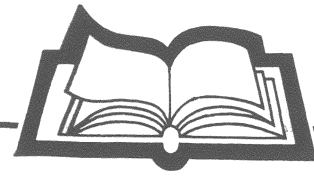
However, we have to organize and to arrange our parties in such a way that it does not conflict with our Christian way of life. All our expressions of joy and all our ways of entertainment have to be in compliance with the Word of God. In what

Amusement, humour and fun are not always practiced in the right way.

2. Real humour

What is real humour? The word humour is often taken in the sense of causing amusement and fun. When people call something humourous they mean that it is funny and causes people to laugh. However, humour is more than just having fun or causing people to laugh. According to the original meaning of the word, humour was a liquid, thought to be present in the body, and determining someone's character and mood. The origin of the word humour can still be traced in some expressions which we still use today. For instance, when we say that someone is "out of humour," we mean that he is in a bad mood.

When we say that someone has a good sense of humour, the word has a somewhat different meaning. We can describe humour as the ability to sense a comic contradiction or a contrast between the real meaning or intention of a matter and what it looks like. For instance an expression which, when taken literally, means quite something else than what



'At Cenchrea he cut his hair, for he had a vow.'

Acts 18:18b

The Vow of Love

The remark of the writer of the book of Acts describing Paul's actions at the close of his second missionary journey seems incidental, and too insignificant to pay much attention to it. It also appears out of place. Vows and fasting are things characteristic of the old dispensation, and it strikes us as strange that Paul, the apostle of Christian freedom, would also take a vow like this. Vows in themselves are almost non-existent in the church today, and one easily regards these words as a remnant of Paul's strict, legalistic upbringing.

However, we ought not to be lured into easily dismissing these words as remnants of a bygone dispensation. To be sure, the vow that Paul takes has all the marks of the vow of the Nazirite as described in Numbers 6:1ff. Particularly the reference to the cutting of his hair reminds us of Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist, the three Nazirites of the Old Testament. Yet the very cryptic and seemingly incidental tone of these words should tell us that more is involved here.

Although the Nazirite vow as described in Numbers 6 is a voluntary and temporary vow, we never read of any Old Testament figure — including John the Baptist — who takes the vow in this way. In itself, the vow was clearly an addition to the regular institutions of worship and service in Israel. It pointed beyond itself to the new dispensation in which life is totally dedicated to the Lord at all times. The office of the Nazirite was an "extra," a temporary office of special service and dedication to the LORD. But as far as we know, no one voluntarily takes on this vow in the Old Testament. Samson is appointed a Nazirite from birth, and Samuel is dedicated to the LORD by his mother. John the Baptist also receives his special commission from birth. While that element of the "extra" — total dedication — marks the lives of all these servants of the LORD, the voluntary and temporary element of the vow so prominent in its institution is decidedly missing here.

This all only tells us that the extra provision of the Naziritic office which the LORD had provided for in the old dispensation was never made use of in the proper way. The Nazirites identified in the old dispensation did not voluntarily come forward to serve. Rather they were appointed by divine decision. Their "extra" arose out of His sovereign decree. Their great works of wonder were born in His initiative. The near superhuman, so characteristic of the labours of all these figures, is born solely in God's unilateral action upon them.

But Paul stands in marked contrast to all these figures. To be sure, like them all, his office and commission is characterized by the same sort of "extra." He was the special apostle to the Gentiles — those added to the tree of Israel in order to make its growth complete. He is sometimes called the "thirteenth apostle," just as Samuel is called the "thirteenth judge." The patterns are similar in many ways, not

only with regard to Samson and Samuel, but also with regard to John. Yet Paul's vow stands out in contrast to those of his Old Testament predecessors as voluntary and temporary.

What accounts for the change? In the old dispensation the way to the voluntary free-will offering was not fully opened. Man's heart was still too clouded with sin and darkness to fully seize the grace that was administered. But with the coming of the Saviour, the great "addition" was given. The great work of redemption fulfilling the law was accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ. And the outpouring of His Spirit opens the way for the true and meaningful free-will offering of total dedication in the church. In Christ, the real import of the Naziritic office comes to light.

And Paul is the one chosen by the Lord to bring this "extra" offer of love. Why Paul? Simply because in him and his apostleship, the Lord wished to manifest the fullness of His longsuffering and grace both to His people, and to all the world. Paul was a Pharisee, "a Hebrew born of Hebrews, . . . a persecutor of the church," Phil. 3:5. The Jews could not have found a more qualified figure to address them concerning their religion. But he was pulled from the darkness of his ways, and received mercy, "for this reason that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display His perfect patience for an example for those who were to believe in Him for eternal life," I Tim. 1:16.

And Paul shows this wonderful mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus in remarkable ways. His whole ministry is characterized by the "extra" typical of the Nazirites. He brought the gospel, but that was not enough for him. He had to do so, for he was under a commission. "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" I Cor. 9:17. But what was the "extra?" Only this, that he brought the gospel free of charge, not making use of his full right in the gospel. That is the note that governs his whole ministry in Asia.

But that was only the beginning. For from the point that Paul completes this vow, the "superabundant" work is reflected in all he does. So often in his last letters we find him at the point of death — only to be released from suffering and prison, and appear once again as one risen from the dead, with marks of Jesus on his body, a testimony to Him for all the world, (cf. Gal. 6:17). Time and time again, the superhuman resounds forth from this suffering and ailing soldier of the cross. And we may be sure that like Samson, and above all — like His Master — he slew more of the enemy in his death than he did in his life.

So we see in a simply vow the fullness of Christ's love manifested in His foremost servant. And that one vow is a constant reminder of what the Lord asks from us all: total dedication to Him!

J. DEJONG

Mission work among the Jews?

When mission work is discussed in our circles, the Jewish people are, generally speaking, not in the forefront of our concern. Without minimizing in any way the importance of the preaching of the gospel to the heathen or to those estranged from the true worship of God, I would like to suggest that the Jewish people should start receiving more attention again. After all, according to the Prayer for all the Needs of Christendom found in our *Book of Praise*, "We pray for the mission among Jews, Moslems, and heathen, who live without hope and without Thee in the world. Grant Thy blessing upon the propagation of the gospel among those who still call themselves Christians but have deviated from Thy truth in doctrine and life" (p.643). There is good reason for the Jews' being put first in this prayer.

Special place

God has given this people a very special place that is still in force today. "They are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." (Rom. 9:4,5). To see such a privileged people not believing in the Christ gave the Apostle Paul much sorrow (Rom. 9:2,3) and he earnestly prayed for their salvation. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1). Although it may seem hopeless, the situation with Israel cannot be so characterized. As we read in Romans 11 within the context of Israel's disobedience, "I ask, then, has God rejected His people? By no means!" (11:1). God continues to remember Israel; but they need to believe the gospel, for faith in Jesus Christ is necessary (Rom. 10:4-13). "But how are men to call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:14-15a). And therefore, proclaimers of the gospel went out to Israel. Indeed, because of the special privileged place of this people, the

glad tidings consistently went to them first. First to the Jew and then to the Greek (Rom 1:16).

This order, the Jew first and then the Greek, is characteristic of the proclamation of the gospel after Pentecost. Did Christ not command His apostles that His Name should be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem? (Luke 24:47).

PSALM 125:1, 4

*Those who trust in the LORD resemble
Mount Zion, firm and sure,
Which ever will endure;
It stands unmoved and will not tremble.
So Israel will not be shaken
Or be forsaken.*

*Do good, O LORD, to those who
hear Thee,*

*To men good in Thy sight
And in their hearts upright.
Let in Thy Israel that fears Thee,
When sinners to their doom are driven,
Thy peace be given.*

The first Christians were Jews. Paul and Barnabas went first to the Jews and if unbelief was met, to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46; cf. 28:23-28). The sequence, the Jew first and then the Gentile, is not just a chronological matter. The fact that Paul, apostle to the Gentiles (cf. Rom. 1:13ff), should see his task as instrumental for the conversion of Jews indicates that more than a certain order of time is in view. As he writes to the Christians in Rome: "Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them." (Rom. 11:13,14, cf. v. 11). While preaching to Gentiles, the Jews are never completely out of his mind. They are of first importance.

Our involvement

As non-Jewish believers in the Christ, we cannot disassociate ourselves from the first place of the Jewish people. After all we are in a sense guests in the tents

of Shem who may partake of the promises given to this people. I think here of the prophecy of Noah: "God enlarge Japheth and let him dwell in the tents of Shem" (Gen. 9:26). The second part of this prophecy was fulfilled when Gentiles could share in the blessings of the covenant community of Israel because of the apostolic preaching of the Christ.

The position of the Jews affects us all, as is also made abundantly clear by the image of the olive tree which is Israel (Rom. 11:17-24). Into this tree we have been grafted, grafted as wild olive shoots contrary to nature into a cultivated tree. Can we then forget the natural branches of Israel that have been broken off because of unbelief? God has the power to graft them in through faith in Christ! (Rom. 11:23,24).

Considering our situation in relation to the Jews, is it not difficult to refrain from praying for the conversion of Jews and, when the opportunity arises, to work for the spreading of the gospel among them? Indeed, as already indicated, such a prayer is found in our *Book of Praise* for use in our worship services and it would be consistent with such a prayer to seek opportunities for mission work among Jews. Such mission work was well-established in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands before the Liberation (Vrijmaking) in 1944 and the matter has recently been receiving renewed attention among our sister churches in that country.

There are many obstacles to doing fruitful gospel proclamation among the Jews. History has shown that the work is exceedingly difficult and humanly speaking only the right kind of people who understand the Jewish heritage and culture can work effectively. But God has not rejected this people (Rom. 11:1) and He raises up His instruments for such work. He is also able to do so from our midst. The first thing we may do is to make the conversion of Jews a matter of regular prayer, if that is not yet the case. Only where there is a growing realization of the special place of this people and our debt to them for so much that is dear to us (cf. Rom. 9:4,5) can eventual mission work be thought of and under God's blessing be realized.

C. VAN DAM

May children partake of the Lord's Supper?²

Passover and the Lord's Supper

One of the arguments that children must be allowed to participate in the Lord's Supper is derived from the Old Testament sacrament of Passover. One argues then simply in this way: just as baptism came in the place of circumcision, the Lord's Supper is a New Testament adaptation of Israel's Passover. The Rev. G. Visee wrote in this respect (see *Christian Renewal*, Vol. 4, No. 14, March 17, 1986):

"There is only this difference: Christ is not merely Israel's Passover Lamb, but the Lamb of God that bears the sins of the world, and, secondly, since His blood was shed, we now have the bloodless feast of the Lord instead of the bloody sacrament of the Passover. And the children partook of that Passover. They were not passive observers, but ate of the meal. The Passover was celebrated by the household, parents and children together. It was not simply a family affair, however, for if the household was too small to eat the whole lamb other Israelites were invited to share. That is also borne out by the fact that Christ celebrated the Passover with His disciples. He and His disciples did not constitute a family; that, however, did not detract from the validity of the meal. There simply were no children in this group, nor were there any women. Nevertheless, they did and do participate in this meal." His conclusion is clear: we may not deny the Lord's Supper to the children of God's covenant, because they participated also already in the Old Testament sacrament of Passover.

Relation, but not mere transition

What are we to say about this? Of course, there is a certain relation between Passover and the Lord's Supper.

But at the same time we have to be aware of the fact that the Passover did not proceed simply to the Lord's Supper. When the Rev. G. Visee says that the words of the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 5:7, "For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed," "draws an unmistakably direct connection between the Passover

and the Lord's Supper," he says too much. This text deals with the fact that the Passover Lamb was a *prefiguration* of Christ's sacrifice. Furthermore, we have to bear in mind in this respect at least two things.

In the first place: there was a considerable time lapse between the breaking of the bread and the giving of the (third) cup, namely, the whole period of the eating of the Passover. In the second place: Jesus Christ did not join all the moments of the Passover, only two moments of it, but especially not the moment of the eating of the Passover.

Therefore, the Lord's Supper is not to be considered a mere Christian form of the Passover. The Passover did not proceed simply in the Lord's Supper. We may say it in this way: the Lord's Supper is the fulfilment of the Passover. The line of the Passover is not extended in the Lord's Supper, but it is picked up in it.

History of redemption

This has also to do with the history of redemption. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of another, a new covenant. He who appeals to the Passover, in which children participated, may not simply conclude: here we have the clear proof that children may participate in the Lord's Supper. Then he has to bear in mind that there is a new element in the Lord's Supper overagainst the Passover. That new element, in which the Lord's Supper does not result automatically from the Passover, is related to the different way of salvation. That does not deal with the *nature* of salvation, but with the manner of salvation. The self-evidence with which the people of Israel celebrated the Lord's Supper, old and young people together, was connected with the degree of God's revelation. The celebration of the Passover was an obligation to the people of Israel under penalty of excommunication. The new element of the covenant of Christ's blood finds its kernel in the work of God the Holy Spirit, which is a personal matter and which is not simply founded on the tie of blood.

The Old and the New Covenant stand

beside each other and one cannot simply draw a parallel between both in every respect. There are some differences.

Responsibility

One of those differences has to do with the emphasis on responsibility in the New Covenant. In the Old Dispensation there was of course responsibility, but that is different from the responsibility of the New Dispensation. We read about that difference in Hebrews 10: "A man who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God, and profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace?" (vs. 28 and 29). That has also to do with the responsibility in connection with the Lord's Supper.

In the same chapter of the letter to the Hebrews we read a quotation from the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning the new covenant: "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds" (vs. 16). Also this text shows that increased grace brings along increased personal responsibility in the New Dispensation.

It is, therefore, totally wrong when for instance James B. Jordan in his *Theses on Paedocommunion* (The Geneva Press, 1982) states: "'Unconverted' slaves ate the Passover in the Old Covenant — inward circumcision is not the ecclesiastical criterion for participation in the Lord's Supper" (Thesis 15).

Here again a mere parallel is drawn between the Passover and the Lord's Supper. This takes into account neither the increased responsibility in the New Covenant nor the progress in the history of redemption.

Besides, there are the important words of I Corinthians 11:26-29 in connection with the responsibility of the celebration of the Lord's Supper (I hope to come back to that passage in the next article).

The "inward circumcision" is justly stressed in the church as a condition for

celebrating the Lord's Supper. I am reminded of the conclusion of article 35 of the Belgic Confession:

"Finally, we receive this holy sacrament in the congregation of the people of God with humility and reverence as we together commemorate the death of Christ our Saviour with thanksgiving and we confess our faith and Christian religion. Therefore no one should come to this table without careful self-examination, lest by eating this bread and drinking from this cup, he eat and drink judgment upon himself. In short, we are moved by the use of this holy sacrament to a fervent love of God and our neighbours. Therefore we reject as desecrations all additions and damnable inventions which men have mixed with the sacraments. We declare that we should be content with the ordinance taught by Christ and His apostles and should speak about it as they have spoken."

Especially the *confession of faith*, mentioned in this article, is very important.

And he who confesses his faith declares in this confession that he is a true believer, a living member of the Church of Jesus Christ. He has accepted his responsibility in God's new covenant.

Without commitment?

In the meantime, the responsibility of the new covenant does not mean that we are without obligation in respect of the Lord's Supper. There is an obligation to accept the promises of God's covenant. So there is also an obligation to partake of the sacrament of the Holy Supper. The church may not leave that to the good pleasure of the people themselves. So if it would be so that the children are allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper, they also had to do it.

It is therefore also wrong when James B. Jordan in his *Theses on Paedocommunion* defends the following idea: "If a child or infant will not eat the food given him, he is not to be 'force-fed.' If a child won't eat, then he won't eat. There is nothing superstitious about it!" (Thesis 24). Of

course, we reject the Roman Catholic idea of *ex opere operato*, as if the sacrament works automatically, exclusively by the act itself. But, precisely overagainst this idea, we point to the responsibility involved, and we say to the people: you are not free to partake of the Lord's Supper, but it is a matter of obligation in God's covenant.

It is only one of the two: the children are not allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper, unless they have made profession of faith, or the children are indeed allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper, but then that is not without consequences. Then they are *obliged* to partake of it. If they *may* go this means at the same time that they *must* go.

Next time we hope to see that there are very clear conditions for the participation of the Lord's Supper, especially stated in the already mentioned passage in 1 Corinthians 11.

K. DEDDENS

NEWS MEDLEY



Yes, and we had better come up with another news medley, for otherwise the brothers (or sisters) who so faithfully send the bulletins might become frustrated, and those who stopped sending them might think that they acted wisely. Let me assure you all that it is our sincere intention to come with a medley more frequently in the future; but then we need bulletins. I realize that ecclesiastical assemblies "don't read papers," but the members of consistories certainly do. May I ask them all to resume regular mailing? If the financial burdens become too heavy, you may even send me a bill once of year for the postage. Your money will be cheerfully refunded, to use a well-known advertisement.

From various brothers and sisters I received word that they missed our bi-weekly chat. It is encouraging to hear this. Frankly, I felt bad every time when I opened an issue of *Clarion* and I did not see this column, but only now have we reached the stage at which the books are practically all in place and I can again find the things which I am looking for. Life resumes a more regular aspect for us.

This time more news is to be mentioned concerning Australia than about Canada. The holiday season was upon us in our own country whereas "down under" everything is in full swing during their winter season. Don't take "winter" too seriously, for recently a young brother from Albany visited us here and told us that for the first time in his life he had seen and felt real snow when with others he went to Mount Baker in the State of Washington, just south of the border. Whatever "snow" falls on the Stirling Range during the Western Australian winter melts almost as fast as it hits the ground and is mostly gone within an hour or so.

Let us, however, begin with Canada.

In Fergus "Rent auditorium and basement to members is discussed. The consistory decided to wave [no, not 'goodbye' but they mean to 'waive' VO] all fee(s) but will require a deposit of \$50.00, which will be repaid, providing the buildings are left in original shape."

Oftentimes the charging of rent for certain activities is a sore point. The question is even whether it is legal to do so. Churches are tax-exempt, but if they start charging rent, they are morally obligated to pay property taxes as well. Besides, renting facilities to members whose very contributions maintain not only the ministry of the gospel as such but also the facilities needed for the execution of this ministry, has always seemed sort of strange and inappropriate to me. I am, therefore, very happy with the decision which the Fergus consistory took. Our facilities stand there unused practically ninety percent of the time and the more use is made of them, the better it is. Economically speaking, our church buildings with annex facilities are very unprofitable; and then I am not speaking in terms of money, but in terms of the use which we get out of them.

The other time — long, long ago — we mentioned already the growth of the congregations. In the Burlington-West bulletin (Rehoboth) we read, "The congregation has at this moment almost 150 addresses with 311 communicant and 309 non-communicant members, total membership: 620!"

The congregation is urged to contact not only the minister if anything has to be discussed or if help is needed, but also the elders, for otherwise the minister would not have sufficient time available for the proper study for sermon preparation or for visits to the sick and aged.

This is something to be kept in mind in other places as well. With the sermons the whole congregation is reached and they are of prime importance. If there is no time for proper sermon preparation, one of the main tasks of a minister of the gospel cannot be properly executed.

We all know that there are instances when one particular "case" may take up most of the week, and then not just for one week but for several weeks in a row or intermittently. Then the whole congregation suffers. It is our experience that the elders are called very infrequently if there is illness in a family or if there are special difficulties. The brothers have their daily work, they have their regular family-visits, they have their — sometimes almost endless — consistory meetings, and then they have their own families, but so does the minister!

The cure for all this is not: to increase the number of elders or to call a second minister. The cure is: smaller congregations. In this connection I like to quote what the Rev. G. VanRongen wrote in *Una Sancta* regarding the situation in Armadale and Kelmscott.

"Indeed the church buildings of both congregations are usually packed to capacity, as experience teaches and taught us. Yet the crucial factor is not the capacity of the church building, but the number of membership: is a large congregation still a real communion of saints, or do its members hardly know each other, or even not know each other at all? Can the office-bearers, and especially the minister, really fulfil all the duties of their office?"

Let everyone bear these things in mind when discussing the need for more seating capacity in the auditoriums, and before deciding to add to them. It is not very pleasant, and it does require sacrifices to start every time anew. In Lynden, Wash., e.g., there are brothers and sisters who first started in New Westminster, then started in Cloverdale, then in Abbotsford, and now in Lynden. Every time anew they moved from a — finally acquired — real church building into sometimes makeshift facilities, anyway make-do facilities. We could well understand it when there are some who do not feel very much like "setting up" everything once again.

Yet, the interest, the real interest of the congregation is at stake. Small congregations do have their drawbacks and specific difficulties, we admit. Oftentimes everyone knows too much about everyone. On the other hand, however, they are better able to take heed of one another and to notice it sooner if anyone starts going the wrong way. The dangers in a large congregation are much more numerous and serious and we should do our best to minimize them as much as possible. One of the main means to this end is: keep small congregations, congregations which number no more than between four and five hundred, communicant and non-communicant members combined.

The Burlington-West bulletin also contained the new text of Art. 13 C.O. This is not the place to comment extensively on the changes made by the Synod 1986. I hope to come back to it separately at some time in the future. Let me say now that according to the text as it reads now no minister has the right to retire unless he is *unable* to do his work. The progress which we had made in the formulation as adopted by Synod 1983 has been wiped out and my poor colleagues have to serve until they are declared unfit and until the congregations say, "I wished he would become disabled, for actually he becomes too old." That is then the most kind way of putting it. However, we'll say more about it in the future, the Lord willing.

In Grand Rapids the contact with various groups in the United States is continued and expanded. Various churches have responded to the request of the Grand Rapids Church for financial support for calling a "minister-at-large." Most of those outside the region of Ontario South have promised support in one form or another, but very few commit themselves

to a definite amount. Most of them promised to have one or two or more collections for this work. Even so, the consistories usually know what the yield of one collection will be, and they must have had some figure in mind when taking their decision; only, they did not want to put it on the budget and left it up to the congregation to what extent the brothers and sisters are willing to support this work.

The Houston consistory "discussed a proposal to obtain air time on the local AM radio station in order to air the program 'The Voice of the Church.' . . . The consistory decided that this was a good way to fulfil part of our calling to spread the Word of God also to those around us, and thus be a salt and a light to our fellow-countrymen. The Church at Smithers will be approached to see if this can be done with their cooperation."

What was Smithers' reaction?

"The Evangelism Committee will be requested to investigate the practical aspects of this matter."

Smithers also spoke about the "renovation of the organ." Because of lack of room in the organ loft it was decided to move the console to the floor of the auditorium. This will be more pleasant for the organist as well, I'm sure, for now he can look at the minister as every other member of the congregation can during the services; and he will be better able to hear the sound of the organ and modify his registration accordingly.

Smithers was also to have a concert. "Guest organist will be John Plug from Albany, Australia, and guest pianist will be Neil Teitsma from Winnipeg." I am certain that they had a beautiful evening in Smithers. The former I heard in Albany on his "own" organ and thoroughly enjoyed it; the latter I heard in Winnipeg and of this I can say the same.

It is gratifying when the talents in our midst are being used and when especially the younger members of the church show interest in the glorious field of music.

The bulletin of the three churches in Western Australia's Perth region mentions that, "In an effort to expand our musical talents, the Committee of the Brass Ensemble has pondered for some time the idea of starting a Youth Training Band, which ultimately would develop into a fully trained Fanfare Band." We cannot but applaud this initiative and hope that it will succeed. As we could hear ourselves, there are great talents among the brotherhood in Australia, also in this respect.

Sometimes they are more enthusiastic than the older ones, and the older ones can take an example from them. The Armadale consistory discussed the question whether the Apostles' Creed should be sung on Sundays when the Lord's Supper is celebrated. In order to help them with their ponderings and discussions, the Youth Club sent a communication to the consistory. "From the Youth Club 'Trust and Obey' indicating their support to introduce the singing of the Apostles' Creed during Holy Supper celebrations." Good for you!

In connection with what I wrote the other time about the singing of the Apostles' Creed I received a communication from a brother who was not too happy with one word that I used. It may not have been first-class English, but certainly was not in the line of the other expressions which he mentioned.

There was one aspect in the letter which may be more general. More than once already I heard the "argument" that "it reminds me of the Romish or Anglican customs" of reciting the Apostles' Creed in unison. If we should do this, too, it is felt, we might come into that same line.

Sorry, but this is an "argument" which is easily proved to be cutting no ice.

There are people whose face reminds you of an elephant or of a mouse. There are even prizes given for "look-alikes." Recently I saw such a picture of a bulldog and its owner. There was a striking similarity as far as facial features were concerned.

But even if a person's face makes you think of a mouse, is he therefore a mouse?

And even IF the reciting of the Creed in unison reminds you of what others do, IS it therefore the same as what others do?

Besides, what difference is there between singing prose or singing a rhymed version? What basic difference is there between the singing of Hymn 1A and the singing of Hymn 1B? If anyone can make clear to me that there is any difference at all between singing the one and singing the other, I shall have to change my conviction. Do you think that Israel sang rhymed versions of the songs of David? If you do, you are gloriously wrong.

The previous time it read that in Surrey they sing "eight notes" when singing "He ascended into heaven." Looking up the copy, I saw that I forgot the "h" after the g, and apparently the typesetter thought that the "h" which I had after the "t" belonged after the "g" so that it read "eight" instead of "eighth."

When it is sung "*He as-cend-ed in-to*" with eighth notes this makes on me the impression as if the ascension of our Lord went: "whoosh!" I do not wish to be irreverent, only to make clear what I mean. It should be sung in a stately manner: *He as-cended in-to*, with the first two notes quarter notes. In the Supplement of 1967 these were indeed printed as eighth notes, but we corrected this in the first complete edition of our *Book of Praise* in 1972.

Enough about this for this time. Perhaps more young people's societies or boys' clubs could urge their consistories to proceed towards inclusion of Hymn 1 in the afternoon services.

Sometimes I discover that a consistory practically ignored this point during the past nineteen years. Yes, that's how long we have had the "Credo" in our songbook! Recently brothers admitted to me that their consistory had never discussed this matter and had never paid attention to it for more than two minutes. Is there, then, no desire within the congregation actively to participate in the profession of our faith by joining voices and singing the Apostles' Creed? Hard to imagine, I must admit. I don't want to start rocking boats, but this I find a sad thing. Have we, then, gotten into such a rut that any change is considered deformation or the first step towards total apostasy?

That was about Armadale. Rev. VanRongen writes that also Launceston is considering the singing of the Apostles' Creed, but then in every afternoon service. That would be much better even.

Among us, too, there is more and more awareness of our political calling. Recently *Clarion* paid special attention to this aspect of our life. Here and there brothers have made themselves available to serve in city councils. No one has as yet received the honour which two brothers (father and son) received in Launceston. One brother was re-elected as an alderman and his father was appointed as Justice of the Peace.

Distances may be considerable in our own country, they are not to be ignored in Australia either. Via the modern means of communication discussions are possible in spite of distances, as we may learn from the following quote from Rev. VanRongen's column: There was a meeting in Kelmescott about the work in Papua New Guinea, for which the Church at Albany has the responsibility. Delegates from the Western churches were meeting in Kelmescott. "What we have heard is about a 'novum,' something new in the history of our churches: the delegates from Launceston fully participated in the discussions by phone!"

Returning again to our own country, we mention that also the Church in Lynden, Wash., decided to sing the Apostles' Creed on Sundays when the Lord's Supper is celebrated.

People in the Okanagan Valley are very hospitable and they welcome guests who may be vacationing in that region. I may tell you that they have excellent facilities for the services. It is a real chapel and they could not wish for any better. There is sufficient room for several visitors.

If needs be, the visitors will also be received into the homes of the members. There is one request: would you please pack

your own lunch? It may be difficult for the brothers and sisters in Vernon if they have to come up with a meal or even sandwiches for an unexpectedly large group of guests. They won't let anybody leave hungry, you can be sure, but it makes it a lot easier on them if everyone brings his own food along. There are parks in the neighbourhood as well.

The fact that Prof. Van Dam acquired the degree of Doctor of Theology is something which not only honours him but makes us all happy. From somewhat closer by I learned of the many difficulties which he had to overcome, of the extra work which resulted from the death of his original promotor, Prof. H.J. Schilder, and therefore we are the more happy that our brother has achieved this result. In various bulletins attention was paid to this feat and congratulations were offered. *Clarion*, too, extended the congratulations of all of us.

Rev. VanRongen, too, paid attention to it in the Australian magazine. Let me close our medley with passing on to you what he wrote.

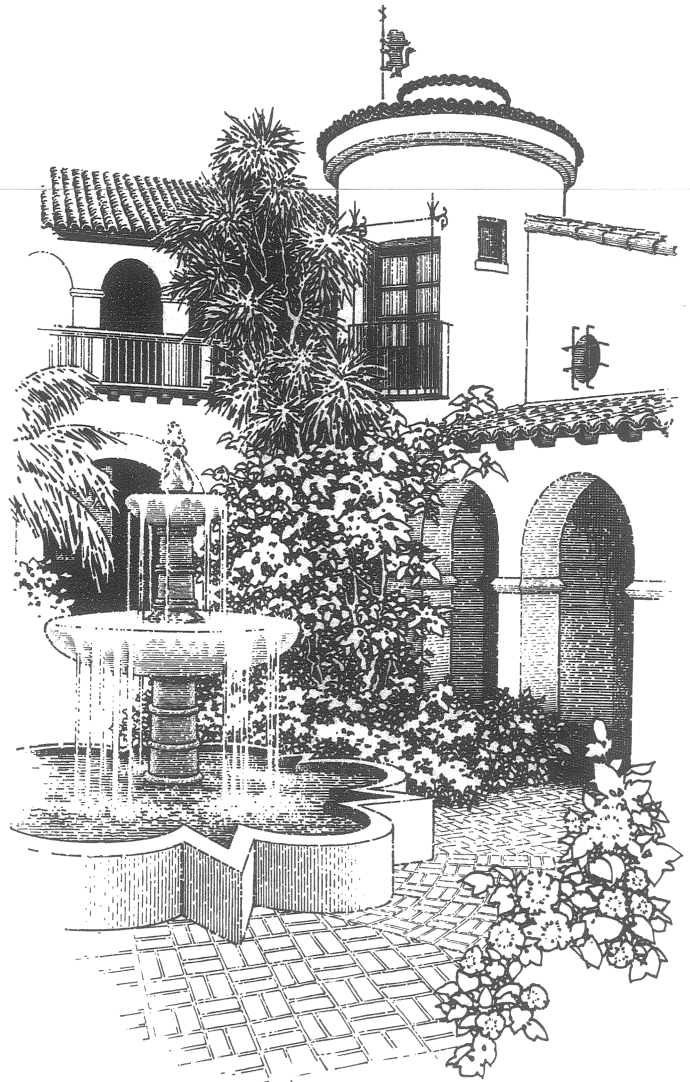
"When the 'young' doctor . . . happened to be under my Zwijndrecht ministry, he was too young to consciously undergo any influence from my side. Now he too learned for that!"

I'm sure that the more one has learned, the more he is willing to learn.

It is usually not from the ones who know much that the biggest trouble comes.

Cheerio!

VO



The Women's Societies Annual League Day — Manitoba

Wednesday, June 18, 1986, was a beautiful sunny day in Manitoba. It was also the day of the Women's Societies Annual League Day. In the church building in Carman, sixty-two women from Winnipeg and Carman gathered for a day of Bible study and "gezelligheid."

Our day officially began at 10:00 a.m. Mrs. Liz DeWit, president of the Carman society "Rejoice in the Lord," opened the meeting. Together we praised the Lord by singing Hymn 19:1, 2. After a blessing on our day was asked, we read from Gal. 5:13-6:12.

Our speaker for the morning was Rev. P.K.A. deBoer from Carman. The speech Rev. deBoer gave was entitled "Christian Lifestyle."

Rev. deBoer began his speech by pointing out that the term *lifestyle* is a very vague one. Our social life, our religious life, our work habits and how we dress are all a part of our lifestyle. Our concern as wives and mothers is how to direct our children to a Christian lifestyle. How do we teach them a lifestyle which is God-pleasing in spite of bad influences from un-Christian neighbour children and the media? Must we be strict parents and isolate ourselves from the world? Should we go to the other extreme and try to live *in* the world though not of it? Or should we go middle-of-the-road?

Unfortunately, there is no ready answer for us. There is no index of do's and don'ts in the Bible. When it comes to questions of "may we" or "may we not" concerning our Christian lifestyle, the Lord leaves room for human accountability. We must make our decision looking to God's Word as the guide. The way we can best lead our children to a Christian lifestyle is by our own example of faithfulness. This also includes those who do not have children. We altogether as a congregation have the responsibility to set a good example for the young and for each other.

Following this speech we immediately began the discussion. Many of the questions were answered by Rev. deBoer himself. Some of the questions were:

1. How do we approach the "grey area" of do's and don'ts in respect to our Christian lifestyle?

2. What is our Christian freedom?

3. Could we not guide our children to saying: "No, I guess God's Word shows me I may not do it," instead of immediately saying *no* to a request?

4. Often among families in our church we see that what is allowed in one family is forbidden in another. Comments on how to explain this to our children were asked.

Rev. deBoer summed everything up beautifully by comparing our life with the Lord to a marriage. A wife who loves her husband does as much as she can for him — willingly, not grudgingly. We must not do as little as we can get away with, but in everything we do we must strive to please Him.

Mrs. Liz DeWit closed the discussion. On behalf of all of us she thanked Rev. deBoer for his work and presented him with a beautiful picture book on Manitoba. We ended the morning by singing Psalm 145:1. In our closing prayer we also asked the Lord for a blessing over the food which we would eat.

While lunch was being put on the tables, Mrs. Cindy VanderVeen read a poem for us called "Mother's Day." Just before dessert came, Mrs. Teuna Jagersma read a poem in Dutch entitled "God wil niet anders" by Nel Benschop. Following the meal we read from Psalm 119:1-16 and Mrs. Teuna Jagersma gave thanks with us. Cards were then passed around for us to sign so that they could be sent to the missionaries and their helpers. Again we were entertained by a group of ladies who put on a skit called "40 years later."

We opened our afternoon with singing Hymn 36:1, 4. The floor was then given to Mrs. Wilma Bergsma, a member of Carman Women's Society, for her speech. It was headed "Reading the Bible at home and at society."

Mrs. Bergsma began her speech by reminding us that the Bible is the Word of God and that it is infallible. Although it was written by men, God inspired these men to write the Bible. We and all men were born corrupt; yet God made a covenant with us. Baptism is a sign of this covenant. When we have our children baptized we promise to teach them about God and His Word. We must read the Bible daily — and not just read it, but base our whole lives on it. We must read it conscientiously, because the Holy Spirit works in us through the Bible. We must submit to the teachings of the Bible in faith. By studying the Bible we not only build up ourselves, but we also build up others in faith.

We went right into the discussion after Mrs. Bergsma's speech.

A lot of the discussion centered around personal Bible study. Is it necessary? Should we not study as a family? When to do it? Someone who is out of the home working all day should set aside time for Bible reading.

Other questions raised were: Is weakness in faith a result of not studying the Bible? When reading at mealtimes, should a children's Bible be used? What do we say about skipping parts of the Bible in our reading — parts such as lists of names or the book of Song of Solomon? Can we study too much of the Bible? How important is it to attend study meetings?

The speech and discussions made each of us reflect on our study lives; it made us realize just how important Bible reading is. Mrs. Wilma Bergsma was thanked for all her work and presented with a book in appreciation.

Thanks was received from the Winnipeg society and given to all who helped organize the League Day. Together we sang our final song for the day, Hymn 35:1, 3, 5: "Rejoice the Lord is King." It was indeed a day for rejoicing. Rejoicing for the privilege that we may freely study the Bible at home and at society, and that, using it as our guide, we and our children may live a Christian lifestyle. The meeting was closed with prayer.

JOANNE TERMEER

OUR COVER

The Cenotaph
at Chatham, ON
Photo courtesy of Jerry Tillema



Executive Board meeting of the Canadian Reformed Teachers' College Association, August 8, 1986

1. The meeting was opened by Br. A.G. Hordyk, the chairman, who read Ps. 99 and led us in prayer. Due to the fact that this meeting was held during the holiday season not all the governors were present. A hearty welcome was extended to those present and especially Br. H. de Leeuw from BC.

2. *Incoming Mail.* A letter from Br. Zuidhof from Ottawa who is moving and who has found Sr. E. Buist willing to be representative to the CRTCA.

A letter from Br. J. Tillema from Chatham regarding a discussion with his local school board.

3. *Treasurer's Report.* Although the treasurer, Br. J. Gelderman, was unable

to be present he did give the chairman the financial material. The financial situation is not good and the governors express their concern and discuss the matter at length.

One of the avenues decided on is to send letters to all local chapters to impress on everyone, once again, our stressful situation.

4. *Minutes.* Since the vice-chairman, Br. W. Bartels, enters the meeting at this point it is decided to present the last meeting's minutes. These are approved as presented.

5. *Principal's Report.* Br. T. van der Ven reports on his visit to the West and presents a letter to Australia which is discussed and approved as drawn up.

Br. van der Ven received a cheque from Winnipeg in the amount of \$2,000.

This is thankfully received and he feels that the trip was a success.

Br. P. van Bostelen will be our official contact from Edmonton.

The principal is preparing for a trip to BC where, among other things, he hopes to attend a "Teachers' Convention" where he will present an address entitled "Thinking Christianly about Teaching."

To date we can count on nineteen students at the College for 1986-87.

6. *Next meeting.* September 12, 1986. This meeting is one week late because of the Annual Convention which will take place, D.V., on September 5.

7. *Closing.* Br. H. de Leeuw closed with us in prayer and the meeting is adjourned.

K. BROUWER,
secretary

Hollandse Dag Smithville May, 1986

Op bijgaande foto een gedeelte van de deelnemers aan onze "Hollandse Dag," op 31 Mei '86 in de John Calvin School te Smithville.

Kwart voor 10 arriveerden de eerste gasten, daar de koffie klaar was, kon er meteen worden begonnen.

't Was fijn om weer zoveel oude, maar ook nieuwe kennissen te ontmoeten.

Ze kwamen van dichtbij, maar ook van ver, zelfs van de U.S.A. en uit Nederland.

Omstreeks 11 uur werd de dag geopend door Mr. L. Hopman. Het programma was goed gevuld.

Na de gezamenlijke maaltijd sprak Prof. K. Deddens over het bekend gemaakte onderwerp, waarop een mooi zangstuk volgde met piano begeleiding, waarna gelegenheid werd gegeven tot bespreking.



"Hollandse Dag" Smithville, May 31 '86

Er kwamen vele vragen en opmerkingen naar voren, die door de spreker op duidelijke wijze werden beantwoord en uitgelegd.

Na sluiting dronken we nog gezellig een kopje koffie waarna we elkander een goede thuisreis wensten, en tot volgend jaar, zo de Here wil.

ABC BIBLE COLLECTION - by Mrs. John Roza



The storm stilled

(Matthew 8, Mark 4, Luke 8)

Colour me!

Quiz Questions

One day Jesus got into a boat with His _____ and He said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake."

While they peacefully sailed on the calm waters _____ fell asleep. Suddenly there was a great storm. The boat was being swamped by the water and great winds started to form.

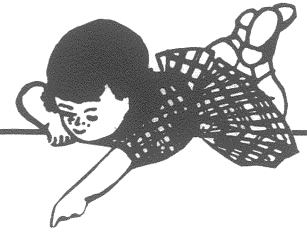
The raging waves and strong winds _____ the disciples. The disciples woke _____ up, and asked if He cared if they perished. Jesus then told the winds and

the sea "Peace! Be still." Then suddenly the _____ and the _____ were calm. Jesus then turned to them and said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?"

The disciples were surprised and astounded and wondered at what kind of man Jesus was that He could perform such a mighty deed.

Answers:

1. disciples 2. Jesus 3. scared 4. Jesus 5. winds 6. sea



Hello Busy Beavers,

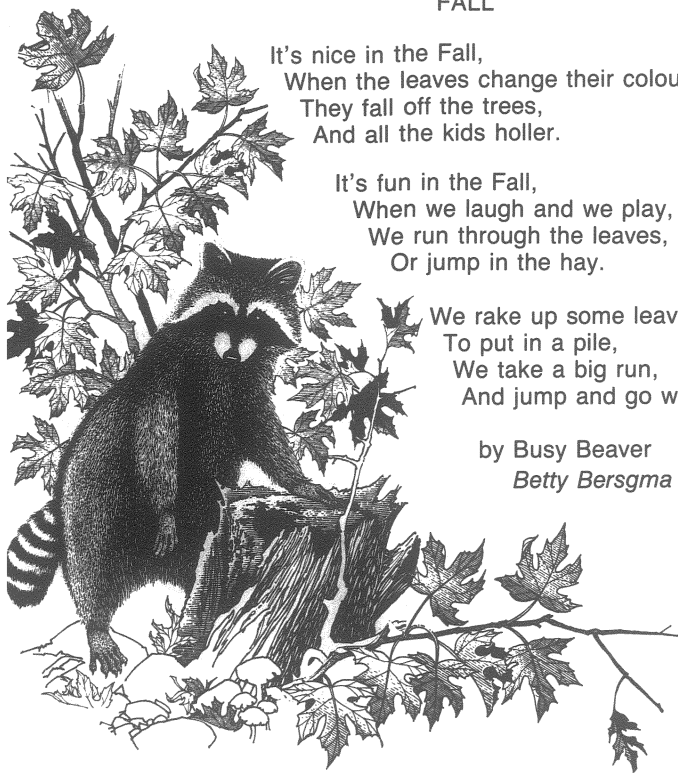
Look at all the "goodies" we have to share today! Let's start with the poems and some cartoons.

Maybe I will make a poem!

FALL
 I like Fall as a season
 And I have a good reason
 It has squirrels
 Whose tails swirls
 It has colourful leaves
 And a nice breeze
 But best of all
 God made it all!



from Busy Beaver
Heather Vandenberg

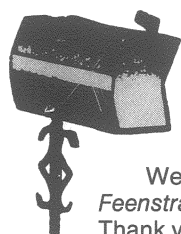


FALL
 It's nice in the Fall,
 When the leaves change their colour,
 They fall off the trees,
 And all the kids holler.

It's fun in the Fall,
 When we laugh and we play,
 We run through the leaves,
 Or jump in the hay.

We rake up some leaves,
 To put in a pile,
 We take a big run,
 And jump and go wild.

by Busy Beaver
Betty Bergma



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Geraldine Feenstra*. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already! Thank you for the very pretty picture you made. How did you do in swimming lessons, Geraldine? Will you write and tell us?

And a big welcome to you, too, *Cindy VanWoudenberg*! I hope you have a very happy birthday. How did you like your trip "up north," Cindy? And are you happy to be back in school?

Hello, *Adrian Bartels*. I was happy to hear from you again. And I'm glad you had such a good holiday. How do you feel about going back to school, Adrian?

You are a good puzzler, *Gredina Jaspers*. Keep up the good work! I'm glad you like your new home. Did you enjoy the summer holidays? How about entering our Summer Contest, Gredina?

Congratulations on your cute little nephew, *Patricia Hoeksema*. I'm sure you'll make a good babysitter for him! Be sure to write and tell us about your new school, Patricia. Thank you for the puzzle.

Hello, *Margo Hofsink*! It was nice to hear from you again. I'm glad you enjoyed doing the quizzes. I'll bet your mother was glad to be home again, too, Margo! Bye for now.

Sounds to me as if you've had lots of fun this summer, *Amy Hofsink*. Did you enter the quiz contest, too? How do you feel about going back to see your friends at school, Amy?

I'm glad you like your new home, too, *Jane Devos*. And congratulations on your new nephew, too. Thanks for your nice chatty letter and keep up the good work on the puzzles, Jane!

Thank you very much for the nice picture, *Wendy Vander-gaag*. It's so nice to know who you're talking to! Congratulations on your sports prizes, Wendy. It sounds like you had a great time. And thank you for the puzzle, too. Bye for now.

How did you enjoy your holiday at the lake, *Marjorie Barendregt*? How far north did you get? Thanks for the puzzle, Marjorie. And keep up the good work!

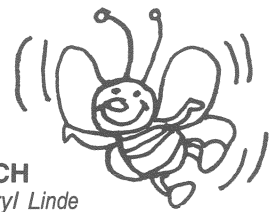
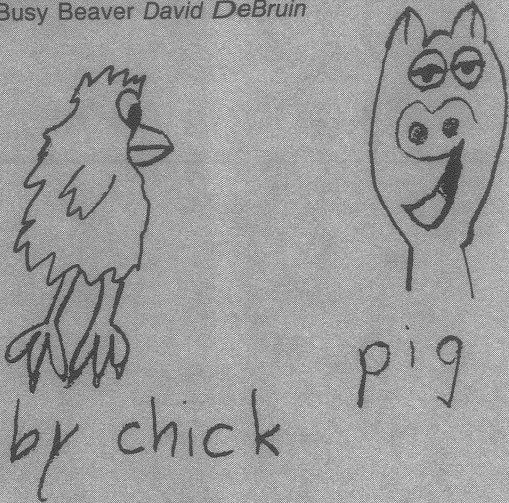
Hello, *Michelle Bartels*. I'm glad you enjoyed the holiday quiz. Maybe because you enjoyed your holiday so much, Michelle? Write again soon.

What a lovely picture you made, *Amanda Bartels*. I like the way you filled the paper and made all the fields different! Is that what your place looks like? You'll have to write and tell me!



CARTOONS

by Busy Beaver David DeBruin



WORD SEARCH

by Busy Beaver Sheryl Linde

C T H W A L N U T E R M E P A W
 R H E M A N Y K I L N A D I S I
 O F E M U G T B R M E P E N F L
 S S T S R E E E S A A L R E I L
 P P E N T I C E E P F E O D R O
 O S R H A N D C E A S H O R S W
 L O M U E T U H I M E O A K S A
 A T O P C L A T Y I P E A R N P
 R S O M E E P E O A S P E N P P
 D O G W O O D L E G N A R O E L
 U S E X O R A N G E T H E M F E
 O R F I R E W O B A M B O O D
 F L N B Y E E V E R G R E E N !

RIDDLES FOR YOU!

from Beaver Beaver Wendy Beijes

1. What can be served but not eaten?
 2. What do ghosts wear?
 3. What kind of snack do sheep eat?
 4. What did the witch say to the twin witches?
 5. What do you call a spider after it's five days old?
- (Answers below)

Quiz Time!

POSSESSIVES

What is usually linked with, or needed to complete, the following?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Aaron's _____ | 8. Mars' _____ |
| 2. Balaam's _____ | 9. the widow's _____ |
| 3. Naboth's _____ | 10. the _____ of Solomon |
| 4. Noah's _____ | 11. the _____ of Babel |
| 5. the _____ of Tarshish | 12. Jacob's _____ |
| 6. David's _____ | 13. "the _____ of the Lord and of Gideon" |
| 7. the _____ of Job | 14. the _____ of Lebanon |

(Answers below)

CODE QUIZ

by Busy Beaver Patricia Hoeksema

11 13 4 7 13 1 1 9 15 2 5
 11 13 5 8 4 15 14 6 12 3
 10 15 5 6 8 11 13 5 8 4
 10 15 5 9 15 2!

1 - L 9 - Y
 2 - U 10 - F
 3 - M 11 - C
 4 - S 12 - I
 5 - R 13 - A
 6 - H 14 - N
 7 - T 15 - O
 8 - E



Look for:

- | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|-----------|
| walnut | apple | beech | palm |
| aspen | elm | willow | bamboo |
| fir | gum | pine | dogwood |
| ash | orange | oak | chestnut |
| pear | spruce | maple | evergreen |

There is a sentence with the letters left. Have fun!



Answers:

Possessives
 1. rod 2. donkey 3. vineyard 4. ark 5. ships 6. harp 7. patience 8. hill 9. penny 10. Song 11. tower 12. ladder 13. sword 14. cedars

Riddles
 1. tennis or volleyball 2. BOO jeans 3. baa baa cue potato chips 4. Which witch is which? 5. six days old

Bye for now, Busy Beavers.
 Hope to "see you" all next time!

Love,
 Aunt Betty

You know my address:

Aunt Betty
 c/o Clarion
 Premier Printing Ltd.
 1249 Plessis Road
 Winnipeg, MB R2C 3L9

The Creator and Giver of life has once again richly blessed our family with the birth of another healthy child, a son:

PHILIP CORNELUS

Born July 14, 1986

A brother for *Amanda* and *Heather*

Thankful parents:

Leonard and Brenda Lodder
(nee Stienstra)

335 St. Patrick Street
Fergus, ON N1M 1L8

We thank God for the birth of our first born, a son:

MICHAEL JOHN

Born July 10, 1986

Kevin and Geri Hutchinson
(nee Heemskerck)

127 Stuart Street
Guelph, ON N1E 4S7

With great joy and thankfulness to the Lord who has richly blessed us with a son, we wish to announce the birth of:

JUSTIN ALLYN

Born August 27, 1986

Clarence and Sharon Meintz

Box 716
Houston, BC V0J 1Z0

1961 — November 10 — 1986

With thankfulness to God and joy in our hearts, we celebrate the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents:

TONY
and
DINY VANDERHOUT (nee Bartels)

Congratulations Mom and Dad from your children *Brian* and *Marian*.

May the Lord continue to give you many more happy years together.

An Open House will be held on Monday, November 10, 1986 from 7:00-10:00 p.m. at 74 Rymal Road East, Hamilton, ON L9B 1C1

Best wishes only.

1961 — September 29 — 1986

With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents:

DICK VANDERVEEN
and
TINIE VANDERVEEN (nee Jagt)

Their thankful children:

Ted and Helen
Jeff and Alison
Karen
Paul

1396 Charles Drive, Burlington, ON L7P 2C9

1951 — September 28 — 1986

... in the LORD, whose Word I praise, I will render thank offerings to Thee.

Psalm 56:10b, 12b

With joy and thankfulness to our heavenly Father for all His blessings, we announce the 35th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

EVERT JAN
and
AALTJE BOSSCHER (nee VanderVinne)

May the Lord continue to bless and keep them.

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

John and Joanne Bosscher
Elaine, Evan, Emily, Kimberly and Adam
Peter and Geraldine Bosscher
Alicia, Nadine, Krista and Ian
Jerry and Erna Bosscher
Tanya
Ali and Peter Sikkema
Lynsie
Fred and Joyce Bosscher
Darryl and Brian
Meta Bosscher
Gerald Bosscher and Cathy Smouter

674 Dynes Road
Burlington, ON L7N 2V6

1931 Neede Gelderland — September 26 — Guelph 1986 Ontario

ROELOF and BERENDINA DEVRIES (nee Baten)

With thankfulness to our God, we rejoice with our parents and grandparents as we celebrate their 55th Wedding Anniversary together. May our faithful covenant God continue to bless you and keep you for each other and for us for many more years to come.

Congratulations Dad and Mom.

With love from all your 10 children and from 41 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Open House will be held in the Guelph Reformed Church, Speedvale Avenue E., September 27, 1986, D.V., from 2-4:30 p.m.

No gifts please.

Home address:
Bedford Road, RR 5,
Guelph, ON N1M 2W3

We are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

II Corinthians 5:8

After a lengthy illness, the Lord took unto Himself into His eternal glory, our beloved husband, father and grandfather:

HENDRIK SCHUTTEN

on Saturday, August 23, 1986 at the age of 65 years.

Orangeville, ON: Sietske Schutten
(nee Koops van't Jagt)

Grand Valley, ON: John and Irene Schutten
Fleurette and Eric, Kevin, Steve,
Marlene

Orangeville, ON: Reina and Arie Niezen
Margaret and Paul, Rob

Brampton, ON: Harmina and Bert Boersema
Leslie, Ryan, Darryl, Bradley,
Ashley

Bramalea, ON: Sita and John VanMiddelkoop
Melanie, Tyler, Travis

Orangeville, ON: Henry Schutten
Brampton, ON: Ralph and Wilma Schutten
Darren

28 Starview Crescent
Orangeville, ON L9W 3B1

On Saturday, August 23, 1986 the Lord took unto Himself into eternal glory, after a serious illness, His child, our beloved brother, brother-in-law and uncle:

HENDRIK SCHUTTEN

at the age of 65.

Wellandport, ON: Jack and Elly Schutten
Smithville, ON: Gerhard and Lies Schutten
Herman and Tina Schutten
nieces and nephews

Psalm 23

After a long illness our heavenly Father took unto Himself His child, our beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother:

HILDA BULTHUIS (nee Hoogeboom)

at the age of 76 years.

She was predeceased by her first husband Yke Van der Haak, March 1971, as well as 4 children.

Edmonton, AB: Jan Bulthuis
John and Helen Van der Haak
Renny and Morris Molenkamp
Hilda and Ed Dykhuizen
Calgary, AB: Marianna and Hans Duiker
Edmonton, AB: Jenny and Bill Van Herk
Florence Bailey
Bart and Liz Van der Haak
Flويد and Loraine Van der Haak
and 25 grandchildren
and 10 great-grandchildren

9714-154 Street
Edmonton, AB T5P 2G3

August 19, 1986

NOTE OF THANKS

To all brothers and sisters, far and near, we want to express our appreciation for your thoughtfulness and prayers. It has supported us greatly during my stay in the hospital and thereafter.

Our Father in heaven made all things well.

Soli Deo Gloria.

Yours in Christ,
Martin VanderVelde

**LEAGUE OF CANADIAN REFORMED
WOMEN'S SOCIETIES IN ONTARIO
INVITATION**

The Board of the League of Women Societies is happy to invite all of you to our

25TH ANNUAL LEAGUE DAY

to be held, D.V.,

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1986

in the
**EBENEZER CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH
OF BURLINGTON (EAST)**

Morning session, 10:00 a.m.

Introduction by Mrs. E. Oostdyk on "Marriage, Divorce and Re-marriage"

Afternoon session, 1:30 p.m.

Rev. D. DeJong will speak on "Early Church History (from Christ to the Middle Ages)."

Meal tickets are to be ordered before September 27, 1986 from Mrs. Ann TenHaaf, 689 Dynes Road, Burlington, ON L7N 2V7. The price is \$3.50 per person.

On behalf of the Board,
WILLA DALE SMID
Corresponding Secretary

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS' COLLEGE

Courses for Teachers (and others)

During the fall of 1986 Dr. C. Van Dam hopes to offer a course on aspects of the Old Testament as part of the ongoing series of courses for teachers. This course will be of interest to teachers and non-teachers alike.

The course will start on Friday evening, September 26, 1986, D.V., and will be offered over ten sessions, each of two hours duration.

Meeting place: Theological College, Hamilton, starting at 7 p.m. (To be confirmed.)

Course requirements for credit: A seminar presentation and a paper. Listeners attend the course without completing these requirements.

Most sessions will consist of a lecture by Dr. Van Dam, followed by a seminar presentation by one of the students. Listeners may attend both parts of the session.

Tuition: Students: \$120.00
Listeners: \$ 60.00

For further information please contact:

T.M.P. VanderVen
29 Lorraine Drive
Hamilton, ON L8T 3R8
Phone (416) 383-4526

Coming Soon!

A SPIRITUAL HOUSE

By Rev. W. Pouwelse

Reflections on some current ethical issues

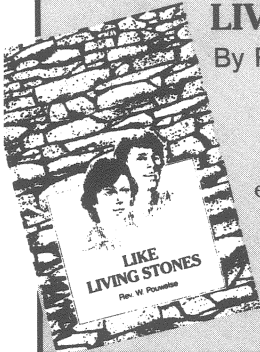
- | | |
|--|--|
| Childrearing and discipline | The relationship between employer and employee |
| The relationship between family and school | Organized labour |
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By Rev. W. Pouwelse

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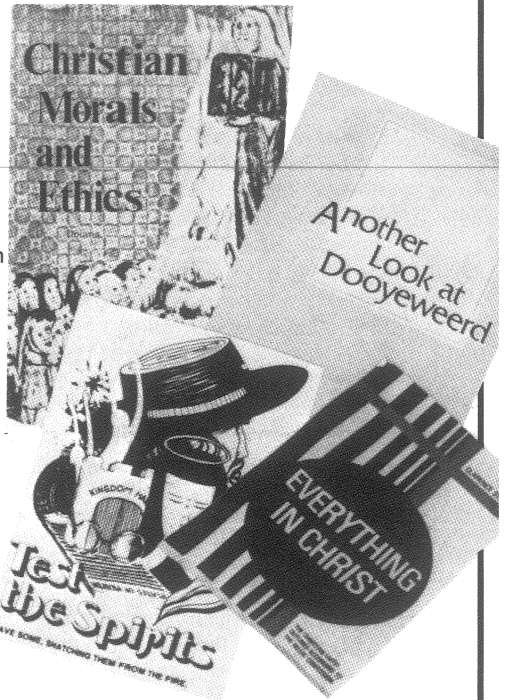
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