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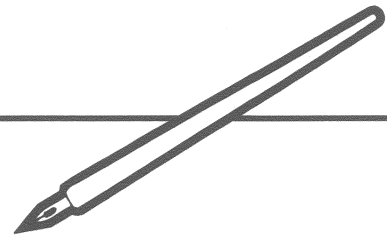
 **Clarion**
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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By J. Geertsema



“Not even the breadth of a thumb”

These words in the title are a literal translation of an expression used by Dr. Abraham Kuyper. In Dutch it says “Geen duimbreed.” We could also translate somewhat more freely and write, “not even a square inch.” The words are used by Dr. K. Schilder as title of one of his brochures. Schilder quotes the expression of Kuyper with its context. It is printed on the title page of Schilder’s brochure. He also concludes his brochure with it. The complete quotation reads: “There is not a square inch within the entire domain of our human life of which the Christ, who is the Sovereign of all, does not say: ‘Mine’.”¹

Schilder mentions at the very end of this treatise that Kuyper spoke these words on 20 October 1880, at the occasion of the opening of the Free University. With these words Kuyper wanted to express the biblical truth that Christ Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords who has all legal authority in heaven and on earth. Thus, Christ must be acknowledged as King over all of our human life in all its aspects. This truth of the gospel was the driving force for Kuyper in all his endeavors, among others, in the field of education. On the basis of this faith in Christ as his King and the King of the church, he fought for a Free University. Over against the universities of the state which were bound by the unbelief of the world, and by the thinking of liberalism and modernism of his day, Kuyper wanted a university that was freed from modernism to serve Christ as King by binding itself to God’s Word and Reformed, calvinistic principles.

Kuyper was here a determined follower of Martin Bucer, the Reformer of Strasbourg, and of John Calvin. Just as they, Kuyper saw life as a unity. One should not separate life in, for instance, a physical, earthly part, and a spiritual part. Life must not be divided in a segment for the soul and salvation on the Sunday, which is for the Lord, and another segment, during the rest of the week, for ourselves and our earthly businesses. Bucer, Calvin, Kuyper, and all other Reformed people did not dedicate spiritual life to the Lord, building it upon the teaching of the Word of God, while leaving their daily life in state and society in the realm of the secular ideas and concepts, building it upon humanistic philosophies. They did not even speak of a twofold rule of Christ: a rule in the church with the Bible and a rule in state and society with natural theology or philosophy. For them the rule of Christ is one and is placed over all of life.

This truth of and faith in the one rule of Christ as King over all of life, had important consequences for Kuyper also in the field of education. For him, of course, the study of theology was for Christ and, therefore, holy. But the same was to be said regarding all the other faculties and fields of study. The study of law and of sociology, of history and geography,



Abraham Kuyper

the study of mathematics and physics, and whatever other field of study there is, it has to do with our faith in the triune God and His Self-revelation as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All aspects of life, therefore, and all the fields of study, are related to God’s works of creation and redemption and sanctification. Therefore, all the study, in all the different fields, at the Free University, were to be done in submission to God as Creator, to Christ as Redeemer of creation, and of the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier. It was all to be subject to God’s revelation and aiming at His glory. There is not a square inch of life of which Christ does not say that it is His.

In 1936, Schilder maintained this Reformed confession in a different context. The Synod of the Reformed Churches had made a decision regarding membership in specific political parties. East of the Dutch border, Hitler was making himself and Germany very strong. Their national-socialist philosophy had quite an influence also in the Netherlands. Even a growing number of members of the Reformed Churches became very sympathetic and joined a national-socialist political party in Holland. The synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, in 1936, pronounced such membership incompatible with membership of the Reformed [or any true Christian] church.

In the brochure, *Not a Square Inch*, Schilder defends this decision and shows why membership in such a politi-

cal party is in conflict with the confession of the Lordship of Christ over all of life. He pointed out that the thinking and purpose of the national-socialist party was clearly in conflict with the teaching of God's Word.

Now it is not my intention to work this out further. What I want to do here is to point to this principle of the Reformation as led by John Calvin, and as it was taken up by the Calvinist Kuyper in his reformation work in the end of the nineteenth century, and as it was maintained and defended by Schilder in his work for the continued reformation of the church of Christ. Christ is King, our King. He rules over all of life. This means that believers confess Him as their King over all of their life. Not a square inch is to be left out. God is one. So are His works. Therefore, life is one. And our life is to show this oneness. Our life is the same on Sunday and on Monday: holy for the Lord. This unity, therefore, is to be maintained also between church and home and school. Further, this unity is to be confessed and practiced between our church life and our life in society. We confess Christ as King and Redeemer, also with respect to politics, and with respect to life in society.

It was this Reformed thinking that, also after 1944, led Reformed people in the Netherlands to set up Reformed Schools, and a Reformed political party, as well as a Reformed league for labour relations (Gereformeerd Maatschappelijk Verbond) in which both the employers and the employees were received as members because together they confessed Christ as their Redeemer in all of life and, therefore, also in their labour and labour relations. On this point, too, they followed the example of "their Reformed fathers." For this confession was already expressed and propagated in 1890 by an organization which called itself *Patrimonium* ("the heritage of the fathers"). One of its leaders was the Rev. J. van Andel. In antithesis with the socialistic labour movement of the nineteenth century, based upon the socialistic concept of the power struggle of the classes, the Reformed confessors wanted to put into practice their faith in Christ as Redeemer. They confessed that the love of Christ binds the "classes," or rather, the employers and the employees, together in their daily labour for their Lord and, therefore, for one another.

It was this basic Reformed thinking, this maintaining of Christ's redeeming kingship over all of life, that was and is behind the establishing of Reformed schools, also in Canada. It was this confession of the oneness of life under Christ that implied for Reformed people in Canada and elsewhere the refusal to become member of a secular, socialistic labour union.

Do we still see our life as one? Is for us still all of life a life that, in all its aspects, we receive from God our Creator through Christ as our Redeemer in order to live it holy for God through the indwelling Holy Spirit? Is our life today one in Sunday worship and in Monday work, in education and in entertainment, and in whatever else there is more in our life? Are we still enthusiastic and faithful with respect to this biblical truth, this confession of the Reformation, this Reformed principle?

¹"Geen duimbreed is er op heel 't erf van ons menscheijk leven, waarvan de Christus, die áller Souverein is, niet roept: 'Mijn'!" Dr. A. Kuyper, *Souvereiniteit in Eigen Kring*, 3rd edition, 1930, p. 32. K. Schilder's brochure has the title "*Geen Duimbreed!*" *Een synodaal besluit inzake 't lidmaatschap van N.S.B. en C.D.U.* (Kampen: Kok, 1936).



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The Glowing Furnace – Reformation Day, 1992

By J. DeJong

It is 475 years ago today that the 95 *Theses* first appeared and were noticed on the church door in Wittenberg. Contrary to all of Luther's expectations, these theses unleashed a great controversy upon the church, and in effect altered the course of history. Today we may give thanks for what the Lord did in bringing His church to this great turning point.

How did the 95 *Theses* manage to create such a stir? Anyone who thinks that Luther wanted to be as a great revolutionary, and deliberately attacked the authority of the Pope is seriously mistaken. In fact, the publication of theological theses was a common practice in this period, and only signalled a challenge to a debate between the professors of the various theological schools. Only some weeks before, Luther had published other theses on the proper approach to theology. In these theses he leveled a powerful attack against the whole scholastic mode of thought, and so expected them to make a considerable impact. But these passed off into the world with little notice.

Since the commissioners of the pope had recently been in town, Luther decided to publish another set of theses dealing with the limited topic of *indulgences*. He hardly could have expected these theses to make the stir they did. Nowhere do they deny the authority of the pope or priest in the church. Luther does not even hesitate to endorse the notion of indulgence *per se*: "Whoever speaks against the truth of the apostolic indulgence, let him be accursed and damned," (Thesis 71). For this reason, "bishops and priests are in duty bound to receive the indulgence commissioners with due reverence," (Thesis 69).

Yet the 95 *Theses* caused a major uproar and it was not long before all

Wittenburg and surrounding cities eagerly sought for a copy of them. And when the news of these events finally reached the papal court more trouble arose for Luther. Although he had defended the pope's authority, he was not to be rewarded with any papal honours. Soon after, Luther was excommunicated from the church.


What, then, explains the great uproar and commotion caused by these theses on such a limited topic? Luther thought he was defending the pope against many of those who abused the ecclesiastical offices. But in fact his argument cut into the heart of the entire system of penance and indulgence as it had developed in the church in the course of the years.

This heart of the Roman system of penance concerned the ultimate authority and power over the believer's salvation. Luther defended the view that the sinner must repent daily, and that repentance is a matter of the heart, and not based solely on external exercises of piety and indulgence. The church, meanwhile, had appropriated so much authority to itself that the priest took his seat in the council of God and presided over the eternal salvation of all her souls. In effect, according to Roman Catholic doctrine at the time, God had given all power of salvation to the church.

Here is where the arrow of sound scriptural criticism found its mark. Luther unwittingly struck a death-blow to the whole hierarchical structure of the church's penance doctrine. The church for Luther was not a salvation-dispensing institution. The church and its offices are only a means of instrument by which God grants forgiveness and justification to the repentant sinner. But it is *God* and not the priest who makes the decision, and announces the verdict.

Here Luther again discovered the God of the Scriptures. As far as our sins are concerned, God is a righteous and holy Judge, and no amount of material indulgence can satisfy His justice. In ourselves we cannot presume to approach God's throne, for He would sweep us away with His terrible wrath. But in Christ, we find again the God of mercy and grace. God is not like a distant banker who tabulates credits and debits, and who credits us with our indulgences. For the unrepentant He is a consuming fire, the God holy who destroys us by His holy majesty. But for the believer, who in all temptation (*Anfechtung*) trusts in His Maker, God is able to be found. To the contrite of heart, the hidden God reveals Himself as He is. He is not a cruel tyrant or abstract and cold judge. He is the one to whom you may and must flee in every need. (Larger Catechism, First Commandment.) He is one on whom you may always place your trust. And His mercy surpasses all human bounds. For He eagerly forgives those who confess their guilt before Him.

The real impact of the 95 *Theses* is then perhaps best seen in the fact that they begin and end with Christ. Christ is the beginning and end of true repentance. "The cross, the cross, that is our theology!" And for the one who sees this with the eyes of faith, God is not a distant, terrifying force. In Christ, we are accepted. In Christ, God is "a glowing furnace, full of love."

This is the God whom we must also know and serve in true faith, holding up the banner of the Reformation until the day of Christ's return. Let us give the proper indulgence by offering to Him the thanksgiving gift that is fitting to His holy Name! 

REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

By R. Schouten

How to read the Book₁

Ministers often make remarks in sermons about the need for personal and family Bible reading and Bible Study. Their exhortations are based on the conviction that faith and godliness depend on listening to and understanding the Scriptures. If the Word of God does not dwell richly in the hearts of church members, the church becomes weak, susceptible to a host of spiritual diseases.

It may be that you have taken the encouragement of your preacher to heart. You have resolved to be more diligent in reading and studying the Bible. So it happens one night that you open your Bible to Genesis and read a whole chapter or two. Perhaps you choose instead to start with Matthew one.

For several days or even a week or two, you make reasonably good progress. After a while, however, you start to run into problems. You find a really difficult passage which doesn't make any sense to you at all. You have no idea what God is trying to convey to you through it. So you lose the keen enthusiasm you had at the start. Now the nightly reading becomes a chore. Eventually, you give up the practice altogether.

You might ask: when the preacher encouraged the congregation to read and study the Bible, did he have any idea how difficult this task was?

It is true that Bible Study is hard work. Preparing for Young People's Society is hard work. However, these are not impossible works. If we follow some basic guidelines, we can definitely grow in our ability to read and understand God's Word.

The larger context

One of the basic rules for Bible study is to pay attention to the context. Preachers sometimes remind each other that "a text without a context is a pretext." If we don't pay attention to the material that surrounds our text, we are likely to go astray in the making of sermons.

Also for personal Bible Study and for Young People's Society, context is a basic concern. In the first place, we may think of the context of the whole book which you have chosen to study. It is my belief that nothing will be more helpful and exciting than starting to see the passages you study as part of a whole book. The Bible actually consists of a whole library of books, sixty-six of them. Each book has a character of its own and a unique message. The books of the Bible were meant to be read as a unit. When we only read a few verses here or there or only a chapter or two, we violate the unity of that book and are very likely to miss the point altogether.

Thus, I would suggest that when you are going to study a particular book of the Bible for Young People's Society start by reading through the whole book in some quiet place of your home. If you think about it, this should not take too long. Many books of the Bible are very short and can be easily read within one hour. Others are a bit longer, but even the longest are far shorter than an average novel.

During this first reading, it is important not to allow yourself to get bogged down in all kinds of problems. If you don't understand something immediately, don't worry about it. Just keep reading. Your goal during this first reading is not comprehension of all the details, but only a general "feel" for the book. You want the wide-angle lens picture. Later, there will be ample opportunity for close-up shots. Therefore, keep up a good speed.

After you have read through the whole book, wait a day or two and then do it again. Yes, read the whole book a second time! This time, you can go a bit slower. Now it's time to start asking some questions. Too many people read the Bible in the same way they watch TV; passively. If we want to honour the author of Scripture, we will have to read actively and that means asking many questions. During the sec-

ond reading, you want to ask yourself questions like this: When was this book written? To whom was it written? What does the book tell us about the author? Why was the book written? What was the purpose of the author? What kind of literature do we find in this book? Is it poetry? Is it drama? Is it historical writing? Is it a letter?

During this second reading, it is also important to watch for the major divisions of the book. Watch out for points when the author seems to move into a new topic or a new phase of the discussion. Incidentally, it will be very helpful to have a Bible with paragraph divisions as we find these, for example, in the Harper Study Bible. When you read an older KJV Bible, you see only a mass of numbered verses without any break whatsoever. This makes reading more difficult.

After you have read your chosen book for the second time, it's time to get out your special Bible Study Notebook. At this point, your task will be to write a paragraph or two which describes the overall message of the book. The point of this exercise is to state the key thoughts of the book. When you read a novel, you should be able to summarize the plot. If you read a short story, you will be able to state the theme of this story. In the same way, a very important part of personal or group Bible Study in Young People's Society is the ability to state the theme of the Bible book in discussion.

After you have come to your own preliminary understanding of the part of Scripture you are studying, it will be time to get out your Bible Study toolbox. In this toolbox, you will find a number of reference books which can help you to grasp the message of the Bible. One of the most helpful volumes at this stage of your study will be a Bible Dictionary. The standard Bible Dictionary is called *The New Bible Dictionary* (2nd edition), edited by J.D. Douglas, and published by Tyndale (re-

tail cost around \$30.00). If you or your Young People's Society have saved some money, a very excellent tool is the *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* (5 volumes, edited by Merrill C. Tenney, published by Zondervan, retailing for about \$195.00). Other items in your toolbox might include study outlines published by Inter-League-Publication-Board or other commentaries and outlines. Most of these have introductory chapters which you should read. You can also read the introductory articles to each Bible book

in Study Bibles like the New International Version Study Bible.

At this stage of your research, you are still interested in the wide-angle perspective. For example, if you plan to study *Genesis*, you can look up the articles under "Genesis" in your dictionaries. Or, if you are studying 1 Corinthians, you can look up articles under "Corinth" (city), "Corinthians, Epistles to," and even under headings like "Paul." Or, if you are studying Daniel, check articles under "Daniel," "Babylon," "Nebuchadnezzar" and so

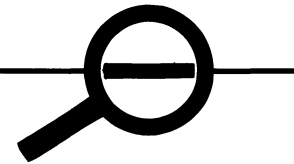
on. If you are going to study the Psalms, check the Bible Dictionary for a description of the characteristics of Hebrew poetry and for a classification of the different kinds of Psalms.

Finally, in order to finish this stage of the study, you may wish to get out a Bible atlas, or at least take a good look at the maps in the back of your Study Bible. Try to figure out where the action is taking place. Often this will really increase your understanding of what is being said in a particular book.

(to be continued)

PRESS REVIEW

By C. Van Dam



Notes on the OPC

General Assembly 1992

The General Assembly has come and gone. According to the report in *New Horizons* (August/September 1992) delegates to this annual June meeting made decisions on a wide range of areas. Of special are mission and ecumenicity.

Several new home mission projects were started during 1991 and new opportunities abound. At the Assembly the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension "reaffirmed its commitment to work in partnership with presbyteries to establish churches that are Reformed in doctrine and Presbyterian in policy." The emphasis that home mission has in the OPC (which has a membership of just over 18,000) is most commendable. At present there are 19 home missionaries. This leads me to think, is the time not coming that home mission should receive a higher priority in our midst? I realize that in many churches in our midst much effort is expended on spreading the gospel in their local community and one can only be grateful to the Lord for all this work of love for it belongs to the first task of the church (cf. e.g. 1 Pet. 2:9). But why is it that there is no organized effort among churches to send, for example, a home missionary to an urban centre in North America, or, to use an existing small isolated core of believers

in an urban area as a base from which a home missionary can spread the glad tidings? Our world is rapidly taking on the normative contours of a neo-pagan (or new age) society and only the gospel can show the way.

Foreign mission is also a high priority in the OPC. Two recently retired missionary couples were at the assembly, – the Ted Harts who served in Korea for 38 years and the George Uomotos who served in Japan for 40 years. It must be wonderful to build on the experience and continuity that such a length of service allows! New fields of mission are being sought in Mongolia, Uganda, Guyana, Nicaragua, and Eritrea. The OPC used to have a mission work and hospital in Eritrea but two decades of civil war made it impossible to continue. Indeed one of the two missionary nurses, Anna Strikwerda, was executed by revolutionaries. Now that the conflict in that country is over a visit has been made with a view to rebuilding the work there.

Another important ministry is the military chaplaincy program.

Currently the OPC has eight chaplains serving on active duty, with additional chaplains serving in the Reserve and National Guard forces, the Civil Air Patrol, and the veteran's administration. These men need our continual prayers as they serve as strategic witnesses in an

increasingly hostile and secularized environment.

Ecumenicity

The OPC continues to be active in ecumenicity. Having withdrawn from the Reformed Ecumenical Council (formerly the RES), the OPC has now applied for membership in the International Council of Reformed Churches (ICRC). The OPC expressed concern for developments in the Christian Reformed Church and the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations "was instructed to review the propriety of the OPC's continued fraternal relations with that body."

According to a report in *Nederlands Dagblad* (10 June 1992), the OPC noted Canadian Reformed concerns respecting admission to the Lord's Supper table in the OPC and the fact that a clear allegiance to the confessions is apparently only asked of officebearers. The OPC in turn expressed her concern that the Canadian Reformed Churches accepted ex-OPC members without informing the OPC. This issue will probably be dealt with in some form at this year's Synod at Lincoln. May it be done consistent with our recognition of the OPC "as a true church of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession" (Acts 1977, Art. 91).

According to the same newspaper report, the General Assembly also decided to stop efforts towards a union with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). Discussions concerning unity have been going on for ten years. An important stumbling block is the manner of union. The PCA (220,000 members) is demanding that the much smaller OPC join them unconditionally. The OPC, however, first wishes to discuss her difficulties with the PCA.


In the context of ecumenicity, another important matter needs to be mentioned (as reported in *New Horizons*).

Last year's General Assembly took what may prove to be a step of historic moment. It began to consider "the desirability and feasibility of the OPC adding the Three Forms of Unity (Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordt) to our present confessional

standards (The Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger Catechism, and the Shorter Catechism), and of providing a common Presbyterian and Reformed church order, so as to provide a basis for unity into one church body of those who are committed to one faith."

This year the Committee reported that this idea had been seized by others and had evolved into plans for a "confessional conference." There is genuine concern over this, because the original idea was to involve the Reformed family of churches. But the Confessional Conference would be a more *ad hoc* group with which the OPC would not be officially involved. At the same time the desire was expressed to pursue the idea and see what the Lord might be doing.

History

Rev. Charles G. Dennison who is pastor of the Grace OPC in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, is also the historian of the OPC. The Committee for the Historian could report to the General Assembly that Edwin H. Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict* (first published in 1940) has been reprinted as a paperback. The commissioners at the Assembly were reportedly excited about this news and small wonder. Rian's work is a classic account of the origin of the OPC and it goes a long way to helping one understand the OPC today. From my own reading of it years ago as a student I remember it as a very clear and moving account. All those interested in the OPC would do well to read this book. It is available for \$16.95 from Family Christian Bookstore (750 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON L7R 3N5; ph. 416 637 9151). 

The Forthcoming Synod

By W.W.J. VanOene

In "olden days" we had the custom of informing our readers beforehand about the matters that were going to be dealt with at a forthcoming general synod. At the meeting of the editorial committee we decided to revive this custom, and the following lines are the result of this.

It is not our intention to discuss the matters that will be submitted to Synod Lincoln 1992, only to tell the membership what the brothers will be discussing and decided about at that synod.

When reading the various reports that have been sent to the churches, one comes to the conclusion that the respective committees, appointed by the previous general synod, have not been sitting idle twiddling their thumbs. Much work has been done, and we owe the brothers a word of gratitude for all they did in addition to their regular labours which often are many. I realize that mosttimes general synods express this gratitude in a brief paragraph in their decision on the proposals, but I would not be surprised if these brief notes of thanks are overlooked in

most instances, assuming, of course, that our members do read the Acts!

Before we turn to the reports themselves I have a request. Will the brothers, please, finally use the proper terminology regarding our broader assemblies? When reading: "The fact that General Synod meets once every three years..." I shiver. Especially in correspondence with foreign churches that in many instances have a different polity, it is important to maintain our specific Reformed character. General Synod does *not* "meet once every three years," but once every three years we have a General Synod! Please, finally!

The Book of Praise

Time and again our members appear to be eager to know what is going to happen to our *Book of Praise*. It is practically impossible at present to obtain a new copy. Will it be reprinted and, if so, will there be many changes?

The Committee reports that it has asked Premier Printing to begin preparations for another printing. Since, however, a general synod will be held in November at which changes in our

Book of Praise may be adopted, the actual printing will have to wait till after synod has been closed, so that such changes can be incorporated in the new printing.

We may expect that Scripture references will be added to the Belgic Confession in footnote form at the end of each article. This will be very helpful.

A linguistic revision of the Nicene Creed has been completed. To my horror I saw that it now reads "And we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church." It is, I realize, a correct translation, but there goes all my catechism teaching of forty-two years. I always differentiated between "believing in," something we do only with respect to God, and *believing*, which we do regarding the church. I wished the committee had followed the Apostles' Creed in this and the Latin and English translations of the Nicene Creed. But here I go and discuss things, and I shouldn't do this.

The previous synod instructed the Committee to make an alternate melody for Hymn 1A available for evaluation. "We hereby report to Synod that all the

churches which have submitted a response are unanimous in their view that the Zwart melody should *not* be inserted in the *Book of Praise*. It may further be concluded from the comments received that the churches also see no need for any other alternate tune."

Bible translations

The Committee on Bible Translations too sent a report. Much of its time was taken up by examining the *New Revised Standard Version*, and the committee came to the conclusion that this "translation" is unacceptable, even though good things can be said about it. "Because the translation shows evidence of an overriding preoccupation with the gender issue, the NRSV is unacceptable for use in the Canadian Reformed Churches. The imposition of an artificial gender guideline for translation (which has its roots in ungodly philosophies like feminism) has resulted in a translation that changes the intent of the text, hinders an understanding of prophecy, and introduces new teachings."

This is not mincing any words. It is clear language.

The Committee further remarks: "It appears likely that the RSV will go out of print within five years."

Here, however, we have good news for our membership. It is most likely that Premier Printing can either have the "old" RSV reprinted or perhaps even can acquire the rights to do so. I do not know any further details, but in this respect the future does not seem to be as gloomy as we have been thinking for some time. We may have to lay out some capital to bear the cost together, but the possibility of continued use of the RSV appears to be there.

Relations with Churches Abroad

From the report of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad it becomes clear that the brothers have conducted an extensive correspondence with various ecclesiastical bodies. It would take too much room in our magazine to quote extensively from it. Let us confine ourselves to mentioning some of the recommendations the committee makes.

Although it is almost a matter of course, yet it is good to note that the committee recommends that our present relationship with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, and the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa be continued.

The committee also proposes that a sister church relationship called "Ecclesiastical Fellowship" be offered to the Presbyterian Church in Korea. Language problems appear to have been overcome, and, besides, we have in Dr. Gootjes someone who even lectured in Korean, so that any remaining language problems, if any, could be solved.

Similar recommendation is made with respect to the Free Church of Scotland. If synod adopts this recommendation, it is recommended "to the churches of Classis Ontario North that the Free Church congregations in Toronto and PEI be invited to attend Classis in an advisory capacity."

Contacts with the Reformed Church in the United States were entertained not only by our committee, but also by the brothers of Carman. With respect to the RCUS the committee "recommends that Synod 1992 responds to the requests of the Reformed Church in the United States for an official relationship by mandating the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad...to investigate the RCUS with a view to entering into a relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship with it and to report its findings to the next General Synod."

Our readers may be aware of it that our Netherlands sister churches did enter into such a relationship with the RCUS.

If, the committee states, "the General Synod 1992 decides to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with the Presbyterian Church in Korea, a study should be undertaken of the Reformed Churches in South Africa," seeing that these churches have correspondence with the Presbyterian Church in Korea.

Through the contact that our Netherlands sister churches have with the Reformed Church of Zaire, this church has come into our own field of vision. Our committee "recommends that General Synod 1992 mandate it to take up contact with the Reformed Church in Zaire with a view to establishing a sister church relationship with the RCZ."

Further, the committee recommends that our participation in the International Conference of Reformed Churches be continued, and it also proposes some changes in the Rules for Correspondence, suggesting that they officially be called "Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship."

It is realized that some readers may be surprised at some of the above recommendations, but it is not possible to publish here the arguments that the committee adduced for its various rec-

ommendations. The purpose of these lines is only to inform our readership of some of the points for the agenda of the forthcoming general synod.

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Recently our attention was drawn anew to our contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and a report on this contact by the committee appointed by Synod 1989 was to be expected as well. It has been sent indeed, and we pass on some of the committee's recommendations to Synod.

a. to gratefully acknowledge the commitment of the OPC to be faithful to the Scriptures and defend the Scriptures and defend the Reformed heritage, and to note with gratitude its warnings against the course taken by the Christian Reformed Church.

c. to respond to the question raised by the CEIR with regard to the problem of receiving congregations and ministers that have been or are members of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church while maintaining official contact.

d. to acknowledge that the issues of the fencing of the Lord's Supper and confessional membership have been addressed, and that these discussions have led to clarification and better understanding, but also to a more focused articulation of the differences, preventing at this moment a closer relationship.


f. to continue the committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with the following mandate:

2. to continue the discussion of divergencies by focusing on the differences in ecclesiology.

3. to continue to discuss and evaluate the current third party relationships of the OPC, and to urge the OPC to break contact with the Christian Reformed Church.

Conclusion

The above gives just a few particulars from the sometimes quite extensive reports sent in preparation for the coming general synod. These particulars are sufficient to show that the brothers will be in need of the constant prayers of the membership.

It will not serve any purpose to pass on particulars from other reports, if they will still be sent, since the time needed for digesting them and publishing the digest is too short and synod may well be over before our readers would read about them. Yet we expect that we have served our membership by the above information. 

Postscript to a plea

By G. VanDooren

Recently some remarks were published in which concern was expressed about the future (and survival) of the *Book of Praise*.

Since then some reactions and events came to the attention of the present writer, which warrant a postscript to that article.

First, it became clear that there are more among us who share the same concern.

The other day a mother asked what to do? She is firmly convinced that our churches were right in preserving the Genevan heritage. But when she tries to convince her children that it is good and necessary to keep those tunes, to learn them, to sing them, she faces opposition. Her children prefer other, more "modern" and "easy" tunes to sing.

She may not be the only mother with such a predicament.

Then, more disturbing, a minister wondered aloud, why our churches in their first years had decided to establish their own *Book of Praise* instead of adopting one of the many Psalter-Hymnals available? Did they realize that by doing so they put up a stumbling-block between our and other Reformed churches? The *Book of Praise* may even hinder those strivings for unity of Reformed believers which are going on today. The question behind this remark, I presume, is the suggestion that our churches, eventually, for the sake of unity, should be willing to remove this "obstacle."

It should be kept in mind that our churches already in their first synod decided to go on the way to a "reformatory psalter," because they were convinced that in this matter more was at stake than the conservatistic tendency to cling to something old. The Committee even published a booklet with this title.¹ It is too bad that it was written in the Dutch language, which at that time still was "our language."

Two more things came to my attention. When I mention them, this should

not in any way be understood as criticism against two laudable activities of our committees for evangelism. On the contrary!

The point, however, is not *what* such committees do, but *how* they do it.

Having been invited to the closing session of the Vacation Bible School, we could not discover in the program any indication or quotation from our "Genevan Psalms." Why not? Was this, maybe, because our Psalms are not fit for reaching out? Should this be understood as a form of "accommodation" to those who are (still) outside the Canadian Reformed Churches?

Then there is the "singing in the park." Again, I have great admiration for all those who are willing and eager to sing of their Saviour in a public place. But *how* is it done? Some bulletin contained the information that the singers had to move to a different spot because they were in the way of the Salvation Army; and, of course, they

could not join the Salvation Army singing in the park! In answer to a question we were told that the regular songs by "our people" were Amazing Grace, Trust and Obey, and the like. Obviously these were considered more "popular" and more fit to reach out to others. Possibly the Salvation Army sang the same or similar songs. Why not join them? Or rather, why not sing from the *Book of Praise*?

I think that the reaction will be: "Oh no!, you cannot sing Psalms on Genevan tunes in the park, in public! They are not fit for that...."

The reader may know that now and then it has been asserted that the Genevan tunes were originally street-songs, which were "borrowed" by John Calvin and others for their rhymed Psalms. The suggestion, then, was that we should look for something better. After all..."street-songs...."

The truth is that things were just the other way around. The Genevan tunes were created to fit the Psalms, the contents of the Psalms. That is why Calvin wanted 150 different tunes, but his composers never came that far.

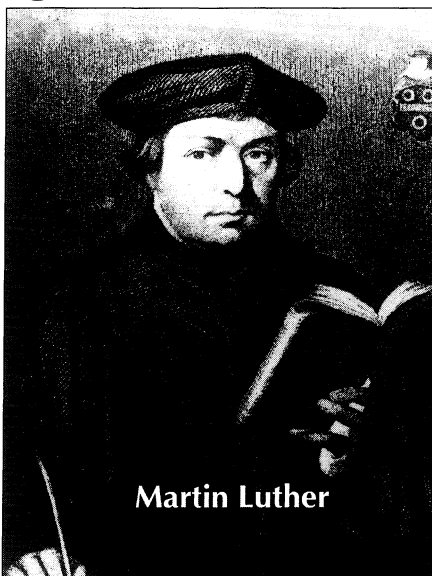
However, the Psalms *became* "street-songs" because God's (often persecuted) children in those days sang their Psalms during their work, and in the streets. "Singing in the park!" It was not: the street brought the music into the churches, but the church-members sang their songs in the street. And in this way many were moved to believe in the God of those Psalms, and, yes, some of the singers were martyred for their Psalm-singing.

Are we the sons and daughters of those brothers and sisters long ago?

But, "you can't sing them in the park, on the street...."

Some can't even sing them in church! But one cannot blame the tunes for that. "*Unknown – unloved*" is all too often true here. It gladdens the heart to read that consistories here and there have decided to re-instate the singing of

OUR COVER



Martin Luther

those "difficult tunes" before the worship services. We hope that such exercises may also benefit those organists who still have trouble to play our tunes properly.

Is not the *Book of Praise* our "identity-card," containing not only the Psalms but also the Creeds, the Forms, the Prayers?

One has an identity-card to show to others, not to keep it in the pocket. Are we going to put the *Book of Praise* inside, and for the rest: accommodation is the thing to do?

I see another hurdle coming up over the horizon.

The time will come that the "Thee" and "Thou" will be dropped. Already many among us say to the LORD: "You," and there is nothing disrespectful in that! It is just a "Dutch ideosyncrasy" (I

am quoting an expert in theology and liturgy) to think that "Thou" is more respectful than "you." That may be the case in Dutch and German, but not in English. Check your King James version, if you still have one, and you will discover that (just like Mennonites still do) "thou" and "thee" is used, not only in addressing God, but also in talking to your child.

So, the time will come for a new edition, for updating the present one, for this and other reasons. That will involve quite something, because if we are going to use "you," all those verbs like "doeth, sayest," etc. will have to be changed.

Will the *Book of Praise*, i.e. particularly the Genevan Tunes, survive that hurdle? Will the coming generation

still cling to this Reformed heritage as the first generation here did?

Are we going to look like the man who desired to build a tower, but he did not first sit down and count the cost, whether he had enough to complete it, so, that when he had laid the foundation, he was not able to finish it. And all who passed by mocked him, saying, "this man began to build and was not able to finish."...? You can find it all in the Bible, Luke 14.

Will we not be able to "finish?" Or does this concern have to do with the age of the present writer who had the privilege of joining others in the production of the *Book of Praise*? **C**

¹*Op Weg naar een Engelse Reformatorische Psalmbundel*, published by Canadian Reformed Publishing House, Smithville, 1957.

Installation of Rev. E. Kampen

On Sunday, August 2, 1992 Rev. E. Kampen was installed as the first minister of the church at Port Kells. It was a joyous occasion for a congregation that had been vacant from its institution on Jan. 21, 1990.

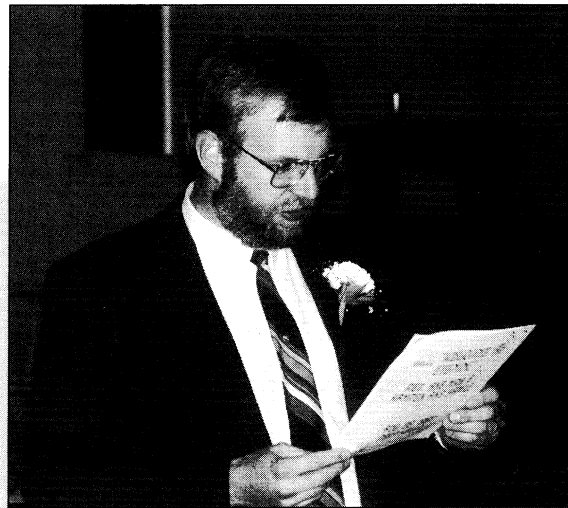
Rev. Moesker led the worship service on the morning of Aug 2. He proclaimed the Word of God from Rev. 1:16. His theme was that "Christ reveals Himself in His Church-gathering work..."

1. carrying seven stars in His hand,
2. with a sharp two-edged sword in His mouth, and
3. His face shining as the noon-day sun.

As the theme was worked out the task and responsibility of the ministers of the Word as well as of the congregation toward the ministers was placed before the congregation and the new minister.

After the service Br. J. Flokstra, delegate from Classis Pacific spoke words of welcome and encouragement to Rev. Kampen as well as congratulatory comments to the church at Port Kells. Br. Deboersap from Vernon passed on similar comments from the church at Vernon.

In the afternoon Rev. Kampen took the (stage) pulpit for the first time as minister of Port Kells. In his inaugural sermon he expounded Scripture as it is found in 2 Cor. 1:8-11.



Rev. E. Kampen

The theme was summarized as: Officebearers are dependent...

1. on God and
2. on the congregation

From the sermon it became clear that all of us, also ministers, depend on God for all that they need in their tasks. The congregation also plays a role in such dependence when it comes to a minister. When prayers are directed to our heavenly Father for health, wisdom and strength to prepare a sermon that will feed, teach, admonish, and comfort

the flock, then the field will be prepared for sowing. Then the hearers of the Word will be receptive to what God has worked through the minister for them.

All the members of the church were invited to an Open House at the manse to celebrate the joyful occasion of the installation. The open-house was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all who came. It was a good day and a good beginning of new acquaintance as minister and congregation.

P. DeBoer **C**

Welcoming the servant – Expecting the Master

The evening of August 28, 1992, saw the congregation of Port Kells assembled to welcome its first minister – the Rev. E. Kampen, together with his wife Kim and daughters Sarah, Anna, Chelsea, and Erin. Due to the absence of many members on vacation, the evening had to be postponed until nearly a month after Rev. Kampen's installation. (He made good use of the intervening weeks to visit many families in their homes, distributing the abundant fruits of his newly-acquired orchard.)

The vice-chairman of the consistory, Mr. M. DeGlint, opened the evening and extended a warm welcome to the Kampen family. Based on the Scripture reading of Heb. 13:7-21, which indicates that our lives are sacrificial in nature, he stressed that also this evening should be a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God for his gift of a shepherd to lead us on the path of life.

Rev. Van Luik, minister of Chilli-wack and a former fellow-student of Rev. Kampen spoke words of welcome on behalf of all the churches in the Valley.

Mr. G. Geurts next spoke words of welcome on behalf of Surrey Maranatha, the "grandmother church" of the Valley.

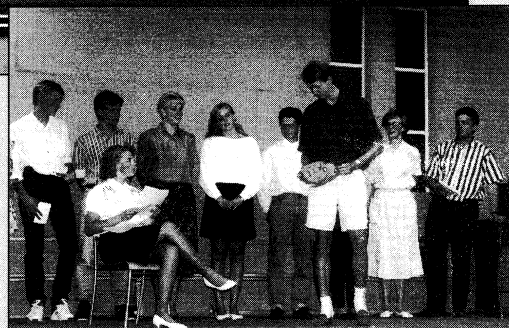
Rev. Moesker was thanked by the vice-chairman for serving as the counsellor for Port Kells for the past two and a half years. He voiced his appreciation for the fine cooperation he had experienced, both at the consistory level and from the "sweet" catechism students.

Mr. P. DeBoer, member of the Welcoming Committee, was then asked to chair the remainder of the evening. Led by Mr. J. Leguijt, and accompanied by Port Kells' youngest organist Mark Dijkstra, the elementary children sang a welcome song for the Kampens. Further musical interludes were also provided.

A quiz highlighting various aspects of congregational life was presented by the Port Kells Bible Study Group. The Women's Society presented a mock



Children's choir



Young people skit

court case which examined the many humorous features of church services in the community hall of Port Kells. Leaking roofs, creaking chairs, ear-splitting fire sirens, Christmas trees and winking Santa faces have all contributed to making life in Port Kells hall a memorable experience. The court condemned the hall to immediate demolition, although reality dictates that it will continue to be used until we can build our own facilities.

A slide show by Mrs. J. Knol, accompanied by verse from Mrs. F. Sikma, presented every family and single member of the congregation.

The Men's Society contented itself with a few modest words of welcome spoken by Mr. W. Vanderpol.

The Welcome Evening Singers, an impromptu choir formed during the spring and summer, next presented four selections. The YPS presented the family with six umbrellas in various sizes.

Mrs. G.B. Wendt spoke on behalf of the four senior sisters of the congregation.

The Ladies Aid was thanked for the beautiful decoration of the hall, as well as for serving delicious refreshments throughout the evening.

In closing, Rev. Kampen expressed his appreciation for the warm welcome he and his family had experienced, as well as for all the efforts of those involved in this evening. "If this is how you welcome the servant," he said, "how much greater will be your joy when the Master arrives! Let us work together as minister and congregation to prepare for that day."

A concluding song was sung by all present, after which Rev. Kampen closed a memorable evening with thanksgiving to the Master, to whom be praise and glory forever.

J. Van Seters

Installation Rev. G. Wieske at Chatham, Ontario

September 27, 1992 was a special and happy day for the church of Chatham. After being eight months vacant, Rev. G. Wieske from the church of Neerlandia was installed by Prof. J. Geertsema. He chose as text 2 Cor. 11:2. The theme of the sermon was: "With the jealousy of God Paul makes his appeal to the betrothed bride of Christ at Corinth to remain pure for her one husband."

We paid attention to:

1. The manner of this appeal: with the jealousy of God.

2. The reason of this appeal: the church is betrothed to Christ.

After the service br. J. Oosterhoff, chairman of the consistory addressed our new minister on behalf of the consistory and the congregation of Chatham. He expressed his wish that Rev. Wieske's ministry may be to the glory of God, and to the upbuilding of faith of the congregation. Rev. J. Van-Rietschoten, our previous minister, spoke words of gratitude to the church of Chatham of receiving so soon a new minister and wished Rev. Wieske the Lord's strength and blessing.

Elder P. Engbers spoke as classical representative and on behalf of the church of London. He was glad that Rev. Wieske came back again in this classical resort and congratulated the church of Chatham. Elder R. Haan from Watford congratulated Chatham on behalf of Watford. Letters with congratulations were received from Prof. L. Selles, Chatham's second minister for 17 years and from the churches of Attercliffe, Hamilton, Laurel, Lincoln, Smithville, Neerlandia and Barrhead.

Last but not least Prof. J. Geertsema spoke on behalf of the Theological College and as member-minister on behalf of the church of Ancaster. He was very

*Rev. and Mrs. G. Wieske
and daughter Roslyn*



happy that he personally as minister could install Rev. Wieske with the text of 2 Cor. 11:2. A text that expresses so much what a minister is and should be for the congregation. And what a difficult task it is, which can only be done with the Lord's strength and blessing!

In the afternoon Rev. Wieske chose as text for his inaugural service 1 Cor. 3:5-7. The theme of his sermon was: "The evaluation of the ministry of the Gospel" and the text shows:

1. The workers *in* this ministry
2. The work *of* this ministry
3. The blessing *upon* this ministry
4. The praise *for* this ministry

After the service at the coffee social in the basement everyone was given the opportunity to speak with and congratulate Rev. and Mrs. Wieske.

On October 2, 1992 a welcome evening was given to Rev. Wieske and his family. An enjoyable evening quickly passed by. The wide variety of music and speeches gave our new minister a taste of our rich local talent. The evening was opened by Br. Henry Brinkman, who led this evening, with prayer and Scripture reading, after which we sang Psalm 42:1 and 2. He welcomed Rev. Wieske, his wife and daughter Roslyn, emphasizing that we especially tonight welcome them as a family in the congregation.

Welcome speeches, some in a humorous manner, were given by the representatives of the different societies accompanied with gifts and flowers. Students of grade 1 and 2 of our school

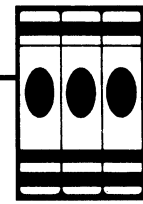
sang a welcome song, while grade seven student Laura Matthews spoke on behalf of the Eben-Ezer School. Mike de Boer and Janice Bultje each sang a solo out of Handel's Messiah, while a group of church members sang different spiritual songs from well-known composers. Jackie Mallot presented Rev. Wieske with a photo album in which a picture was of her first baby, who was also the first baby he baptized on the first Sunday, when he preached in July in Chatham.

Elder H. Veenema was the last speaker to welcome the Wieske family on behalf of the Consistory and the congregation, and presented them with a FAX machine. He thanked the members, who helped in cleaning and made the manse ready to move in, the moving itself from Neerlandia by Br. J. Bos and everybody, who participated in making this evening very successful.

After we sang Hymn 6 and prayer by Br. Brinkman, Rev. Wieske entered the pulpit and spoke words of thankfulness, also on behalf of his wife and daughter, for this overwhelming receipt in the congregation. He referred to his inaugural sermon again on Sunday, that he in the first place came to Chatham as preacher, teacher and pastor, which tasks he hopes to fulfill with the Lord's help and to His Glory and for the upbuilding of faith of the members of the congregation.

A social get-together in the basement of the church concluded this very enjoyable evening.

A.J. Ytsma **C**



The Secret Mission

Reviewed by J. Geertsema

A. van der Jagt, published by Christian Reading Materials, 831 Orchard Drive, Lewiston, NY 14092, U.S.



This book is a sequel to *The Escape*, published by Inheritance Publications in 1988. In *The Escape* Mr. Van der Jagt told us the story of John, a Huguenot boy, whose father had been sent to the galleys because of his Reformed faith. When his mother died and when his uncle, a Roman Catholic priest, wanted to place him in a monastery, John fled to Holland. On his way, he rescued his younger sister from a Roman Catholic family in Paris, where she was held as in a prison. In this second book Mr. Van der Jagt tells us how John went back to France, a few years later, on a dangerous mission,

while in the service of Dutch political leaders. His task is, among others, to bring financial and other support to the Huguenots in France. He uses the trip also for getting in contact with and freeing his father. At the same time he is able to help others. He meets his Roman Catholic uncle again, too, which brings him in a dangerous situation. It is evident that this second book gives the reader again a number of adventures.

However, the importance of this new book of br. Van der Jagt is not in the adventures but in the fact that the story of John is based on historical data, as they are found in old Dutch documents. Moreover, this second volume is even more interwoven with the political history of the time: around 1700. The reader finds the names of important leading figures in both Holland and France, together with their portraits. On the back the purpose of the author is presented in the following words: "The book was purposely written for Christian teenagers." It wants "to encourage them to say 'No' to their peers" when they put pressure on them to go along in ways that are sinful. Here is a youth who confessed Christ and served the cause of the Reformation in France when the Reformed believers still went through awfully hard times at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century.

We have here again a good book, which gives informative, instructive, up building reading material. Buy it and give it into the hands of your teenager. Read it also yourself. The price for this lasting and profitable book (these books) is low, just about eight dollars. Very much recommended.

Missions Now: This Generation

Reviewed by J. Visscher

Roger S. Greenway, John E. Kyle, and Donald A. McGavran (Grand Rapids: Baker), 1990, 126 pp.

This book was originally written with a view to the 1990 Urbana Student Missions Convention and is meant to

expose young adults interested in missions to the insights of three veteran missionaries. Roger Greenway served as a missionary in Sri Lanka and Mexico and taught at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and is currently teaching at Calvin Seminary. He is also executive director of World Ministries in the Christian Reformed Church. John Kyle is director of Mission to the World, the foreign missions arm of the Presbyterian Church in America. Previously he served with the Wycliffe Bible Translators and with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Donald McGavran, who died at the age of 93 while this book was being finished, is famous as the founder of the Institute of Church Growth and the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary. He was born in India and served as a missionary to that country for many years.

The book itself is divided into three sections dealing with missions in relation to the Bible, the church and the youth of the church. Under the biblical givens, McGavran sketches God's dealings in the past, Greenway elaborates on the idea of followers of Christ being "co-missioners" meaning "co-labourers," "co-sufferers" and "co-witnesses."

With respect to the section on missions and the church, Kyle urges students to obtain a better understanding of missions and argues for "hands-on" involvement. McGavran, in characteristic fashion, speaks about the world being made-up of a human mosaic with many different peoples, all of whom should be disciplined, not in an individualistic fashion, but taking into account their particular ethnic grouping. He also gives a number of practical pointers as to how this can be done.

In the final part of this book, the authors direct themselves especially to the youth. Greenway speaks about having the proper missionary "tool kit", namely a strong spiritual life, a love for people, a basic and growing theology for missions, goals and strategies to achieve the goals, training and experience, cross-cultural skills and numerous other qual-

ities. He also reveals his three major concerns for the world today as dealing with the spiritually lost, the desperately poor, and the increasingly secularized. Kyle tells students how they can make a contribution in the current world mission situation and McGavran writes about the future missionary agenda.

Taken as a whole, this book serves as a kind of missions primer for students and young people. How well does it succeed? On the one hand, it is easy and attractive to read because its style is so clear and filled with many interesting examples and illustrations. It also furnishes the young reader with a lot of valuable information about the state of world missions today. On the other hand, it is obvious that McGavran is the driving force behind this book and that his particular ideas and insights dominate. Now that in itself need not be bad; however, the fact of the matter is that McGavran's missiology raises some serious questions about how he works with the biblical givens, about how he views the church and about the pragmatic nature of his approach.

In summary, if you are really interested in missions and come across this book, read it but do so with care.

Not By Bread Alone: God's Word on Present Issues

Reviewed by J. Visscher

David B. Knox (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth) 1989, 143 pp.

Here is a paperback filled with a lot of sound, biblical advice on such topics as: the mind, fellowship humanism, God's Word, authority and honour, social justice or compassion, the basis of punishment, race, money, sex, women's lib, censorship, Sunday, war, homosexuality, abortion, motives for Christian living, and eternal life.

On the matter of the Word, Knox concludes by saying, "We may be thankful that God has given us, in the Bible, His inerrant Word, the instrument through which He calls us to faith and obedience, and through which He moulds in us the character of Christ. It is our privilege as well as our duty to believe that Word and to read it regularly and prayerfully and, through it, to trust God completely and to obey Him gladly, and thus grow into Christlikeness, as we await in confidence for the promise

of our Lord's return and the coming of His kingdom" (p.32).

On the subject of money, he says, "So the first role in thinking about money is to put it in its proper perspective. Be rich in heaven rather than on earth. Have your heart in heaven, sit lightly on the things of this life; and if your riches increase, set not your heart on them" (p.60).

On the topic of the Sunday, he states, "When we remember that the honouring of God is the first principle for a healthy community, the hallowing of one day a week as especially God's is a most important community activity. For unless we exercise ourselves in godliness we will find that we will be overwhelmed by worldliness. Unless we rest from our ordinary activities in order to honour God, our Creator and Redeemer, on His day, we will find that the whole of our life, and not just the one day, will become godless. A desecrated Sunday results in a godless community" (p.97).

On the issue of homosexuality, he writes, "We should be clear, then, that God's Word consistently condemns homosexual activity. It follows that those who deliberately and unrepentantly engage in it cannot expect to be in relationship with God through His Holy Spirit. They cannot, that is, be Christians. They may say that they are but the facts are set against them. God will not dwell in the hearts of those who set their face to do what His Word plainly and consistently forbids" (p.110).

Suffice it to say that many more quotes on relevant topics could be given; however, space constrains us. If the above has whetted your appetite, by all means pay a visit to your local book merchant.

Heartily recommended!

Inheritance Preserved

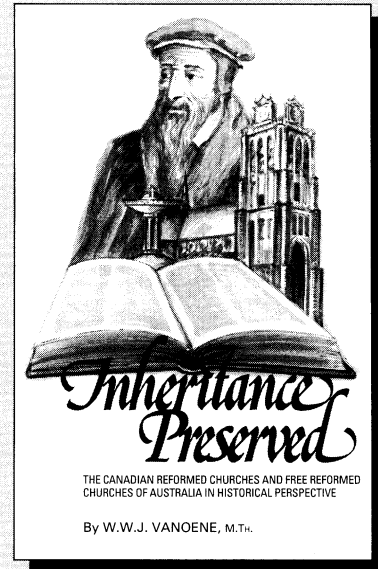
Reviewed by G. Nederveen

W.W.J. VanOene, Revised Edition, Winnipeg: Premier Publishing 1991, hard cover, 398 pages.

After three previous printings (two in 1975, the third in 1978), this work has been published once again. This time as a revised edition. The revision consists mainly of some additions. These are:


1. an update on the Canadian Reformed Churches covering the period from 1975 to 1990;

2. a chapter on the history of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia;
3. a pictorial update on ministers, churches and schools.



The main body of the text which traces our historical roots on this continent has not changed since the third printing. For those who only have the first printing, the changes and additions are more pronounced. Most significant for me are the two appendixes which contain the appeals the Canadian Reformed Churches sent to the Christian Reformed Church in 1963 (Appendix II, pp. 322-336) and in 1978 (Appendix III, pp. 337-357). It will benefit everyone to familiarize oneself with the content of these documents.

The author is well-known for his attention to detail. That makes this book of such great value. Rev. VanOene has dealt with the salient points of the Canadian Reformed church history. It is a history which all who desire to understand their roots in the sea of Reformed churches must read. The author has presented it in such a way that it is not tedious reading.

Let me therefore keep it brief and just say: consider this book required reading if you want to understand and defend your roots as Canadian Reformed. 

PRESS RELEASE

Classis Ontario South, Attercliffe, September 23 and 24, 1992

1. Opening

On behalf of the convening church at Hamilton, the Rev. Cl. Stam opens the meeting in proper fashion. He welcomes all present, especially Cand. J.E. Ludwig, the Deputies of Regional Synod Ontario (Rev. P.G. Feenstra and Rev. G. Nederveen), and various guests.

He mentions that Rev. B.R. Hofford is unable to attend classis because of his wife's illness and that Rev. D.G.J. Agema cannot (yet) attend because his wife is in the hospital for the delivery of a child. Best wishes are expressed with respect to both families.

2. Credentials and constitution

All the credentials are found to be in good order. It is noted that the church at Rockway has an instruction. Classis is constituted. Because of the absence of Rev. Agema, designated clerk, for the interim Rev. K.A. Kok is appointed as clerk. The moderamen is then as follows: chairman: Rev. J. de Gelder; vice-chairman: Rev. Cl. Stam; clerk: Rev. K.A. Kok.

The chairman thanks the convening church for the preparatory work. He mentions that on this day the Rev. Cl. Stam experiences his 20th anniversary of his ordination in the ministry. Rev. D.G.J. Agema has received a call from the church at Neerlandia. Words of congratulations are expressed to the churches at Chatham, London, and Rockway who received a minister from the Lord.

Rev. R. Sietsma, missionary of the church at Hamilton, is seated at classis in advisory capacity.

3. Adoption of the agenda

After some additions and deletions, the agenda is adopted.

4. Peremptory examination of Cand. J.E. Ludwig

The presented documents are found to be in good order. The examination of Cand. Ludwig, called by the church at London, proceeds.

The sermon proposal is based on John 2:13-22. In closed session, the sermon proposal is discussed and evaluated. There is no objection to continuation of the examination. In open session, Br. Ludwig is informed of this decision.

After lunch the examination is continued.

In place of Rev. Agema, Rev. Kok examines in Exegesis Old Testament (Isaiah 8:1-22; Deuteronomy 8:1-10).

In place of Rev. Hofford, Rev. Kok examines in Exegesis New Testament (Acts 16 and Romans 16).

Rev. Stam examines in the Doctrine of the church.

Rev. Kok examines in Church History.

Rev. T. Hoogsteen examines in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

(Meanwhile Rev. Agema enters the meeting. After informing classis concerning the prosperous birth of a healthy son, he is congratulated by classis.)

Rev. D. Moes examines in Ethics and Diaconology.

Rev. G.A. Snip examines in Church Polity.

In closed session, classis evaluates the examination. Classis decides that there are no objections to admitting Cand. J.E. Ludwig to the ministry in the Canadian Reformed Churches. The Deputies of Regional Synod East concur with this decision.

In open session, Cand. Ludwig is informed of and congratulated with this decision. Also words of felicitations are addressed to Sr. Ludwig and other family members. Cand. Ludwig signs the Form of Subscription. Classis sings Psalm 84:4, and the chairman leads in thanksgiving. Opportunity is given to congratulate Cand. and Mrs. Ludwig.

Classis recesses for supper.

5. Approbation of the call of Cand. J.E. Ludwig

After reopening, it is noted that an alternate delegate is present from the church at Rockway.

Classis deals with the approbation of the call extended to Cand. J.E. Ludwig by the church at London, Ontario. The required documents are found to

be in good order. Classis therefore gives approbation to the call extended to Cand. Ludwig by the church at London. The ordination and inaugural will take place, the Lord willing, on Sunday, October 4, 1992.

6. Approbation of the call of Rev. G. Wieske

Classis proceeds to deal with the approbation of the call extended to Rev. G. Wieske by the church at Chatham.

The presented documents are inspected. It appears that one required document, a certificate of release from the consistory at Neerlandia (Art. 5 A.l.a.), is not available. Classis takes note of this oversight and on the basis of the available documentation decides to give approbation to the call.

7. Question period ad Art. 44 Church Order

The church at London is appointed to represent classis at the installation of Rev. G. Wieske, while the church at Watford will represent classis at the ordination of Cand. J.E. Ludwig.

The church at Grand Rapids requests pulpit supply. A schedule will be drafted by the moderamen for approval.

8. Correspondence

Various appeals and a letter have been submitted to classis by members of the church at Watford. It is decided to deal with this material at a next session of classis.

9. Reports

a. Report of the Committee ad hoc re. the Rev. M. van Essen is held over to the next day.

b. Report of the church visitation to the church at Rockway by Rev. D. Moes and Rev. G.A. Snip is gratefully received.

c. Report of the church visitation to the church at London by Rev. D. Moes and Rev. Cl. Stam is gratefully received.

d. Report and audit from the church at Chatham re the Fund for Needy Students is received. The books have been found in good order. The assessment for 1993 is set at \$5.00 per communicant member.

e. Report and audit from the church at Ancaster re the Fund for Needy Churches is received. The assessment for 1993 is suggested at Can. \$31.00 per communicant member. A letter from the church at Rockway regarding this report is read, asking grounds for the increase and stating concern about the requested amount. Some additional information will be given by the church at Ancaster at the next session of classis.

10. Adjournment

Classis adjourns to reconvene the next day at 9:00 a.m. to finish the agenda. The chairman requests to sing Psalm 72:10 and leads in thanksgiving and prayer.

11. Reopening of classis

On September 24, at 9:00 a.m., classis is reopened. The roll call shows that various alternate delegates are present. The churches at Laurel, Lincoln, and Rockway, are represented by only one delegate.

12. Reports (continued)

Report from the church at Ancaster re the Fund for Needy Churches is again discussed. The church at Ancaster gives further information regarding the increased assessment. Still more information is required by classis, and the delegates from Ancaster will seek to obtain it in the course of the day.

13. Appeals

The appeals and a submission from members of the church at Watford are dealt with (see 8). The discussion of this material is continued and finalized after lunch.

14. Reports (continued)

a. The delegates from the church at Ancaster give further information regarding the Fund for Needy Churches (see 9 and 12). The assessment is set at Can \$31.00 per communicant member for 1993.

b. Report from the Committee ad hoc re the request of the Rev. H.M. VanEssen, formerly of the Reformed Church at Brantford, Ontario, to be declared eligible for call in the Canadian Reformed Churches is discussed. Classis gratefully receives this report. Classis decides:

1. To take note of and to accept with thankfulness that Rev. VanEssen has been faithful to his call according to his declaration as minister.

2. To take note of and accept with thankfulness the reasons why Rev. VanEssen desires to be declared eligible for call within the Canadian Reformed Churches.

3. Classis decides that in this instance being "well tested," referred to in Art. 7 C.O., a period of half a year is sufficient. Classis requests Rev. VanEssen that when he presents himself for examination, he submit to classis an extensive testimony from the church(es) of which he has been a member.

4. To judge that the examination to be declared eligible for call not take place at Classis September, and advise Rev. VanEssen to do additional study in close contact and consultation with the staff of the Theological College in Hamilton, during the months September, October and November, 1992.

5. To advise Rev. VanEssen to ask the convening church for a next classis to put the examination on the agenda. This examination, which will take place with the cooperation of the Deputies ad Art. 48 C.O., shall include the following subjects: Sermon Proposal, Exegesis Old Testament, Exegesis New Testament, Doctrine and Creeds, Church History, Diaconiology, Church Polity, Knowledge of Holy Scripture and Ethics.

6. That if the examination is judged by a next Classis and Deputies ad Art. 48 C.O. to be sufficient, Rev. VanEssen be declared eligible for call. The question regarding his status within the

Canadian Reformed churches be determined upon successful completion of the examination, with the help of the deputies of Regional Synod.

The chairman speaks a few words of encouragement to the Rev. H.M. VanEssen with respect to the preparation for his examination at a next classis.

15. Appointments

After supper, classis is reopened. The ladies of the church at Attercliffe are thanked for their excellent service.

The following appointments are made:

Next classis: convening church: the church at Laurel; hosting church: the church at Hamilton; date: December 9, 1992; proposed moderamen: chairman: Rev. B.R. Hofford, vice-chairman: Rev. D.G.J. Agema; clerk: Rev. J. de Gelder.

A schedule for pulpit supply (Grand Rapids) is adopted as follows: October (Hofford), November (Sietsma), December (Wieske), January (Kok), February (Moes), March (Hoogsteen), April (Snip), May (Stam), June (Agema), July (de Gelder), August (Ludwig).

Delegates to Regional Synod East (December 2, 1992) are elected as follows:

Ministers: J. de Gelder, K.A. Kok, G.A. Snip, and Cl. Stam (alternates: D.G.J. Agema, G. Wieske, B.R. Hofford, and D. Moes, in that order).

Elders: W. Bartels, H.J. Homan, J. ten Haaf, A. Witten (alternates: J.B. Ludwig, P. Engbers, G. Gritter, and J. Oosterhoff, in that order).

16. Personal question period

A question is asked whether the convening church must pass on all mail received to the churches. The chairman reads the applicable rule in the classical regulations.

17. *Censure ad Art. 44. C.O. is not necessary.*

18. Acts and Press Release

The Acts are adopted and the Press Release is approved.

19. Closing

The chairman thanks the hosting church for the hospitality extended. He requests Rev. D.G.J. Agema to lead in thanksgiving and prayer. Classis is closed.

For Classis Ontario South,
Cl. Stam, vice-chairman e.t.



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Rev. E. Venema

of Loppersum, the Netherlands

* * *

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OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



Dear Busy Beavers

Who gets to sit in the front seat of your car/van when you go to church?

Do you think it's a long wait for the service to start?

Does the organ sound the same to you every Sunday?

Busy Beavers, what *really* happens when we go to church?

Sure, every Sunday we sit in the same pews, hear the same organ, see the same people in church.

But *what* really happens there?

Think about it!

We meet the Lord there.

We may be joyful as we sing His praise. We talk (pray) to Him about everything about our lives.

And the Lord will hear us! He sees us!

Looking at it like that – yes, church really is special!

On Reformation Day, October 31, we remember how the Lord brings His church back to the Bible, again and again.

October 31, 1517, Luther nails his "95 Theses" to the church door at Wittenberg. It's the "official start" of the Reformation.

October 31, 1992, Reformation Day. We remember how the Lord always takes care of His church through all the years, through all the troubles.

That's why every Sunday morning (without even thinking about it, sometimes!) we can step into our car/van and go to church!



Quiz Time!

PRAYER PLACES

Wherever people are, they may call to God in prayer. Match each person with the place where he or she prayed.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Jesus, John 11:38-41 | a. In a tower |
| 2. Peter and John, Acts 3:1 | b. On a mountain |
| 3. Paul and Silas, Acts 16:23-25 | c. On sick bed |
| 4. A group of women, Acts 16:13 | d. At a grave |
| 5. Jesus, Peter, James, and John, Luke 9:28 | e. In a fish |
| 6. Jonah, Jonah 2:1 | f. In bed |
| 7. Habakkuk, Habakkuk 2:1 | g. In jail |
| 8. David, Psalm 63:6 | h. At a river |
| 9. Daniel, Daniel 6:10-11 | i. At a window |
| 10. Hypocrites, Matthew 6:5 | j. In the Temple |
| 11. Hezekiah, 2 Kings 20:1-7 | k. On street corners |

NAME SEARCH

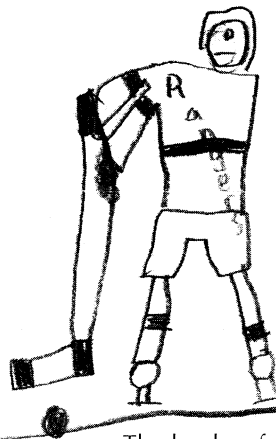
By Busy Beaver Tim Sikkema

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

In this wordsearch find the names of all the ministers, professors, and missionaries except one of the missionaries. Names may be written to the right, to the left, diagonally, from top to bottom, or upside down. You will have to finish this wordsearch to find a sentence about him with the remaining letters. Use pages 142 and 143 of the 1992 Yearbook of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches.

A HOCKEY PLAYER

By
Busy Beaver
Jeremy DeHaan



Are you playing hockey this winter? You can see Jeremy is interested, too! And other Busy Beavers, too, I'm sure. Will you write and tell us your team, your practices, etc?

The hockey fans will like your letters!



From the mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Tim Sikkema*. We are happy to have you join us. Thank you for the puzzle you made for the Busy Beavers, and also for your letter. Did you like the ending of your book, Tim?

Sounds to me as if you had a very interesting vacation, *Ashlea Jagt!*

I guess you like the part best when you took the ferry, right? Thanks for your story, Ashlea.

Thanks for your letter *Andrew Bos*. It was nice to hear from you again. I see you are good at the computer, Andrew. Do you do other things on it, too?

That was an interesting picture you sent, *David DeBoer*. Thank you! I'm glad you had an interesting trip this

summer. Did your soccer team do well? Did you see the names for pen pals in the last few issues of *Our Little Magazine*, David? Go ahead and write several of them!

Hello, *Trina Jelsma*. Thank you for your letter and picture. I see you had an interesting summer! So how do you feel about being in school again, Trina? And how do you keep busy after school?

Bye for now Busy Beavers!

I'm looking forward to your letters. There's just time to send in a Christmas puzzle or story you'd like to share with the Busy Beavers.

Hope to "see" you next time!

Love to you all,
Aunt Betty



Thy eyes beheld my unformed substance; in Thy book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Psalm 139:16

With thankfulness to the Lord, who made all things well, we announce the birth of a son,

BENJAMIN BRENDAN

Rev. and Mrs. D.G.J. Agema
(nee DeBoer)
*Christa
Pete
Monica
Derrick*

September 23, 1992
Attercliffe, ON

With thankfulness to the Lord, we announce the birth of our third son

STEVEN GERRY

Born October 4, 1992
A brother for *John* and *Trevor*
Herman and Sylvia Kamstra
(nee Jans)
3528 Braemore Place
Burlington, ON L7N 2N2

We thank the Lord for entrusting to us another covenant child. We named him

JEREMY CORNELIUS

Born August 26, 1992
John and Jeanne Verhelst
*Edward, Richard
Suzanne, James*

Box 2472
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

He hath made everything beautiful in His time. Ecclesiastes 3:11

With thankfulness to the Lord for His precious gift. He has entrusted into our care, our first child, a daughter

AMBERLY NICOLE

Born September 28, 1992
Wilmer and Diana Kruisselbrink
(nee Hodgens)
Walkerton, ON

With thankfulness to the Lord, who has entrusted into our care His covenant child, we announce the birth of

ERIN SUSANNE

Born September 4, 1992
A sister for *Crystal
Darcie
Sheldon*
Henry and Judy Slaa
(nee Veenendaal)

Every good and perfect gift is from above... James 1:17

Our Creator God has again richly blessed us with a very precious gift, a son, born on September 26, 1992, whom we have named

BRYAN MARK

A brother for *Andrea Nicole
Raymond Gerrit*

Gerrit and Grace Vanderhorst
6th grandchild for
Barb Bysterveld
16th grandchild for
Alice Vanderhorst
35162 Sim Road, RR 1
Matsqui, BC V0X 1S0

Know that the LORD is God! It is He that made us; and we are His!

Psalm 100:3

With thankfulness to the Lord who brought us together, we

JOYCE JONKER

and

RICK VANSYDENBORGH

announce our engagement.
August 21, 1992
RR 2
Orangeville, ON L9W 2Y9

With thankfulness to the Lord we hope, the Lord willing, to remember the 40th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents on Monday, October 26, 1992.

TOM and JENNY DEKKER
(nee Linde)

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Bill and Jackie Dekker
Bill, Tom, Mike, Michelle
John and Tina Dekker
Joni, Jennifer, Crystal
Ben and Nellie Bartels
Benjamin, Bradley, Gerald
Timothy, Scott, Jessica
Karl and Hettie Kratz
David
Andy and Janet Helder
Nick, Andrew, Joel, Eric
Henry Dekker and Angela Mans

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Guest Accompanist: Mair Wyn Jones

Master of Ceremonies: Albert Smouter

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Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

THANK YOU

We would like to thank all our friends who in one way or another contributed to the festive character of our 25th Wedding Anniversary. We thank you for your good wishes!

Rev. and Mrs. C. Van Spronsen

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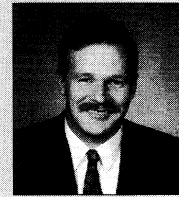


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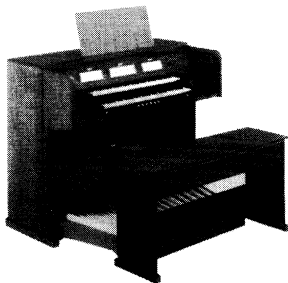
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