

# The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE



## **SPECIAL MISSION ISSUE**



...we have always maintained that the promise of the gospel and the command to repent and believe must be proclaimed to all nations, wherever God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel.

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## THE STANDARD BEARER

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## MEDITATION

## Jesus' Other Sheep

Rev. C. Hanks

*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.* John 10:16

Our Lord is giving us a profound lesson in real evangelism, true mission work, yet in very simple language.

Other sheep I have — Sovereign election.

Other sheep — This speaks of our total depravity.

Them also I must bring. This obviously includes the particular atonement for sin.

They shall hear My voice. Almighty calling and efficacious grace.

And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Preservation of the saints.

All very profound truths of the Scriptures, a gospel in miniature; and yet it is so simple that a child can understand it.



These words were spoken in the temple at Jerusalem shortly before our Savior laid down His life for His sheep on the cross. At the moment His chief concern is with His *other sheep*. Our eternal Prophet, Who thoroughly understands His mission as commissioned Him by the Father, is filled with holy zeal for those sheep which are given Him of the Father, which must still be gathered into the sheepfold. Let us realize in fear and wonder that all the saints of the New Testament are included here, also you and I!

A shepherd with a staff in hand guarding his flock of sheep was a common sight on the Judean hillside. Jesus takes this figure from our everyday life and compares Himself to that shepherd. In fact, a shepherd and his flock is a common figure that is used throughout the Scriptures.

In the Old Testament Scriptures we read of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as shepherd kings. They were by occupation shepherds, each ruling as lord, or king, in his own domain. Later David reigned over the theocracy of Israel with the authority of their Shepherd King in heaven (Psalm 80). These were types of the Shepherd King Who was to come, our Lord Jesus Christ.

A shepherd owned his flock. This small flock of sheep was often his sole possession, which he cherished as his chief concern and livelihood. He loved his sheep, leading them out of the sheepfold to green pastures, and bringing them back from the pastures to the safety of the fold during the darkness of the night. He was a picture of Christ, Who gathers His young in His arms, carries them in His bosom, and gently leads those that are with young. A shepherd would even lay down his life for his sheep. Again it is a picture, yet with quite a difference. In natural life a shepherd nearly was forced to lay down his life when a wild animal attacked; it was absolutely necessary for Jesus to lay down His life to deliver His sheep from the claws of the enemy, and He had to do so willingly. When a shepherd died in trying to rescue his sheep, the sheep were without a shepherd; when Christ dies for His sheep He remains their eternal, living Shepherd.

A shepherd knew how important it was that he constantly care for his sheep; for a sheep is a dependent animal. Some animals can forage for themselves, but not a sheep. A sheep is defenseless. The lion has its claw, the bull its horns, the dog its bite, the bee its sting, but a sheep has no defense. Besides, a sheep tends to wander; and having wandered away from the flock, it cannot find its way back, but goes off to be lost in the wilderness or to be the prey of some animal. Need I say that all this is a picture of us, who always go astray, each one in his own stubborn, willful way? We can even add to

this that a sheep is a very stubborn creature. When two sheep get into a fight, they will bash their heads together until they are blind or killed. Are you, am I, any better?

Our Lord is the Good Shepherd, the eternal reality of the earthly picture. He loves His sheep with an eternal love. He claims them as His very own and sole possession. He speaks to us of that love in the text before us.

Jesus speaks of "other sheep, which are not of this fold." Speaking of "this fold," He obviously refers to the saints of the old dispensation. They also belong to Christ's sheep and have already been gathered into the fold. Another flock must still be brought in. It is not as if the believers of the old dispensation form a separate people with a different future and a different way of salvation. The very fact that Jesus speaks of both the saints of the old dispensation and those of the new as belonging to Him and to His fold proves that they are one. This is confirmed by the fact that Jesus later speaks of "one fold (or flock) and one shepherd." The Old Testament contains the promise given with types and shadows, the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old.

It is interesting to notice that the ingathering of the saints in the old dispensation was also solely the work of Christ. He is appointed from eternity as the great Servant in God's house. Through Him were the heavens and the earth made. Through Him God spoke, whether by direct speech, by vision, by dream, by prophets, or by the Angel of Jehovah. Christ worked mightily by His Word and Spirit in the hearts of His sheep, gathering them in the line of generations of believers from paradise even until the moment when He speaks this Word. That part of Jesus' ministry, or mission endeavor, is all but finished. Therefore He looks ahead and speaks of His other sheep, which must still be brought into the fold.

Our Lord says, "Other sheep I have." Not: I *hope* to have, if they will accept Me and come to Me. Not: I *will* have when they are finally gathered in. But: I *have*. These are the sheep which the Father has given to Christ from eternity, which He therefore claims as His eternal possession. No man can take these sheep from Him. They are His, sworn unto Him by God's sovereign and eternal election.

Therefore our Lord can confidently say: "Them also I must bring."

Jesus is fully conscious of the divine "must" that weighed so heavily on His shoulders throughout His earthly ministry. He is the eternal Servant of God, Who came into this world of sin and death in all the weakness of sinful flesh to seek and to save His lost sheep. He came to do the Father's will, to



surrender Himself in perfect obedience to the Father's will, to carry out the eternal counsel of redemption, to save those whom God has chosen unto Himself to be His peculiar possession forever. When Christ was twelve years old He spoke of being busy in the work of His Father. He bowed under an ever increasing burden of God's wrath upon our sins, which He had to bear away through His atoning death on the cross. Without wavering, our Lord walked the way of suffering, descending ever deeper into the anguish of His approaching death. He was despised, reproached, hated, cast out, condemned to die the accursed death of the cross for our sakes. He surrendered Himself to the torment of separation from God in the consuming fire of divine wrath to deliver us from the clutches of the devil, sin, death, and hell. Out of the depths of hell arose the cry, "Behold, I have found My sheep that were lost!" He came forth out of death and the grave as the Shepherd of His sheep to lead His flock into the sheepfold of heavenly glory. He loved His own even to the point where He laid down His life to save them.

In heaven Jesus is still deeply conscious of that "must" of which He speaks. He still says, "Them also I must bring." Our Intercessor is in the heavens, pleading upon the basis of His accomplished work of the cross, that we may be where He is, in Father's house with its many mansions. He is preparing a place there for each of the redeemed, who are purchased by His blood and have the right to a place in Father's presence as His children. Jesus is still our Savior in the heavens; He is still our Shepherd. He receives from the Father the Holy Spirit of truth, Whom He sends to dwell in the church. That began at Pentecost. Christ also sends forth His servants, whom He calls to proclaim the gospel, the glad tidings of His accomplished salvation. These are under-shepherds, ambassadors of Jesus Christ, whose sole calling is to preach the Word, in season and out of season — the whole Word, the whole counsel of God, but also nothing but the Word. These messengers of Jesus are recognized by the fact that they not only believe in the infallibly inspired, inerrant Word of God, but they are thoroughly convinced that this Word, and this Word only, is the power unto salvation, because it is God's power, spoken by His servants, applied to the hearts of God's elect by the Holy Spirit. Faithful servants know that only Christ builds His church, not man. Only Christ can open hearts and make them receptive to the gospel. Only the Holy Spirit can open doors for missionaries to bring the Word of God to lost sinners. Therefore they need no gimmicks, no human attractions, no well-oiled machinery to win souls for Christ, no prayers that are addressed more to men than to God. They preach Christ, crucified and risen, foolishness to

those perishing, but the power of God to all who are saved.

Therefore the Savior can confidently add concerning His sheep, "And they shall hear My voice." His sheep recognize His voice. One reason why they recognize His voice is that the Holy Spirit applies the Word to their hearts. We are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, so that we have the life of Christ in us, a new, heavenly life. To that new life the Holy Spirit addresses the Word. Therefore, in the second place, we agree wholeheartedly with what we hear. We hear the voice of Jesus calling: awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead. We bestir ourselves and become aware of the fact that we are wretched sinners, who are worthy only of condemnation, because of all our rebellion and our sins. No, no one need tell us that Jesus loves us as lost sinners. How can He love me, as I am in my sin? But the Word does expose my sins, it does drive me to the cross, and there I find mercy in forgiveness. I still need that Word to guide me, to feed me, to bring me step by step unto my complete salvation. I need the defending, preserving power of my Good Shepherd. No false shepherd can give me that. I recognize his voice also, but then as a voice of a stranger, whom I must avoid, for he never seeks my good. The Good Shepherd calls, "Come unto Me," and by the drawing power of His grace we come, not once, but daily, in prayer and longing.

"And there will be one flock and one Shepherd." That is our Lord's comforting assurance and our eternal security. If salvation depended in any way on a preacher or on us, our Lord could never say this, and we could never be assured of our preservation, not even in the last hours of our life. But Christ is gathering His own unto Himself, even until the last one is called out of death into life and prepared for heaven. Then He will come again to take us into the sheepfold of glory, which is the glorious kingdom in which we will live and reign with Christ forever. There will be no missing sheep in that heavenly flock, no empty seats at the wedding feast of the Lamb. Yes, perish the thought, which is so deeply unworthy of our God and of His Christ. The whole assembly of the elect will be united in one body, all its members serving each other and functioning in their own capacity, as each one is given the ability to function, to the glory of the Father. The bride will be eternally devoted in loving service to the Bridegroom, that God may be all in all.

One flock and one Shepherd. Yes, even then we will need Christ as our Shepherd. He will be our Lord, our King, from Whom we receive every blessing. In Him we shall see the riches of our salvation, the wonder of God's boundless mercy and eternal grace. In Christ we will have perfect fellow-



ship with one another, with Him, and with the Father. We shall see the Father in Christ, and adore the glorious brightness of His holiness and righteousness, His truth and His grace. Then, yes then, I shall be satisfied.

Even now we can confess:

The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of right-

teousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me: Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

## EDITORIAL

# Our Special Missions Issue

*Prof. H. C. Hoeksema*

This is the third, and last, of our special issues for this volume-year. This time the theme of the entire issue is our Protestant Reformed mission outreach; and all of the articles, including our regular church news column, which tempts many readers to start reading with the back page, are devoted to this subject. I take this opportunity to express thanks to all those who have contributed to this missions issue. I will not play favorites and call your attention to this or that article as being of special interest; read all of them, for they are all worthwhile.

Perhaps the question may arise in the minds of some: why does the *Standard Bearer* present this missions issue?

I must confess that when our staff sub-committee, Prof. Decker and I, planned the issue, we did not stop to give account of our reasons. The plan was rather spontaneous. And, as with other special issues, we have found more than enough material to fill our pages; in fact, the editorial department must be abbreviated in order to provide sufficient room for articles which were written specifically for this issue.

Nevertheless, if I must give account of our reasons, I would say, negatively, that the reason is not that we wish to brag. For if anything has become evident in the course of the history of our Protestant Reformed missions through the years, it is the fact that we have nothing of which to brag. Not only are we small, and not only are our mission efforts proportionately as small as is our denomination, but also on the mission field we have learned the object lesson that all our boasting must be of the Lord our God.

Positively speaking, I could mention more than one reason. One reason is suggested in Prof. Decker's article: this issue should certainly give the lie to that vicious little lie which our enemies have so often spread abroad concerning us, that "the Protestant Reformed Churches don't believe in doing mission work." Another version of that same lie has been that the Protestant Reformed Churches only do mission work among Christian Reformed people. In recent years we have not heard it as frequently as in the past. But I would suggest that an issue such as this one certainly should convincingly bury that slander forever!

A second reason is simply to *inform*. Sometimes we tend to think that our various mission endeavors are the endeavors of someone else, be it of the "church," or synod, of this or that committee, or of our missionaries. But the simple fact is that these labors are not those of some impersonal third party, but very really *ours*. And we not only have a right to know what is going on, but we have a vital spiritual interest in knowing about these labors, or at least we ought to have such an interest. Hence, this is an effort to keep you informed; and it is an effort to stir up your interest at the same time. Personally, I find this issue rather exciting; and I think that our churches are living in some exciting times!

A third reason, closely related to the second, was suggested to me in a recent letter from an elderly friend. I have never met this friend, but know him only through correspondence during the last several years. He is not a member of our churches, cannot be one because he doesn't live near one of our churches. I may be mistaken, but I think he



originally became acquainted with us through our radio program when it was broadcast in southern California. Through the years we have corresponded sporadically, and from time to time he has sent generous gifts, asking me to use them wherever they were needed in our churches. Recently this friend moved to another state, and he missed receiving our annual Acts of Synod and Yearbook. Realizing, I suppose, that I might wonder why he would want to read such a dry-as-dust booklet as our Acts of Synod, he added his reason: "so I can pray more intelligently for your churches." Well, that is a good reason for this missions issue: so you can pray more intelligently for our missions, but also for our missionaries.

A fourth reason is the fact that the *Standard Bearer* and the Reformed Free Publishing Association down through the years have always been vitally interested in and played an active part in our Protestant Reformed outreach. If a list could be compiled of all the instances in which the *Standard Bearer* and R.F.P.A. publications have played a part in getting people acquainted with our Protestant Reformed cause and in which they have even been the initial means or occasion of our mission labors, I assure you such a list would be large! This was the case in our early years, when the *Standard Bearer* was the chief means of informing and instructing

people with respect to the common grace controversy. But also in recent years this has been the case—and probably much more often than many of our people realize. Those of us who are close to our publishing efforts are aware of this and have the opportunity of learning through correspondence or through personal contacts what a mighty means of instruction the pen can be. Often these contacts are made in the most unexpected manner and the most unlikely quarter. This past summer, for example, I met a young man in Singapore who told me he had purchased *Behold, He Cometh!* in London, England and through it had become convinced of the error of the premillennial position and the right of the amillennial position. And examples can be multiplied of people whose hearts were warmed through the reading of our publications and their Reformed testimony.

I had intended to write a separate editorial about the part of our publications in our missions. But as usual, the editorial department had to be abridged in order to make room for all the material in this issue.

But let us remember: the pen is indeed mightier than the sword, especially when that pen is employed in the service of the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God!

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## SPECIAL ARTICLE

# Protestant Reformed Missions

*Prof. Robert D. Decker*

In the past our churches were rather severely criticized because of an alleged lack of emphasis on mission work. In fact, many accused us of not even believing in mission work. To a certain extent these charges are still leveled at our churches. It is said, for example, that because we deny a "well-meant offer" of the gospel we are not able to preach on the mission fields. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Protestant Reformed churches have always believed it their calling to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. The Protestant Reformed Churches have always heartily confessed, without any reservations, "Moreover, the promise of the gospel is, that whosoever believeth in Christ crucified, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all per-

sons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel" (*Canons of Dordrecht*, 1618, 1619; II, Art. 5). Precisely because of our deep commitment to this confession of the Reformed faith we deny that the gospel is a well-meant offer. And, precisely because this is our conviction we have always maintained that the promise of the gospel and the command to repent and believe must be proclaimed to all nations, wherever God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel. For this reason as well the Protestant Reformed Churches have been engaged in mission work from the earliest days of their separate existence as a denomination.

In the earliest years this work was largely done by the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema. Taking time from his large and busy congregation, Rev. Hoek-



sema went on preaching and lecture tours through Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, and California. God gave the increase. In the first ten years of our existence as a denomination our churches grew from the original three to nineteen congregations. During this time (1931) the Domestic Mission Committee was organized. This committee, in cooperation with the Reformed Publishing Association and the Sunday School of First Church in Grand Rapids, published many books and pamphlets which were distributed both in this country and abroad.

In 1936 the Rev. Bernard Kok was called as our first missionary. For some five years Rev. Kok labored in the Midwest and West preaching the gospel of sovereign grace. The fruit of his work was the organization of the Edgerton, Minnesota and Manhattan, Montana congregations. In 1943 our church in Randolph, Wisconsin was organized through the work of Rev. C. Hanko, who was pastor of Oak Lawn at the time. In subsequent years, up to the split of 1953, various of the ministers labored in the West and among the flood of post-war immigrants in Canada. The only congregation to be organized and which is still a part of our churches was in Lynden, Washington. For ten years after the split of 1953 (1954-1964) Rev. George C. Lubbers was our home missionary. That God blessed the faithful preaching and teaching of Rev. Lubbers is abundantly evident in the congregations of Loveland, Colorado and Isabel, South Dakota which he organized. The church at Forbes, North Dakota, also organized as a result of Rev. Lubbers' work, eventually disbanded when most of its families moved to other of our churches. In the seventies Rev. Robert Harbach and Rev. Dale Kuiper served as home missionaries in Houston, Texas and in Maine, respectively. The Trinity Protestant Reformed Church in Houston was organized as a fruit of these labors.

Accompanying the work of the missionaries and ministers through the years has been the work of local church extension committees, radio programs by some of the ministers, the Reformed Witness Hour, and the printing of thousands of tracts, pamphlets, and booklets, and public lectures.

This was home mission work or church extension work. It has always been the Protestant Reformed position that our first duty and responsibility lies with those who are nearest to us. This is expressed in the Preamble to the Mission Constitution: "The Protestant Reformed Churches believe that, in obedience to the command of Christ, the King of the Church, to preach the blessed Gospel to all creatures, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all things which Christ has commanded, it is the explicit duty and sacred privilege of said churches to carry out this calling according to the

measure of our God-given ability.

"We believe that this missionary activity includes the work of church extension, and church reformation, as well as the task of carrying out the Gospel to the unchurched and heathen. However, we are convinced that our present duty lies primarily in the field of church extension and church reformation." This priority is still maintained by our churches, as is evident from the fact that two of our ministers, the Rev. Steven Houck and the Rev. Ronald Van Overloop, are engaged in home mission work. Rev. Houck preaches in East Lansing, Michigan and Rev. Van Overloop preaches in Birmingham, Alabama. It should be added that several of our ministers, having taken calls to small congregations, concentrated their ministries on church extension. In two instances God blessed this work with abundant growth. When Rev. Bernard Woudenberg arrived in Lynden, Washington in 1965 the congregation had shrunk to five families. When he left for Kalamazoo in 1976 Lynden numbered twenty-four families. Today Lynden has forty-two families. Rev. Woudenberg continues to operate an extensive tape and radio ministry in Kalamazoo. When Rev. John Heys arrived in Holland, Michigan in 1967 the congregation numbered fifteen families. When Pastor Heys became emeritus in 1980, Holland had grown to nearly fifty families. Finally, it should be noted that First, Grand Rapids is currently doing home mission work among a fairly sizable group in Bradenton, Florida. God has blessed our churches with the heritage of the Reformed faith, which maintains and defends the absolute sovereignty of God. A witness has gone forth from our churches to this blessed truth. The calling remains the same for the churches today. May God give us grace as churches in these troubled and wicked times to be faithful to the Reformed faith and to preach it from our pulpits and on the mission fields wherever He opens doors for us.

In the history of Protestant Reformed missions, two dates are of great importance. The first of these is 1962. In this year the scope of our mission vision was significantly broadened by our contacts and work with the people of the hills of Jamaica. Interestingly enough, this contact was initiated by our radio ministry, the Reformed Witness Hour. This broadcast was aired on Transworld Radio, which covered Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania. A pastor from England, hearing the broadcast, began corresponding with Rev. C. Hanko and told him of the mission field in Jamaica. Our churches took over that field and have been busy there ever since. In 1970 Rev. Lubbers again heeded the call of Christ to the mission field and began his labors in Jamaica. In the course of his



ministry and in addition to regular Sunday preaching and teaching, Rev. Lubbers trained several young men to become pastors of the indigenous churches of Jamaica. Other of our ministers, notably Revs. Heys and Woudenberg and C. Hanko, have faithfully provided tapes and study materials for the Jamaican pastors and their families. Several of our Elders have gone as emissaries and aided the Jamaican saints in countless ways. Our prayer is that God will continue to bless His church in Jamaica with growth in the knowledge of Him Whom to know is life eternal.

The second date is 1979. During the course of this year the Rev. Arie den Hartog was called by Christ through the Doon, Iowa church to preach the gospel in faraway Singapore. Having accepted the call, Rev. den Hartog became the second missionary from the Protestant Reformed Churches to preach the gospel of sovereign grace on foreign soil. Pastor den Hartog is presently working with a

group called the Gospel Literature and Tract Society (G.L.T.S.). Their goal is to be organized into an indigenous Reformed Church in Singapore. One of their number, Mr. Lau Chin Kwee, is currently studying at our Seminary. Another may be coming to the Seminary next year.

In addition to its home mission work the Protestant Reformed Churches are deeply involved in foreign mission work. The churches are committed to this task, as well they should be. Christ has commanded the church to go to the nations, and the Protestant Reformed Churches desire by God's grace to be faithful to this great work. May God use our churches, also in the days to come, for the gathering of the elect out of all nations, and thus for the coming of His Kingdom. May all of our people support this work with fervent prayer and generous offerings. And above all may the glory belong to God Who works all things after the counsel of His own will.

## Home Missions: Birmingham

*Rev. R. Van Overloop*

It is truly with good purpose that Scripture so often speaks of the preaching of the gospel under the figure of farming. Increasingly, in mission work, we see the appropriateness of this figure and learn the lessons it teaches.

Probably the best known use of this figure is in the parable of the sower sowing the seed on the different kinds of soil (Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23). In this parable we learn of the various responses which the preaching of the good news receives. These responses are determined by the soil upon which the seed of the Word falls.

Paul uses this same figure in I Corinthians 3:6,7. "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

Another (not so well known) parable which uses this figure is found in Mark 4:26-29.

And He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is

brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

I believe it fitting to quote the brief expository remarks John Calvin makes on this passage in his commentary.

Although this parable points in the same direction as the two previous ones (the lowly beginnings of the Gospel—R.V.O.), yet Christ seems particularly to refer to ministers of the Word, lest they should execute their office with less enthusiasm when no fruit of their labours appears immediately. Therefore He tells them to be like farmers who sow seed in the hope of harvesting it and are not worried and anxious but go to bed and get up—in other words they get on with their daily work and are refreshed by a good night's sleep—until at last in its own time the corn is ripe. Therefore, although the seed of the Word lies choked for a while, Christ bids all godly teachers to be of good cheer and not to let distrust diminish their zeal.

We learn from the hand of the Lord in experience as well as from His holy Word the necessity of patience. Someone has said that the first fruit any garden or field produces is patience in the one who planted and waits for the harvest. How true that is in the mission field. All good things come slowly.

The field on which I report in this article is



centered in Birmingham, Alabama. For approximately a year and a half we have set ourselves to the task of scattering the precious and pure seed of the Word of God. This we have done under the watchful care and helpful supervision of South Holland Protestant Reformed Church and of the Mission Committee of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

The sowing of this seed of the Gospel is in the preaching of the Word. Therefore we gather every Lord's Day for worship services. These are at 10 A.M. and 6 P.M. We meet in an upper room of a local labor union hall. An ad in the religious section of the local newspapers gives public notification of our worship services and welcomes others to worship with us.

The Scripture reading and the sermon from the services are recorded. This is for duplication and distribution on cassette tapes, which is an excellent means of extending our witness. Each family of our group is given a tape for their own use or for distribution to others. As is well known, this is a very good way to develop interest in our preaching, when people can listen to the tapes in the privacy of their homes.

Our radio program is another reason a portion of our worship service is recorded. We have rented an hour time slot on a local 100,000 watt religious FM radio station. There is not a lot of obvious fruit to radio broadcasting. However, in several curious ways we have learned that there are those who listen to our radio broadcast. We do feel that we are able to reach quite an audience through this means. Thus the goal of giving a witness is certainly attained. We pray that He Who sovereignly controls all things will direct others to turn their radio dials to hear us and that He will open their hearts to hear and believe and join us in worship.

To date the field has produced a harvest of four families who have expressed themselves as committed to our cause. Interestingly, these four families are all young. Of the seven children, there is only one over the age of five. We find this an encouraging sign for future labors. We can see several sprouts coming forth from the field.

Within this group the Seed of the Word is also sown. We meet in our homes for our midweek meetings in which we have gone through the Sermon on the Mount and are now taking a 22-week examination of the Book of Revelation. The choice of this book for Bible study was that of the group. They felt strongly the need for the light of Scripture taken as a whole on the subject of the "things which must shortly come to pass." In the Bible belt there is much talk about the last times, but very little is done with a careful study of the

Scriptures. Rather than letting the Scriptures interpret themselves, people allow historical and current events to do the interpreting. Therefore we are finding this study enlightening and enjoyable.

Currently we are advertising Christian Literature distributed by the Protestant Reformed Churches. The last ad elicited five telephone calls requesting some or all of the six pamphlets and two booklets which were listed in the ad. We anticipate also some written requests. This is another excellent way to spread the pure truth. Again, it is very difficult to anticipate the fruit which might be produced. We can only exercise ourselves in patience.

In the last few months we have had contact with a local Christian High School. We have conducted chapel on four occasions. Also we have taught two Bible classes on two occasions. This contact too can only be considered as a very good way to scatter the seed of the Gospel. And again, once we scatter the seed, then all we do is water and wait. But this waiting is upon Jehovah Who alone gives the increase.

There is something to be said about this field of mission labor, in my opinion. It has to do with the location of this field, rather than the labor. We are referring to the fact that Birmingham is located in the southeastern part of the United States. There are a lot of churches in that portion of our country which is sometimes referred to with the designation "Bible-belt." But in this area there is a dearth of that which is called Reformed. Historically the Presbyterians were Reformed; but we are grieved to say that is, for the most part, no longer true. They either ignore their historical creeds or have changed them so as to remove their Reformed character. The remaining portion of the Bible-belt is so stretched and even broken that it is badly in need of suspenders to help it maintain its former name. The name "Reformed" is unknown for the most part. So we, from our human viewpoint, see Birmingham, which is centrally located in the southeast, as possibly an excellent center from which we can extend our witness. With that too in mind, we are zealous for the cause of God and pray for His blessing in the way of an increase and fruit. We ask for your prayers as well.

*The Standard Bearer  
makes a thoughtful gift  
for a shut-in.*



# Home Missions: Lansing

*Rev. Steven Houck*

In Matthew 16:18 the evangelist records for us one of the most encouraging promises our Lord has ever given to His people. Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Encouraging indeed! For by that short statement our Beloved Saviour tells us that the church is His church, and therefore that we who belong to that church belong to Him. Is not that the very word of comfort which we confess with our fathers, "that I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ"? Certainly that is our only comfort; for that means that we belong to the One Who redeems us from sin and death and Who holds us so securely in His hands that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." As He Himself said, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Church is His and it is most certainly saved with His precious blood and given eternal life in Him for the glory of God.

And yet, in these words of Jesus, there is something else which is especially encouraging to a missionary. And that is the expression, "I will build." Our Lord tells us that He is the One Who builds His Church. It is not the work of man. It is not a missionary or any other man who saves souls. It is not even a joint effort of God and man together. No, it is God's work exclusively. He alone can and does build His church. That does not mean that He doesn't use means; for He certainly does. The Church may not neglect her calling to "go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Nor must a missionary ever think that he does not have to work and work hard to fulfill his calling. But it does mean that both the missionary and the church can have the confidence that whatever the outcome of our labors, God's purpose in Christ Jesus for His church is always accomplished. God, in Christ Jesus, through the Spirit of Christ is the One Who does the work of missions.

It is that fundamental principle of missions which encourages us as we endeavor by God's grace "to preach the gospel to every creature," both from the pulpit on Sundays and from door to door as we make contact with the people of the community. Much of the time it is very difficult, if not impossible, to know exactly what fruit our labors yield. And when we do see fruit it is, many times, negative rather than positive. There is much

rejection of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Reformed Faith, though it is very precious to us, is despised by the world. And those who call themselves Christians are often times the most vicious enemies of what we preach. To them the things we teach are "hard sayings." The bondage of the will, particular redemption, election and reprobation, the particular love of God, the Sovereignty of God, these are all truths that the natural man rejects and refuses to believe. And yet, all these belong to the gospel of God's sovereign grace which we preach. It should not be difficult to understand, therefore, why we make such slow progress toward the establishment of a church in the Lansing area. Unless God Almighty works in the hearts of men, to turn them unto Himself and to an acceptance of the Reformed Faith, we can do absolutely nothing to change their beliefs. As Jesus said, "without Me ye can do nothing."

This is not to say, however, that God is not working here in a positive way, for we have very definitely experienced His presence among us. For one thing, we have seen among those who regularly attend our services and Bible studies definite growth. Although we do not agree on all points of doctrine, yet for over a year we have been studying God's Word together; and that has been very beneficial in many ways. It has given us the opportunity to study the particulars of the Reformed faith and especially the distinctive teachings of our Protestant Reformed Churches. And that is essential to the work of missions. One can not embrace the truths which our churches hold dear if he does not know what they are. That is why we have geared both the preaching and the Bible Studies in such a way that we focus our attention on that truth. In our preaching on Sunday mornings we follow the line of instruction given in the Heidelberg Catechism. In our Wednesday evening Bible study we consider together the teachings of the Canons of Dort. It is especially this study that has given those who worship with us an opportunity to consider what we believe in the light of the Scriptures. It also has given them the opportunity to ask questions on a variety of issues.

Besides this work among the adults, we have been very active in teaching the children. We now teach a total of five catechism classes. After the morning service on Sundays, we teach a class on Essentials as well as a class on the Heidelberg Catechism to the older children of the group. On



Monday evenings we teach two Bible history classes to the younger children. On Tuesday evenings we go to the MSU campus and have a Catechism class with our P.R. students there. In all of this instruction we have been blessed by the way God works with our children. It is very encouraging to see especially the younger children so eagerly absorb the truth of the gospel. We as churches ought to thank God for the tradition of good catechetical instruction among us. We as parents must take great care to be faithful to teach our children the truth. As missionary, I see in a very dramatic way, the difference between the reaction of adults to the Word of God and the reaction of children to it. While many adults whom I contact outside of our group have great difficulty with the truth, our children receive it without question. It reminds me of the words of Jesus; "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mark 10:15).

We have been very pleased with the way God has given us opportunity to preach the gospel to many people of the community. Although we can do nothing to save men, our calling is to be an "ambassador on behalf of Christ." We must "publish the (particular) promise of the gospel together with the command to repent and believe to all persons promiscuously and without distinction to whom God, out of His good pleasure, sends the gospel" (Canons II, 5). This, by God's grace, we are doing. We can definitely state that much of the community is aware of our presence here, and many have heard the call of the gospel to repent and believe. In the first place there is the preaching on Sunday. Over the course of our time here we have seen many visitors attend our services. The fact that our meeting place (University S.D.A. Church) is so close to the MSU campus and therefore very accessible to visitors has been a great asset to our labors. Although visitors do not come

with any regularity (sometimes we have many in a short time; other times we have none for a long period of time), they do come and they do hear the preaching. Yes, many seem to be hostile to the Word and others seem to be indifferent to it; but they hear the call and with that call God works in their hearts according to His purpose.

Besides the preaching on Sunday we have been able to make many personal contacts with the people of the community, especially some of the students at MSU. We regularly advertise some of our RFPA literature in several local newspapers. We distribute this free of charge to anyone who asks. At times the response to these ads has been very good. We keep a record of all requests and then follow them up with personal contact. In all of this the Word of God is getting out into the community.

More recently we have begun two new programs designed to reach out into the community. For the first time it is now possible to hear the Reformed Witness Hour in the Lansing area. A radio station in Charlotte (WGWY - AM 1390) airs our programs every Sunday at 1:30 P.M. Not only is this a blessing to those who are a regular part of our group, but it is a witness of the gospel in the whole community. We have not seen a very great response to these programs as of yet, but it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness. Besides, we have the promise that God's Word never returns unto Him void.

Our newest venture is a public Bible study held on the MSU campus. Every Tuesday evening we meet for an hour with our P.R. students, Tom Yeutter from our group, and any visitors that may have come. We are studying Luke's account of the gospel. We want to present the simple facts of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as they are revealed in His birth, ministry, suffering, death, and resurrection. We hope that our humble beginning of this endeavor will blossom into bigger and better things. It would be nice if eventually there would be a large group of students meeting together with us. But, for that, we will have to wait and see what is the will of our Heavenly Father.

And that brings me to a very important point which I would like to make. We have several mission fields in which we are presently laboring. Some of these fields are more fruitful than others. With respect to the less fruitful fields, it is very easy for us as churches as well as for us as missionaries to become impatient and to give up almost before we have become settled in our labors. In our fast moving world it seems that we want everything to happen right away and everything to happen big. Our idea of success so often is no different, in practice at least, from that of the Arminian. We



Our meeting place: University S.D.A. Church, 149 Highland Ave.



want to see numbers; we want to see great "revivals"; we want to see some kind of a massive public movement to the Reformed faith. But our own experience with mission work in the U.S.A. ought to teach us that, at least at the present, that is not the way God is working. Do we not believe that "God sends the gospel" to whom He desires "out of his good pleasure" (Canons II, 5)? Do we not believe that those who hear that gospel and believe that gospel and are thus "delivered and saved from sin and destruction," are "indebted for this benefit solely to the grace of God"? In short, do we not believe that this work is God's work? Then we must learn to recognize the present condition of our mission work as God's good pleasure, and patiently, in faith, wait upon Him in all our endeavors. Let

us not become impatient with what God is doing or not doing; that is sin. But let us be faithful in the work to which He has called us. It takes time, sometimes a very long time, to establish a new church. Things do not happen overnight. Let us therefore persevere in our labors. Let us work even harder. Pray for our missionaries and for those with whom they work. Take an interest in what is happening on the mission field. Get involved in whatever way you can, as churches and as individuals. But above all, wait patiently upon our Sovereign God to do all His good pleasure. Jesus said, "I will build my church." Do you believe that? I do, and that is my comfort and encouragement as your missionary laboring in Lansing.

## Church Extension Work: Bradenton

*Rev. C. Hanko*

Sunday morning. There is an air of eager expectancy among the early arrivals at the Christian School in Bradenton, where the Protestant Reformed Churches are now holding services. Formerly we met in the Manatee River Hotel, but for various reasons we sought a new meeting place and gained consent from the local Christian School Board to use one of the classrooms for our meetings. Those who have come a bit early are eagerly awaiting the arrival of others, especially of new faces, as is experienced every Sunday. This is so different from some of my earlier experiences in mission work. Often when a new field was opened, and I happened to be present, we were filled with anxiety, wondering whether any one at all would show up for our meetings or services. Our hearts virtually missed a beat every time another car drove up. We were happy when we had enough people to hold a meeting. Here in Bradenton we anticipate seeing many who attend our services regularly, and are always eager to make new acquaintances. It is true that many who attend our services and our weekly Bible Study Group are members of one of our Protestant Reformed Churches, who are spending a few weeks or a few months in Florida. These are a God-given support in the mission efforts that are being carried out. They make it so much more pleasant for strangers from other denominations to come to our services, since these visitors know that they will not be the only ones there. Besides, many from other churches plainly enjoy the fellowship that they have with us.

Soon others arrive. Some of them are well known to us, because, even though they are not members of our church, they faithfully attend our services. Some have relatives or friends in our churches. Some have had earlier contact with our churches, either having been members, or having attended services in our churches, or having read our periodicals. Some never attended our services before, and some never knew of our existence, but saw our ads in the local paper. Most of those who are from other denominations are either from the northern States or from Canada. Our audiences number all the way from twenty-five at the beginning of the season to more than seventy at the height of the tourist season. To date this audience consists quite consistently of two-thirds of our own people and one third from other churches. This means that at our services we have from ten to twenty-five or thirty people present who do not regularly enjoy the truths as proclaimed from our pulpits. We must remember that this audience changes somewhat from week to week. Those who are here for a short visit return to their homes, new faces appear and new acquaintances are made. The result is that during the winter season we do have contact with a number of people from various parts of our own country and of Canada.

Every minister who has been here has greatly enjoyed preaching the Word to this audience and leading the Bible Study Group from week to week. From the attention and from the singing it becomes



evident that the Word is well received. It has been said that it is so quiet during the service that one can hear a pin drop. This always makes preaching a special pleasure, as only he can know who has been in the pulpit. When we read of Jesus' public ministry, we read that there were times when He could perform no mighty works in a certain place, because of their unbelief. On the other hand, we also read that there were occasions when the people eagerly received His Word, because He spoke so that even a child could understand Him, and with authority, which was lacking among the scribes. The latter is certainly the case in our Sunday services. The people receive the Word with gladness. They testify of being strengthened in the faith, of being spiritually fed, of experiencing the power of the Scriptures, the Gospel of salvation.

Our people here have often wished that others of our churches could be present in and after our services. Remarks are made by those who heard us for the first time, like, "That is the kind of preaching in which I was brought up"; or, "That is the truth that I learned as a child, which is so sorely lacking in our day." Some express concern about the apostasy in the churches of today. Others, as one remarked last Sunday, note that under our preaching they experience the riches of the truth of the Scriptures.

During the week we have opportunity to meet some of our Sunday guests at the Bible Study Group, where we are studying the Book of Revelation. We also avail ourselves of the opportunity to visit people in their homes, which is usually a pleasant experience. About eight couples who attend our services regularly have homes here in Florida. True, they do spend a few weeks or months in the north during the summer, but they do have a permanent residence here. Some have trailer homes, some have apartments, and some have a full house as in the north. Although it is never wise to count noses in any mission endeavor, it can be stated that a number of those who have permanent homes here have expressed the desire that we purchase land, build a church, and prove that we have every intention of continuing our work until a church is organized. They speak very optimistically of a future church in this area.

Sometimes a fear is expressed among the members of our churches, that we are holding services here in Bradenton to cater to the few elderly couples who leave their own churches to spend the winter in a warmer climate. I can well understand that fear. Many of us feel very strongly that a faithful member of the church should attend the services in his own congregation every Sunday, for his own benefit, as well as for the communion of saints and for the welfare of the congregation. I am in hearty agreement with that. Except when I go out

to preach I want to be with my own people in my own church, and I miss that fellowship when I am not there. It always saddens me when on some holiday week end, like a Labor Day week end, a number of vacant seats stand out in our churches. Yet we are living in a time when people travel and do take vacations. I admire those who arrange their vacations in such a way that they can still attend worship services in one of our churches. Therefore I can sincerely appreciate the efforts of those here in Bradenton, who are here for health reasons, to arrange for our own services here and to strive for organizing a local Protestant Reformed Church. Assuming now that most of those who come here in the winter do so because it is important for them to avoid the intense cold of the north, we can see that God uses also these people to prepare for us an open door for the preaching of the Word in this area. Who knows how God wants to use these efforts at this place for the furtherance of His church and kingdom?

The remark has been made that by holding services in this area we are encouraging members of our churches to leave their own church and come here. It is still a question in my mind whether this is any more true of the work here than it is of the established church in Redlands, California, or elsewhere. It is also questionable whether there are that many more now than before who spend a few weeks or the season in Florida. In any case, we do have members of our churches that spend their summer vacations away from home, and in that case we urge them to make every effort to attend one of our churches. Our services here in Bradenton serve the same purpose, be it during the winter months.

Yet it is not for our own people that services are being conducted in this area. First Church, which sponsors these efforts, wants to reach out to those outside of our churches, to proclaim the glorious truth that God has entrusted to us also to others who are not privileged as we are. For this purpose the Lord has certainly given us an open door in this area, and it is our duty to take every possible advantage of this open door. One might object that these people are here only temporarily, soon to return to their own communities, scattered throughout the United States and Canada. This is true for the most part. Yet this is also an added reason why the preaching of the Word can be, under God's blessing, effective here. I am convinced that those who attend our services here have a different and better opinion of our churches than before. The devil has found a powerful weapon against us with all kinds of slanderous reports, which have given our churches a bad image in the eyes of many. That becomes evident from our conversations here. But



the truth of the Word of God is a power that refutes those evil, Satanic attacks. Just how our God will use these people for His own good purpose when they return to their homes, no one can say. But we do know that He is able to use His Word as He deems best, for His Word never returns void. It always does His sovereign good pleasure, both in those who are saved and in those who perish. It is our calling to sow the seed and wait upon the Lord for the harvest.

It has been said that it may take years before we have a church in Bradenton. Although this is not necessarily true, let us grant for the moment that this may be the case. Our past experience has taught us that a congregation which comes into existence almost overnight soon experiences the bitter agony of trouble, created by those who had ulterior motives for joining us. Our past experience has also taught us that the Lord takes His own time about arousing real interest in the hearts of others. He wants us to be patient and to wait upon Him. We should also do so here, even as in our other fields. But I am convinced that there is reason to believe, even as many who live here assure us, that in due time a church will be organized in this area.

Nor can it be said that a congregation in this area would consist only of elderly people and winter res-

idents. We are informed that there are many summer vacationers, who spend some time along the beaches here. We also have reason to believe that a congregation could be organized consisting of parents and children as well as elderly people, with a full orb'd congregational life that consists of catechism classes and other activities, as well as Sunday worship services. There is here a rather large Christian school, where we are holding our meetings. There is another Christian school just outside of Bradenton. Young families are moving into the area as the possibility of finding work increases. There are more young families here now than ever before, especially because of such modern conveniences as air conditioning. If the Lord will, He can and will bring us also younger families to make up a viable church at this place. We must go on in faith. As the Dutch expression has it, "Aan des Heeren Zegen is alles gelegen," that is, "Everything depends on the blessing of the Lord."

Our big ambition right now is to be able to hold services here throughout the year. Then we would like to see a full-time missionary working here, and, besides that, our own church property. The people here are looking for a suitable location. May our God bless our churches also through these efforts.

## Mission Work Through Radio Broadcasting

*Mr. David Harbach*

The intent of this article is to provide a concise account of the history of the Reformed Witness Hour and a brief look at the present work of a select committee to seek ways of increasing the effectiveness of the radio broadcasts.

"Our aim is that the Reformed Witness Hour serve as a propaganda agent for the Protestant Reformed Churches and a testimony to the truth of God's Word as we confess it. We have a definite contribution to make to the church world. Why shouldn't people learn to know about us and recognize us as a group of strong Reformed churches?" The preceding quote appeared in the first issue of the *Reformed Witness News*, January, 1945. However, the Reformed Witness Hour had its birth four years earlier. The following is a quote from the souvenir program of the 1000th broadcast of the Reformed Witness Hour; "the Reformed Witness

Hour, formerly known as the Protestant Reformed Hour, is the fruition of an idea born in the minds of a group of young men during a discussion of the decisions of the Synod and Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches in regard to Radio work." It was no surprise then that the Young Men's Society of First Church in Grand Rapids sponsored the first four years of radio broadcasts. Later, in 1945, the consistory of First Church sponsored the program. We are thankful that these programs have been a faithful witness to God's Covenant of Grace.

The first broadcast was over WLAV on October 12, 1941, featuring Reverend Herman Hoeksema. Rev. Hoeksema consistently maintained that God is the Lord; did not compromise the truth in order to satisfy the fancies of the radio audience; did witness to the Reformed conception of the Word of



God. Indeed, through the generous labors of Rev. H. Hoeksema, the Radio Committee, and the Radio Choir, the Reformed Witness in its early years was a true testimony to the Word of God and His Covenant of Grace.

Rev. H. Hoeksema as the radio pastor spoke on many themes. The theme of the first radio broadcast was "God is God." In 1944 he spoke on the theme "The Wonder of Grace." He also spoke on advent and lenten themes which were later published into hardcover books. For several years many people identified the voice of Rev. H. Hoeksema with the Reformed Witness Hour broadcasts. During those several years that he was the main speaker, many people heard the faithful witness to the wonderful truth that God is God.

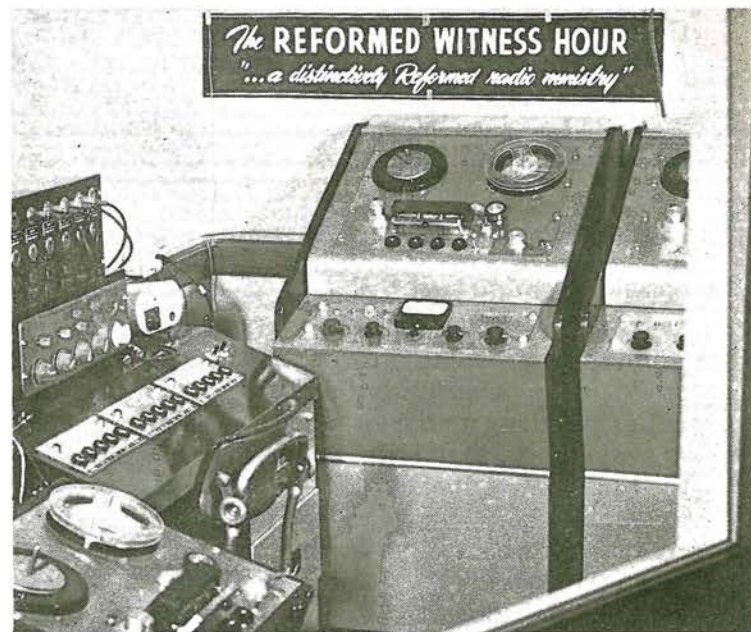
The early history of the Radio Committee was characterized by a steady, moderate growth in members and budget. In 1941 the Radio Committee consisted of three members and a yearly budget of \$1200.00. In 1944, the yearly budget was \$5,500.00. In 1945, the committee consisted of thirteen members who worked with a monthly budget of \$1,100.00. The number of Radio Committee members has remained the same over the years. However, as the ability to broadcast on more stations has increased, so has the yearly budget increased. The committee was mandated in 1945 by the consistory of First Church to "maintain, direct, and advance the cause of the ministry of the Word of God by means of the radio, as this means is utilized by the Reformed Witness Hour." By God's faithfulness to us, His covenant children, and to His Covenant of Grace this mandate has been carried out for nearly forty years, involving almost 2,000 broadcasts. A note of interest is that our present Editor-in-Chief of the *Standard Bearer* was the main radio announcer for the broadcasts in the early years. He was at that time referred to as Mr. Hoeksema.

The Protestant Reformed Radio Choir was developed in the year 1941 at the request of the Radio Committee. Originally there were twelve members. In 1945 the membership increased to eighteen members. The Radio Choir supplied music for three out of four broadcasts and rendered several concerts each year. The original theme song was from Psalter 308. This was later changed to the present Psalter number 276. A note of recent interest is that almost a year ago another Radio Choir was formed to begin the task of recording suitable music for the radio broadcasts. Over the past few years the tapes of recorded music have become well used and worn-out, so that the need arose to produce a fresh quality to the musical aspect of the broadcasts. Even with this recent change, the radio broadcasts still begin, as in the early years, with the

Radio Choir singing:

"Thou, O Lord, art God alone:  
Everlasting is Thy Throne;  
Through the ages men shall sing  
Praise, to heaven's eternal King."

In the early 50's the Radio Committee saw a sudden reduction in its membership and stations. During this time the recording equipment was moved into the basement of one of the committee members. Even during these difficult years the broadcasts continued to be faithfully presented. John M. Faber was president during 1953 when the committee was reorganized. The two stations maintained at this time were WFUR and CHLO. God preserved our ability to proclaim His Word over the air waves, and to Him we are thankful.



Recording Studio

The 1960's promised to be a time of increasing growth. Our covenant God enabled us to broadcast our radio programs overseas to many European countries by the means of Trans-World Radio, located at Monte Carlo, Monaco, in southeastern France. A quote from *God's Covenant Faithfulness*, edited by Gertrude Hoeksema, sums up the work, "The Radio Committee has usually engaged stations in the areas of Protestant Reformed Churches, or in areas of home mission work. But in the early years of the 1960's, the Reformed Witness Hour was broadcast in Europe by way of Trans-World Radio. The committee sent the tapes of the Reformed Witness Hour to Monte Carlo in Monaco, where the program was beamed toward England, the Netherlands, and surrounding countries. Although this Trans-World broadcast proved too expensive for our small denomination to underwrite, the various branches of the denomination



still have requests for our literature from people who became acquainted with us through our European broadcast."

The 1970's was a time of reorganization within the committee. Many of the people who became members of the committee are still members today. We also began to realize the importance of the means of the radio in our mission endeavors. Many small groups of people outside our denomination listen to our broadcasts. The mission committee of Synod has sponsored stations in areas where there appears to be interest, in order to proclaim God's Word to His people. Sometimes this yields positive fruit. We are confident that the Reformed Witness Hour continues to be a strong Reformed witness in many areas throughout our nation.

The latter part of 1980 was a time of sorrow for the Radio Committee. Our chairman was Mr. Larry DeMeester. After a long struggle with cancer, our Lord took Larry into glory during the Christmas weeks. "For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death" (Psalm 48:14).

The Reformed Witness Hour is being broadcast over fourteen stations within the United States. The yearly cost of this work is now \$22,000.00 or more. This cost includes the buying of new tapes, the printing and mailing of every broadcast to 383 listeners, the payment to the ministers in our denomination for going on the air, and the expenses related to radio work. Many of our stations are funded by the Mission Board of Synod. First Church continues to assume the payment for WFUR and other radio stations. We have stations that broadcast our program in the states of Washington, California, Texas, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota,

Colorado, and Michigan. Sometime in May we will be celebrating our 2,000th broadcast, D.V. We have an appointed committee making preparations for this momentous event in our history.

We also have an appointed committee known as the "Select Committee" mentioned in the beginning of this article. The Select Committee is made up of two Radio Committee members, two ministers from our denomination, and two people not on the Radio Committee but interested in radio work. This committee is directly responsible to the Radio Committee. The purpose of this committee is to investigate all of the aspects of the radio broadcast and to determine their effectiveness. The Radio Committee is vitally concerned with the success of our programs. We need to know whether or not we are using the money that comes to us from our churches, Synod, and individuals in the best possible way for the cause of God's Kingdom here on earth. Over \$22,000.00 a year is a lot of money and we want to be sure we are getting all that we can for every dollar we spend. We also need to know who our listeners are so that we can determine who we are trying to reach with our program. We need to know whether or not the format of our program is effective in presenting the truth of God's Word. It is for these reasons and others that the Select Committee has been working hard to determine the effectiveness of the Reformed Witness Hour. It is our sincere desire that the proposals which the Select Committee makes will increase the fruit of our labors. We are responsible before God and to the consistory of First Church to carry out the mandate given to the Radio Committee many years ago. We are confident that God will continue to use us to be a faithful witness to the truth of His Word.

## Foreign Missions: Jamaica

*Rev. G. Van Baren*

With considerable hesitation and trepidation I fulfill the request to write about our work in Jamaica. The writer has never been in Jamaica, though he has served on the mission committee for many years and presently is its chairman. For the latter reasons he was asked to write this article.

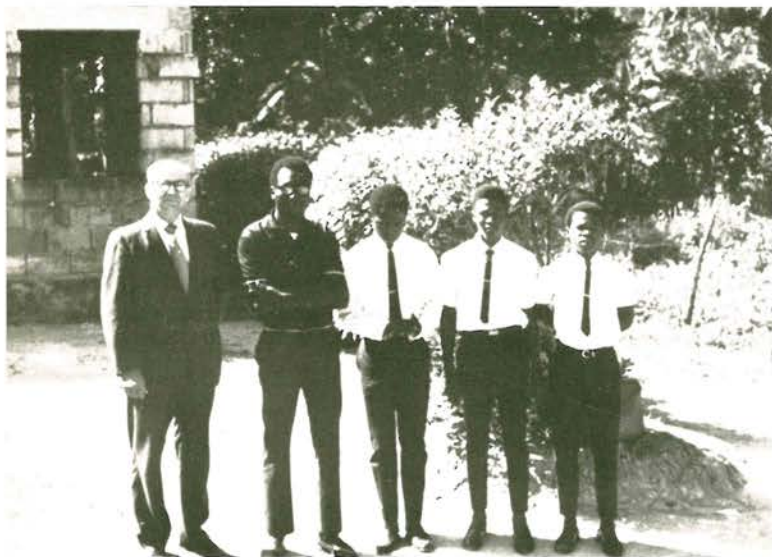
Much might be written about our mission work in Jamaica. Of necessity, this article must only briefly present the history of this work and some comments upon the work itself.

One first finds reference to Jamaican mission work in our Acts of Synod of 1962. The mission committee reported to Synod on their contacts with a certain Rev. H. Morally from London, England. This man had heard the broadcasts of the Reformed Witness Hour over Transworld Radio. He wrote to request that our churches take over certain churches in Jamaica over which he claimed authority. Though the mission committee soon lost contact with this man, this contact became the means



of reaching others in Jamaica. Soon the mission committee was working with three ministers in Jamaica: Revs. Elliott, Ruddock, and Frame. Of these three ministers, Rev. Frame passed away and Rev. Ruddock left the churches with which we were working.

Other ministers are now working in that field. There is Rev. Brown, Rev. Nish, and Rev. Williams. These three young men were trained by Rev. G. Lubbers when he served on the island as missionary of our churches. (A fourth young man, Rev. Beckford, who was also trained by Rev. Lubbers, began serving one of the churches but died shortly after entering the ministry.)



Part of the history of our labors on this mission field must include many men who served as emissaries—some for longer, others for shorter periods of times. Elders H. Meulenberg and H. Zwak were the first, but were followed by other ministers and elders and deacons. Rev. J. Heys and Rev. C. Hanko spent much time there. Revs. Woudenberg, Harbach, Bekkering, and Joostens spent time there. Then there were various elders including Mr. J.M. Faber, Mr. C. Prince, and Mr. Feenstra who were there. Several deacons from Hudsonville spent time there. All of these men, whether in greater or lesser degrees, contributed much to this work.

Perhaps some I have missed. Many indeed contributed to this work over the years. But it was one man, Rev. G. Lubbers, who spent several years in Jamaica as our missionary. For him and his faithful wife, those were trying but blessed years. There were frustrations—because of the government and because of the problems in the field itself. Rev. Lubbers spent much time preparing the four young men to take over the leadership in the churches. He did also much teaching and preaching.

One thing became evident in the labors of Rev.



Rev. and Mrs. G. Lubbers

G. Lubbers. There was too much work and too much pressure for one man to handle. Rev. Lubbers tried to handle the wide diversity of labors there: he had to serve as the diaconate; he was the confidant of many; he was minister as well as "professor." All this was too much to ask of one man.

Labors have continued since Rev. Lubbers left the field. These labors have not always been as consistent and well-organized as they ought to have been. Yet, work has been done. This has been through the emissaries who have been sent. It has been done through tape programs, first begun by Revs. J. Heys and C. Hanko, and now continued by Rev. B. Woudenberg.

The question often asked is whether we have a mission field in Jamaica or not. As I have been privileged to observe this work over the years, I can but conclude that the answer must be, "Yes." There are indeed questions and problems with the work, but they are of such a nature that indicates God would have us to continue to labor. If the problems there involved the lack of interest or desire to hear the Word, one could "shake the dust from his feet." Or, on the other hand, if those with whom we labored all understood and knew the truths of Scripture, and walked according to these, there would be no need of our continued labor. But where there is the evident desire to hear and learn, though there be also questions of doctrine and walk which must be constantly faced, there the work must continue.

There have been problems with a work of this nature. Some of the problems involve ourselves and our manner of working a field such as Jamaica. Decisions must be made as to what should be done, when, and how. Obviously, there are differences of opinion. There have been questions concerning the relationship between the calling church and the mission committee as to the responsibilities for supervising the work.

Other problems in the work involve the field itself. First, one must deal with a foreign government which has a legal system different from ours, and different rules and regulations. There is the



question whether the government requires of a missionary a "work permit" to be on the island. There have arisen questions concerning duty charged when bringing in used clothing for the needy of the churches. It is difficult to determine with certainty the laws regarding property that the churches may properly secure their own buildings. So it goes. It seems that the government there often works in maddeningly slow ways. For foreigners to learn to deal with such a government is a great difficulty.

There are problems related to culture on the island. The people of Jamaica speak English. Yet they speak their own dialect which is at times difficult or impossible for U.S. citizens to understand. These also have their own mannerisms and expressions which are foreign to us. Misunderstandings can often arise. What we might present as personal suggestions, the Jamaicans may regard as solemn promise.

The grinding poverty of the island is also a problem. This creates difficulties for a missionary who works under these circumstances. On the one hand, it would seem extremely difficult for a missionary and family to try to live on their level of poverty. All this can create misunderstanding.

Besides, there is always the question about help for the poor. By our standards, almost all of these people would be at the very bottom level of poverty. Yet, though one can be very sympathetic towards their needs and physical situation, it is impossible probably and inadvisable surely to try to raise their standard of living. The people there are part of a culture, part of another nation. To attempt to elevate some above others in the island would only create far more problems than it would solve. Those who have labored in other poverty-stricken areas as missionaries have almost invariably warned against trying to raise the standard of living by pouring funds into the area. The church is there not to change their standard of living, but to present the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is not to say that there is no need for benevolence. There are instances where the terrible poverty makes it impossible to obtain what seems to be essential medical assistance. In the past, assistance has been given; and doubtlessly there will be a need for this in the future.

Other problems arise because of the human nature each possesses. The mission committee, the emissaries, and now the calling church, repeatedly must handle problems which arise between individuals, between minister and congregation, etc. This is not unique to Jamaica, of course. But there we are called to help—though usually no one is on the scene to provide the immediate assistance so often necessary.

There are also sins rather unique to that area. Legal marriage has not always been regarded as important. Children born out of wedlock were common—and acceptable in the society there. In some cases there were old heathen practices, carried over from Africa, which continued. We have often been troubled by the presence of such sins.

On the other hand, the Jamaicans are shocked by the loose morals of our own country: the scanty dress and other similar practices which are observed in the tourists.

Problems arise because of the low educational levels in Jamaica. There are many things which we take for granted in our own country but which are not always found there: ability to read; availability and the means to obtain books.

Many of the above problems of the field have been mentioned through the past years. I repeat them not to point out that we have no field of work in Jamaica—but that we *do* have such a field. If there were no problems, if there was no need—we would have no place on that island. But where there is such a need for assistance and guidance, and where there is the willingness and readiness to listen and learn, where there is such thankfulness for the instruction given—there we have a necessary place and an open door. Let us not complain about these problems, but view them as the urgent reason for faithful labors there.

What must be done then to help? First, and not least, there must be continued effort to train and guide them through use of taped instruction and contact by emissaries. Our last Synod provided for some of this in its decision that two ministers or a minister and elder ought to go there for a period of two or three months. It is always difficult to work out the details for such labor, but that ought to continue.

Secondly, it would appear that the most reasonable way of continuing the work in Jamaica would



Belmont Congregation



be to call a missionary to serve there again. In that case it would appear also reasonable that he have assistance: either by having a second missionary also called to serve there, or else that emissaries regularly go to assist him.

Two other factors enter this picture. First, the tasks and responsibilities of such a missionary would have to be defined. There ought to be no misunderstanding as to what he is called to do. Secondly, the Synod faces the difficult decisions concerning what might be called "priorities." We

have a calling to continue our work on the home mission field. We presently have commitments in Singapore. This mission work requires both manpower and financing. Decisions are not easy to make. Yet the pressing urgency of the tasks in Jamaica remains. Soon, Synod might have to decide that the requirements of the field in Jamaica demand the calling again of a missionary to serve there. Pray that God may also guide the churches to make these significant decisions to His glory and the profit of the Church.

## Foreign Missions: Singapore

*Rev. Arie den Hartog*



G.L.T.S. - November 1980

Greetings to you in the name of the Sovereign God and Savior Jesus Christ Who is pleased to gather His church out of all nations of the world. Let me tell you again something about how the Lord is doing this through our ministry as your missionary here in Singapore. It remains evident that the Lord is pouring out a very great blessing upon

the preaching of the gospel here. We are amazed by the response to the preaching of the gospel. The numbers at our worship services continue to grow. The saints are growing in their knowledge and love of the Reformed faith. The work is a real joy and blessing for us. We are overwhelmed by all of the evidences of love and appreciation that we



Outside place of worship



Inside place of worship



are receiving from the saints here. We are certainly being very well taken care of and lack nothing. We receive all of this too as evidences of love for the gospel which we have the great privilege to preach.

It is especially since our Christmas Day worship services that we have seen a significant increase in numbers. At this worship service there were more than 140 in attendance. Ever since that time, each Lord's Day we have seen an average of 130. Last Lord's Day we had the greatest number ever, over 150. The increased numbers in attendance at the worship services means that almost every Lord's Day there are some that must sit outside of our place of worship because of lack of space inside. We are very greatly in need of a new place of worship. To date we have not been able to find this. A committee of the G.L.T.S. is very busy searching.

At the same time it is a great thrill to see capacity audiences each Lord's Day. Several new people are attending our worship services regularly as well as being involved in other activities in the G.L.T.S. We are always amazed by the fact that the sole means through which new people come to the worship services is that of personal invitation and encouragement of the members of the G.L.T.S. While we certainly believe that it is through the instrumentality of the preaching of the gospel that Jesus Christ is pleased to gather His church it is evident again and again that the members of the church have a vital part and calling in the work of the gathering of the church. The church grows through the zealous witness of the saints and the living testimony of their lives as they go forth from the preaching of the gospel. That is how it was in the New Testament Church. That is how it is here in Singapore.

On the Lord's Day of January 18 we had another very special Lord's Day as we witnessed the sacrament of Holy Baptism. We had the unusual and blessed privilege of administering the sacrament of Holy Baptism for eleven brothers and sisters in the Lord. All of these youthful saints have received about twenty weeks of instruction in Christian and Reformed doctrine. All were personally examined

by the leaders of the G.L.T.S. in our presence. All made public confession of their faith by answering the five questions in our baptism form at the worship service. Several of these young Christians made this confession of faith and received baptism in spite of strong opposition and persecution in their homes.

Plans are to begin another class for baptism and membership in the G.L.T.S. in the next few weeks. There are several persons who have already indicated desire for such a class. There is still a good number of people who regularly attend the worship services and other meetings of the G.L.T.S. who are not yet baptized. All of these people are going to be confronted by the leaders and myself in the next few weeks. The command of our Lord Jesus Christ is not only to preach the gospel but also to baptize all those who believe.

The increased attendance of course also increases the amount of work. There is always especially an increase in the amount of pastoral work. There is a very great need for pastoral work on the mission field. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ often has the greatest effect when it is brought directly and personally to the specific needs and problems of the saints. The youthfulness of the saints here increases the need for pastoral work. They face many of the same problems that the young people in our established churches face. But they have no Christian father and mother to turn to. They face the added problems that come from having pagan homes and from having to suffer persecution in these homes. In fact, there is so much pastoral work here that it is impossible for your missionary to do this all by himself. There is much that should be done but that just does not get done. It is for this reason that we continue to pray that the Lord will send us an elder and his wife to come over and help us. What these youthful saints need is someone who can serve as a kind of spiritual father and mother to them.

We are very thankful for the large amount of work which the leaders of the G.L.T.S. do. They also take a great part of the pastoral work. Though they are not yet officially office bearers in the church they perform very much of the labors of office bearers. We long for the day when these brethren can be officially ordained as office bearers in the church. We need this. It is our conviction that the apostle Paul very soon ordained office bearers in the church because he saw how greatly the church needed them. The Lord has raised up in the G.L.T.S. men who are well qualified to be office bearers. We believe that a foreign mission needs office bearers. From the start the work of the church on the foreign mission field must be carried on by the saints whom the Lord gathers. The Lord



Eleven young people baptized - January 18, 1981



Jesus gathers the church as a local and autonomous church. We believe that when the Lord gathers His saints on the mission field He also equips and qualifies men to be office bearers. These men then serve from the beginning to lead and guide the church into the truth of the Word of God. In all of our labors we therefore give as much of the work as possible to the leaders of the church here, we allow them to make as many of the decisions for the church themselves as they are able to make. As missionary it is my calling to give leadership and instruction to faithful men whom the Lord has called to lead the church.



Executive Committee Meeting in Pastor's apartment

The G.L.T.S. continues to grow and increase in the knowledge and love of the Reformed Faith. We are impressed by two things in this connection. On the one hand it takes a lot of patient labors to nurture those who are babes in Christ unto maturity. The saints here are all youthful, and many of them have been Christians for only a few years. Not too many years ago they knew nothing at all of the Word of God. Imagine yourselves in such a state. We as Protestant Reformed people have almost all had the blessed privilege of being instructed in the Reformed Faith from childhood on. We have had hundreds of catechism classes, many of us have heard thousands of sermons. Imagine now how much instruction it takes to come to the state of being mature Reformed Christians. It is a great joy and privilege for me as your missionary to nurture these young saints in the Reformed Faith. In many cases I have the privilege to be the very first one to give to these saints instruction in the doctrines of the faith. We do not therefore labor with those who have developed in apostasy, as is often the case on the home mission field. We labor with new saints of God. As is always true in the church, errors can easily arise. Also new Christians can be led astray by false preachers and false doctrines. There are many of these in Singapore also. Yet there is a difference between those who have for a long time

gone the way of apostasy and those who first come to the faith and are led astray.

The second thing which we are impressed with is the eagerness that there is in the G.L.T.S. to learn. They are conscious of being young in the faith. They know they have a lot yet to learn and they desire to learn this. The various Bible classes and catechism classes are always made lively and exciting because of the many questions that are asked. It is very often the case that one does not get through the material that he had planned because of the many questions that are asked. Throughout the week we often get phone calls from members of the G.L.T.S. who want to know the meaning of this or that passage of scripture. Some of the questions are not easy to answer and I often have to ask for more opportunity to study the questions before I give an answer. There is just no end of subjects that are faced. It makes me so often wish that I had more time to study this or that area more carefully. Always one must come up with Biblical answers. We often find that we take doctrines and practices in our church so much for granted that we do not give enough thought to the Biblical foundation for these doctrines and practices. So we are driven again and again to the Word of God and we must learn these Biblical foundations anew.

On January 1 we rejoiced at the occasion of the engagement of another young couple who are both members of the G.L.T.S. We are now giving instruction to this young couple in the scriptural teachings on marriage, using as our guide the book on marriage by our Rev. Engelsma. This couple will be married in May, the Lord willing. It is always a blessing for the church to have a marriage take place in her midst. This is especially true for the G.L.T.S. We can very much see that our married couples give the G.L.T.S. strength and stability. We find that the Chinese are somewhat slow, by our western standards, to marry. Perhaps this is even more so in the G.L.T.S. than in Singapore in general. The young men are quite shy to get on with the business of finding a life partner. This has caused some problems. They need instruction and encouragement on the whole matter of the importance of establishing Christian homes.

I have taken many occasions already to give instruction in the truth of the covenant and the importance of Christian homes for the church. I have emphasized that the church continues as God is pleased to gather His elect along the lines of continued generations. Thus the G.L.T.S. must understand that the true church must be established not only with them personally but also with the families which the Lord in His providence will give to them. It is obvious that also the precious scriptural truth of the covenant has a large part in the



preaching on the foreign mission field.

This article is again getting rather lengthy so I must stop here, though I could tell you much more. Let me close with an expression of appreciation to all of you who have remembered us in the recent

season of the year with prayers and cards and letters and gifts. We are much encouraged by all of these and give thanks unto the Lord that our denomination is so vitally interested and concerned about our work here.

## Book Reviews

**PREACHING WITH CONFIDENCE**, James Daane; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan. (80 pp., paper, \$3.95) (Reviewed by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema.)

The sub-title of this little book is "A Theological Essay On The Power Of The Pulpit." But from the preface we learn that the book is intended as a homiletics textbook. As an essay, the book qualifies; as a homiletics textbook it is, in the opinion of this homiletics instructor, very deficient.

The book's chief merit, I believe, is its emphasis on the importance of preaching and the power of preaching. This is a subject which cannot be stressed too strongly in our day.

However, the subject of the *nature* of preaching cannot be understood apart from that of the *content* of preaching. Only that preaching is and can be powerful which stands completely in the service of the Word of God in Christ according to the Scriptures. Preaching must be proclamation of the *truth*, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Given Dr. Daane's view of Scripture and his view of election and reprobation, he is hardly qualified to instruct in the art of true preaching.

While technically some of the practical chapters of this book make some good points, they are too brief and scant to be of much help to a seminary student struggling to learn to preach.

**THE BIBLE IN ITS LITERARY MILIEU**, Edited by John Maier and Vincent Tollers; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979; 447 pp., \$12.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.)

This book is a collection of essays written by contemporary scholars who have adopted the hermeneutical rule of a historical and literary criticism as the way to interpret Scripture. The book is divided into five sections which are entitled: I. The Word; II. The Context; III. Textual Criticism; IV. Literary Forms and Literary Influence; V. Approaches to a Literary Criticism of the Bible. We include a few chapter titles, taken at random, to

give the reader some idea of the material treated: "The Psychology of Inspiration"; "Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy: An Essay on Biblical Poetry"; "History and Tradition in the Prophet Amos"; "The Antiquity of Mosaic Law"; "What Archaeology Can and Cannot Do"; "The Method of Cultic Interpretation"; "The Bible in English"; "Sumerian Literature and the Bible"; "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis"; "A Form-Criticism of the Lord's Prayer"; "The First Three Chapters of Genesis"; "Genesis as Myth." Some of the authors are: Edmund Leach, Kenneth Burke, Norman Perrin, Roger L. Cox, Bruce M. Metzger, G. Ernest Wright, William F. Albright, David Noel Freedman, and Northrop Frye.

For those who are unacquainted with the vagaries of higher critics, we might explain that the historical - literary method of interpretation adopted by the critics is a method which seeks to explain the origin of the books of the Bible in terms of history and literary development. In the nature of the case, this is a very subtle error because everyone who has a passing acquaintance with Scripture knows that Scripture is indeed "literature" and that it arose out of particular historical circumstances. The evil of this approach is the flat denial of inspiration in the sense in which Scripture teaches it and in the sense in which it has always been believed by the Church of Christ. This book is a lengthy and wordy example of this type of higher criticism.

There are, quite naturally, some interesting and true ideas set forth and developed in the book. There is, e.g., a splendid defense of the King James Version—although from a literary viewpoint; there is some interesting information on the formation of the Canon of Scripture—from a purely historical viewpoint. But the only real value of the book is the information it gives concerning what the higher critics are doing with Scripture and how they successfully take Scripture out of the realm of the miraculous and put it in the realm of the literary and historical. Scripture, after these men finish



with it, is no longer the Word of God, divinely and infallibly inspired, but is only a book roughly on a par with the writings of Homer and Seneca.

Form critics do not like to say that a given book of the Bible is written by one person; they prefer to speak of Scripture as the product of religious communities, gifted writers and editors. This is a convenient way to deny inspiration and to reduce Scripture to a statement of the faith of various people throughout history. Their denial of inspiration, however, is hardly ever explicit; they simply ignore the doctrine and act as if it does not exist. Although what they write concerning the literary, grammatical, and historical aspects of Scripture sometimes has a grain of truth in it, 1) they state as

profound and with very big words what every child of God "instinctively" knows, as, e.g., that Scripture is rooted in particular historical situations; 2) they so belabor the obvious that one cannot help but become suspicious of their motives. What kind of spiritual blindness on the part of these critics is it which leads them to say of the Psalms that, "the personal, individual element is pushed into the background"? (p. 181).

That this kind of hermeneutics is actually accepted and taught in many leading Seminaries in this country (including those which profess to be Reformed) demonstrates vividly how far the church has departed from the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

### IN MEMORIAM

On the evening of January 27, 1981, it pleased our Heavenly Father to take unto Himself our beloved husband, father and grandfather, TED HUIZENGA at the age of 71 years. We are comforted with the thought that he now partakes in the inheritance reserved in heaven, incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. (I Peter 1:4).

Mrs. Ted Huizenga  
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Huizenga  
Jennie Catherine  
Wendy Lou

Caroline Joy  
Tedd Ronald  
Robin Jean  
Randolph, Wis.

### NOTICE!!!

The Hull Protestant Reformed Christian School will be in need of a teacher for the lower room, Kindergarten and First grade for the 1981-82 school term. Please send application to Hull Protestant Reformed Christian School, c/o Mr. Ronald Koole, 306 Second Street, Box 618, Hull, Iowa 51239.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On March 2, 1981, our parents, MR. and MRS. GERALD FEENSTRA, will, the Lord willing, celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

We, their children, thank our heavenly Father for the years of love and Christian instruction they have given us. It is our prayer that our Covenant God will continue to bless them and keep them in His care.

their children,

Randy Feenstra  
Greg and Nancy Feenstra  
Ryan Feenstra  
Kathy Feenstra

### ANNOUNCEMENT

Covenant Christian High School has a position open for a teacher in its science department beginning in September of 1981. Applicants are invited to write the chairman of the Education Committee: Mr. David Ondersma, O-6761 Brookwood Dr., Grandville, MI 49418.

### NOTICE!!!

#### TEACHER NEEDED

Covenant Christian School in Lynden, Washington is in need of an additional teacher for the 1981-82 school year for either Grades 3 through 5 or assignment in the Junior High - Senior High level. Teachers interested in filling this position should contact Mr. Harold Tolsma, 9088 Northwood Road, Lynden, WA 98264.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On March 11, 1981, the Lord willing, our parents, MR. and MRS. JOHN FABER, will celebrate their 55th Wedding Anniversary. We, their children, are thankful to God for the years He has spared them for each other and for us. It is our prayer that the Lord, Who is good to His people, will continue to bless them in the years ahead in life's journey.

"Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in His ways" (Ps. 28:1).

Mr. & Mrs. John Faber, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. William Faber  
Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Faber  
10 grandchildren  
1 great grandchild

## News From Our Churches

Although the work goes under a variety of titles, e.g. church extension, evangelism, reformed witness, etc., the intent of our congregations in this labor is the same. In the news of this issue of S.B.

our attention will center on the efforts of our local congregations to extend the "good news"—as our Lord has privileged us to know it—to those beyond the pale of our churches. While it is true that as a



denomination we support our denominational mission activities, it is clear from bulletin announcements and news letters that our congregations take on numerous individual evangelism projects. Some of these activities are labors in the immediate geographic locality of the congregations sponsoring the work, but as you will see, a large amount of this work is much broader in scope—so broad, in fact, that it encompasses the whole world. Read on and you will see what I mean.

An announcement in a bulletin of our First Church in Grand Rapids informs us that the responsibility for their Recording Ministry is now in the hands of Mr. Rich Dykstra. The announcement goes on to say: "An average of about 30 tapes of our Sunday services are mailed out each week—not only to those within our congregation but also to individuals from Maine to California, Ontario to Florida. About 300 requests for sermon and lecture tapes were serviced during 1980. These came from all over the U.S. as well as Scotland, Ireland, Australia, Malaysia, and South Africa." Interested S.B. readers can contact Rich by sending to: 3531 Senora S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508.

A November, 1980 newsletter to the congregation of Hope, Michigan from its Reformed Witness Committee describes two activities in which they are currently involved: First, "We have again this fall begun the Reformed Doctrine Class meeting alternate Thursday evenings in the Allendale Christian School. We have begun where we left off last spring in a study of the Belgic Confession. The class is once again led by Prof. Hanko who prepares study guides and questions for each class." Second, "Our work has also continued in the tape ministry which is done by Mr. Jacob Kuiper on the committee's behalf. Every 2 weeks 176 tapes are copied and sent. These tapes, by the way, go literally to the 'ends of the earth.' "

A Church Extension Committee report to the members of our Loveland Church explains that

they have been busy with a number of projects: updating the mailing list of those to whom they send various materials, investigating other possibilities in connection with their radio broadcast work, and preparing a pamphlet which, "...we can mail to each householder in Loveland, briefly setting forth our beliefs and introducing ourselves as churches, along with a tear-off card that can be returned postage free for additional information."

A church extension report on consecutive Hudsonville bulletins discusses some projects in which they are currently involved. For one thing, "This committee sends out, approximately every month, a small bulletin with a one-page message written by Rev. B. Woudenberg, to approximately 250 addressees." (If you are interested in receiving this bulletin, you can obtain it by sending to: Studies in Bible Doctrine, 427 North Fletcher, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007.) The Hudsonville report also mentions that, "The consistory is recording our Sunday sermons which are being submitted to Family Stations, Inc., a network of 9 religious stations located mainly on the East and West Coasts, whose chairman is Mr. Harold Camping. During the period of October 1980 through March 1981, 16 of our sermons are scheduled for broadcast. These stations are located in San Francisco, Sacramento, El Cajon, Long Beach (all in Calif.); Newark and Camden, New Jersey; Annapolis, Maryland; Shenandoah, Iowa and a shortwave station in Okkechobee, Fl. They have also two affiliate stations at Lima, Ohio and Redding, Ca. The sermons are heard on a program called 'Conference Echoes' which is broadcast every week-day night, Monday through Saturday, from 9:05 P.M. til 10 P.M." It is interesting to note that there is no cost for the broadcasts since these are non-profit religious stations which are supported by listener contributions. By the way, people in the Grand Rapids area who are not already familiar with Mr. Camping and would like to be, can listen to him Monday through Thursday evenings from 10:00 to 11:00 on WJBL FM. CK