

THE **STANDARD BEARER**

**A Reformed
Semi-Monthly
Magazine**

Thoughts on Psalm 133

Descending from the heavens

To the earth —

Sweet dew —

Replenishing,

Refreshing,

As it falls upon the silent mountainside.

See how there is new birth —

How life springs up

Where it has gathered day by day.

From its abundance

Form the little rivulets

That seek the distant sea.

Meandering through hills and valleys.

These bright streams

Restore

Revive

All those along their winding way.

Have you not seen

How like the dew it is,

When brothers dwell in unity?

Suzanne Looyenga, 1992

PRC SYNOD 1992

*Vol. 68, No. 18
July 1, 1992*

Meditation — Rev. Charles J. Terpstra	
Conduct Becoming the Gospel of Christ	411
Editorial — Prof. David J. Engelsma	
Synod of South Holland 1992	413
Letters	415
Contribution — Prof. Robert D. Decker	
Seminary Expansion	419
Pictures of Synod 1992	420
All Around Us — Prof. Robert D. Decker	422
When Thou Sittest in Thine House — Mrs. Mary Beth Lubbers	
Spiritual Olympics or Olympia's ABC's	423
Taking Heed to the Doctrine — Rev. Bernard Woudenberg	
The Fragmenting of the Churches	424
Day of Shadows — Rev. John A. Heys	
Blessed by Divine Decree	426
Report of Classis East — Mr. Jon J. Huiskens	429
News From Our Churches — Mr. Benjamin Wigger	429



Delegates to Synod 1992

In This Issue...

In his pre-synodical sermon in South Holland on June 8, Rev. Terpstra emphasized the *manner* in which the church, as the city of God, must do its work. The work of the church, he said, must be marked, among other things, by *unity* — a unity of faith, surely, but also a unity in spirit and of purpose.

In such unity there is blessedness ... and, under the blessing of Jehovah God, fruitfulness. Mrs. Looyenga speaks of that in the poem which is featured on the cover of this our "Synod Issue."

Rev. Terpstra's sermon, which appears as the Meditation in this issue, speaks also of the steadfastness and the diligence which must characterize the work of the church of Jesus Christ. The undersigned, present at Synod in order to secure pictures of the activities of Synod for this publication, can testify of the determination of the delegates to heed the implied admonition, in Rev. Terpstra's text, for those who conduct the work of the Protestant Reformed Churches at the synodical level. For such leadership, members of this denomination ought heartily to thank the Lord.

D.D.

THE STANDARD BEARER

ISSN 0362-4692

Semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July, and August.
Published by the Reformed Free Publishing Association, Inc.,
4949 Ivanrest Ave., Grandville, MI 49418. Second Class
Postage Paid at Grandville, Michigan.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Standard Bearer,
P.O. Box 603, Grandville, MI 49418-0603.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Editor: Prof. David J. Engelsma
Secretary: Prof. Robert D. Decker
Managing Editor: Mr. Don Doezeema

DEPARTMENT EDITORS

Rev. Ronald Cammenga, Prof. Robert Decker, Rev. Arie
den Hartog, Rev. Russell Dykstra, Rev. Carl Haak, Mr. Fred
Hanko, Prof. Herman Hanko, Rev. John Heys, Rev. Marvin
Kamps, Rev. Steven Key, Rev. Kenneth Koole, Rev. Jason
Kortering, Rev. Dale Kuiper, Mr. James Lanting, Rev. George
Lubbers, Mrs. Mary Beth Lubbers, Rev. James Slopeema, Rev.
Charles Terpstra, Rev. Ronald VanOverloop, Mr. Benjamin
Wigger, Rev. Bernard Woudenberg.

EDITORIAL OFFICE

The Standard Bearer
4949 Ivanrest
Grandville, MI 49418
BUSINESS OFFICE
The Standard Bearer
Don Doezeema
P.O. Box 603
Grandville, MI
49418-0603
PH: (616) 538-1778
(616) 531-1490
FAX: (616) 531-3033

CHURCH NEWS EDITOR

Mr. Ben Wigger
6597 40th Ave.
Hudsonville, MI 49426
NEW ZEALAND OFFICE
The Standard Bearer
c/o Protestant Reformed
Church
B. VanHerik
66 Fraser St.
Wainuiomata, New Zealand

EDITORIAL POLICY

Every editor is solely responsible for the contents of his own
articles. Contributions of general interest from our readers and
questions for The Reader Asks department are welcome.
Contributions will be limited to approximately 300 words and
must be neatly written or typewritten, and must be signed. Copy
deadlines are the first and fifteenth of the month. All
communications relative to the contents should be sent to the
editorial office.

REPRINT POLICY

Permission is hereby granted for the reprinting of articles in our
magazine by other publications, provided: a) that such reprinted
articles are reproduced in full; b) that proper acknowledgment
is made; c) that a copy of the periodical in which such reprint
appears is sent to our editorial office.

SUBSCRIPTION POLICY

Subscription price: \$12.00 per year in the U.S., \$15.00
elsewhere. Unless a definite request for discontinuance is
received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the
subscription to continue, and he will be billed for renewal. If you
have a change of address, please notify the Business Office as
early as possible in order to avoid the inconvenience of
interrupted delivery. Include your Zip or Postal Code.

ADVERTISING POLICY

The Standard Bearer does not accept commercial advertising
of any kind. Announcements of church and school events,
anniversaries, obituaries, and sympathy resolutions will be
placed for a \$3.00 fee. These should be sent to the Business
Office and should be accompanied by the \$3.00 fee. Deadline
for announcements is at least one month prior to publication
date.

BOUND VOLUMES

The Business Office will accept standing orders for bound
copies of the current volume. Such orders are filled as soon as
possible after completion of a volume year.

16mm microfilm, 35mm microfilm and 105mm microfiche, and
article copies are available through University Microfilms
International.

Meditation

Rev. Charles Terpstra

Conduct Becoming the Gospel of Christ

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: ... that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

Philippians 1:27

The apostle Paul had a great concern and desire for the believers in the church at Philippi. That was that their conversation, their manner of conduct, their walk of life, be worthy of the gospel of Christ. He did not want them in any way and to any degree to have a conduct that was unbecoming the gospel of Christ, a walk of life that did not harmonize with the Person and the truth they had received and believed, a behavior that would bring shame to Christ's name.

"No," he says, "whether I get out of prison and come to you, or whether I cannot be with you because of my bonds and can only hear of your affairs, this one thing I want you to have and call you to have, a conversation that becomes the gospel of Christ." And he defines what that worthy walk is, one in which they are standing fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

What the Spirit said to the saints in that church at that time is what He

says to us as believers and as churches today. Each of us as individual believers must have a walk of life that befits the gospel we have heard and by which we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and been saved. And we as a denomination of churches collectively must have a walk worthy of the gospel of Christ. And for us too, whether as individuals or as churches, that conduct is that we stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

This charge of the Word of God is no option for us; it is mandatory. It requires our faithful commitment and our diligent obedience. And it is especially pressing given the ecclesiastical climate in which we find ourselves. This Word of God is more urgent now than when it was first given.

* * * * *

The Spirit used a distinctive word for conversation in this verse, a word which has important implications for an understanding of the text and the calling contained in it. It is not the usual word for manner of living in the New Testament but a word that is found only here and in Acts 23:1. Literally it means "to behave as a citizen" or "to live as one who belongs to a city." It is a derivative of the Greek word for city, *polis*.

It ought to be understood that the idea of this word must be taken spiritually here. The Spirit is not instructing the saints to live as good citizens of the city of Philippi or of the empire of Rome, though of course as Christians they must also do that. Rather is the Spirit instructing the saints with regard to their life in the spiritual city of God, which is the

church of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament the people of God lived in the spiritual realm of God in the earthly land of Canaan with its center in the city of Jerusalem. That was the church of Christ, beautifully described, for example, in Psalm 48. In the New Testament all believers belong to the spiritual and heavenly city of God called the new Jerusalem (Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22). Of this city God is the Founder; over this spiritual community God is King, ruling in men's hearts through His Son Jesus Christ and by His Spirit. In this city law and order is maintained by submission and obedience to His infallible Word, which every citizen is bound to do, and has been saved to do. This city is the true political realm to which we belong as saved sinners.

It is for this reason that the text connects our conversation with the gospel of Christ. Not only is it the case



Rev. Charles Terpstra

Rev. Terpstra is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of South Holland, Illinois.

that *in* the gospel of Christ the truth concerning this spiritual city of God in all of its aspects is set forth; but it is also the case that *through* the gospel of Christ we are brought into the city of God. The gospel is the *power* that delivers us sinners from the city of darkness and our evil citizenship in it and translates us into the holy realm and godly citizenship of God's city.

And thus it is that our text exhorts us to have a life in the city of God which becomes the gospel of Christ: "Only let...." We are to have a conduct that is worthy of what the gospel of Christ has taught us and has made us. We are to have a citizen life which is in harmony with what is revealed in the scriptures. Just as the citizens of an earthly city are to uphold the reputation of their city by living in harmony with its laws, so must we who belong to the city of God have a life that upholds the honor of our God and the reputation of His church by keeping His Word and truth.

* * * * *

Applying this specifically to our life as churches and to the labors of our Synod, this admonition speaks first of all to the affairs which we treat, to the business which occupies us. And it teaches us what we must not be dealing with as churches. That we belong to the city of God means that our business as churches and as a Synod is not taken up with the politics of our national governments, with the policies of the earthly states in which we live. Our Synod does not meet to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of our political systems or to talk about the latest actions of our national legislatures. We do not meet to align ourselves with a political party and candidate for the upcoming national election in this country. We will not discuss the party platforms of the Democrats and Republicans.

There are churches that will do this in their national meetings; but this is not conduct becoming the gospel of Christ.

Nor will our business as citizens of the city of God be taken up with social, economic, and environmental

concerns and policies. We do not have on our agenda a discussion of poverty in America and Canada, or social injustice and racial problems in the cities of our land. We will not treat ozone layer destruction and global warming, or the need for recycling. Again, there are churches across this country who will be dealing with these things in their assemblies and Synods; but this is conduct unbecoming the gospel of Christ; this is not what the city of God is about.

Rather is our business as churches and as a Synod the gospel of Christ, or the faith of the gospel. Our concerns lie with the spiritual things of the city of God, not the carnal things of the cities of man; our policies involve the kingdom of heaven, not the kingdoms of this earth. Letting our conduct be as it becomes the gospel of Christ means that as churches we make the good news of salvation from sin and death in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our chief and central concern. It means that as a Synod we busy ourselves in the preaching of the gospel of Christ in our churches and in our mission fields, that we are busy in ensuring the pure administration of the sacraments and of discipline and of the other ordinances of the gospel in the churches. It means that we are concerned with Reformed, Christian orthodoxy, with the defense and the maintenance and the promotion of the faith of the gospel, i.e., of the historic, biblical truths of sound doctrine and godly Christian living.

This is our business. As long as we stick to these things of the city of God we shall conduct ourselves worthy of the gospel; but if we depart from these things and become engrossed in anything else, then we will bring the city of God into disrepute and shame the Head of the church.

* * * * *

The calling to have conduct that becomes the gospel of Christ also pertains to the *manner* in which we do the work of the church as the city of God. Philippians 1:27 sets forth three things with regard to this.

First, our conduct must be with

steadfastness in the truth of the gospel. Our text says, "That ye stand fast in one spirit...." If we are going to be have worthy of the gospel of Christ as believers and as churches, we have to be steadfast and unmovable as far as the faith of the gospel is concerned. With respect to the doctrines of the Christian faith, with respect to the distinctives of the Reformed truth, we must be stationary; we must have our feet planted in the cement of God's Word and truth so that we never move from the faith once delivered to the saints.

*...we must know
what we believe
and tenaciously hold on
to the truth.*

Standing fast in the truth is not a popular concept in today's church world. At the present time it is fashionable to be drifting with the latest doctrinal winds, to be constantly changing with the times, to be tolerant of all kinds of views. Or, to use the figure of the city, it is popular to be knocking down the walls of the truth and throwing open the gates to all manner of false teaching and practice. Truth is said to be relative, not absolute; the scriptures are said to be culturally conditioned, not changelessly relevant. Steadfastness is called intolerant stubbornness and theological bigotry. Compromise is the order of the day. But this too is conduct unbecoming the gospel of Christ.

To be obedient to our calling we must be steadfast and unmovable in the true gospel of the infallible scriptures. We must not be unfixed and unstable as regards what we believe and what we practice on the essentials of the faith. We may never compromise with error on any Christian doctrine or practice. Never may we tear down the bulwarks and ramparts of Reformed truth that surround the city of God or open the gates of the church to invite in false teachers and error. We must stand fast in the gospel of Christ; we must know what we believe and tenaciously hold on to the truth. That alone is conduct becom-

ing the gospel of Christ.

* * * * *

Secondly, in carrying out the business of the gospel of Christ as citizens of the city of God, we must have *diligent effort and labor* for the faith of the gospel. The word "striving" points us to this truth. Literally it means "to engage in a contest, to contend in public games"; thus it has come to mean, in a general sense, "to labor, to work hard for, to strive for."

This is what must characterize our work as churches and as a Synod. Just as an athlete expends himself and puts forth all effort in competing in a game, so must we expend all of our energy and put forth all effort for the faith of the gospel. There must be no slothfulness, no lackadaisical indifference, no careless labor in doing the business of God's city. We must be striving as we do the Lord's work. We are, after all, dealing with the gospel of Christ!

This applies to our defense of the faith of the gospel. Striving suggests opposition; the word has the idea of contesting, and indeed there is such; only it is not the contesting of a game but that of a battle. We face opposition from those who are enemies of the faith of the gospel. The city of God is surrounded by foes: Pelagianism and Arminianism, Roman Catholicism and modernism, feminism and evolutionism, Pentecostalism and mysticism, worldliness and materialism, humanism and hedonism. Against these errors and

evils we must compete and contest in the sense of fighting and wrestling. We must put forth all effort to guard the city both from within and from without. We must man the walls of the truth and watch! We must maintain the walls and repel the foe!

Further, this diligent effort and labor also applies to our promotion of the faith of the gospel. It is not enough that we defend and maintain the faith of the gospel; we must also positively strive for it, i.e., put forth all diligence to promote the Christian religion and the Reformed faith both at home and abroad. God is giving us many opportunities to do this. And we must stretch ourselves forward with renewed effort to see the gospel of Christ go to the nations, including our own nations. We must use all our resources to see the faith brought to others who do not have it at all or who do not have the faith in its fullness. This too is conduct worthy of the gospel.

* * * * *

Thirdly, our labors as citizens of the city of God must be marked by *unity*. The text also emphasizes this: "in one spirit," "with one mind," "striving together." This is a necessary reminder for us, and it is absolutely essential to the conduct that becomes the gospel of Christ. The sins of disunity and division are constant dangers for us. How easy it is for us to stand fast but not in one spirit, to strive for the faith but not together and not with one mind! We must hate and resist these sins of disunity and

rather make sure that our labors as churches and as a Synod are in true Christian unity, that we are standing fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith.

This unity is the unity of faith of course. It is that oneness of believing and holding to the same truth of the gospel as far as the essentials of Reformed Christian doctrine and practice are concerned. But it is also the one spirit and mind of Christian love, love for God, love for His church and people, love for His Word and the cause of the gospel. It is the one spirit and mind of Christian humility, that lowliness of our Lord set forth in chapter 2 of Philippians (vss. 3, 4). It is that unity of purpose, that we seek together the glory of God and the good of His church. Having this unity, we will have conduct becoming the gospel of Christ. Any other behavior will bring the city of God into shame and dishonor.

* * * * *

And how shall we be able to fulfill this calling to walk worthy of the gospel of Christ? Certainly not by our own determination and our own strength, for the help of man is vain. Our sufficiency is not in ourselves. We will do so only by the grace and Spirit of God, by the power of the very gospel according to which we are to walk. Our sufficiency is of God alone. May we always look to Him and put our trust in Him for all of our labors as churches and as a Synod. □

Editorial

Synod of South Holland 1992

The annual synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC) met in South Holland, Illinois from June 9 through June 16. In the absence of the

president of the previous synod, the pastor of the host church, Rev. Charles Terpstra, preached at the pre-synodical worship service on the evening of June 8. His text was Philippians 1:27.

The officers of synod were Rev. Gise VanBaren, president; Rev. Ron Cammenga, vice-president; Rev. Barrett Gritters, first clerk; and Rev. Ron VanOverloop, second clerk.

Missions

The Foreign Mission Committee (FMC) reported on an investigatory trip that two of its members made to Ghana, Africa. Synod decided that the present work of the FMC in Ghana consists of sending materials and developing contacts. It also approved a weekly radio broadcast that the FMC has begun over Radio Africa. The committee reported a gift of money from the grade school children of Adams St. Christian School in Grand Rapids for the distribution of Bibles and religious literature in Ghana.

It was decided to continue in Jamaica by means of two conferences a year until a missionary and a co-worker are obtained by First Church of Grand Rapids, the calling church for Jamaica.

On the recommendation of the Mission Committee (MC), synod closed the Florida field as of August, 1992, because of the dissolving of the "core group" and lack of growth.

Synod heard a promising report on the field in Northern Ireland. There is a sizable "core group," including young families with children. There are regularly visitors at the services and lectures. The group is aggressive in its witness in the region. The members of the mission, the Covenant Reformed Fellowship, addressed a letter to synod, which read in part:

We write to thank you most sincerely for the work you are doing here. Over the past year we have enjoyed regular pulpit supply and this is something we very much appreciate. The preaching of those ministers who have been here has been excellent and has been graciously used by God for the spiritual upbuilding of ourselves and those who regularly visit with us.... Our urgent request to you at this present time is for your prayers. In particular we urge you to pray fervently with us that it might please our sovereign God to incline the heart of His servant, who presently has the call to Northern Ireland, to accept it.

At the time of this writing, Rev. Barrett Gritters is considering Hudsonville's call to be missionary to Northern Ireland.

The MC informed synod that it has recently met with a group in Boise, Idaho concerning the group's possibly becoming a mission of the PRC. The South Holland PRC has been working with the group. The report of the MC indicated the likelihood of the group's asking to be a PR mission in the near future.

In addition to approving support of airing the Reformed Witness Hour on five radio stations as an aspect of our mission labor, synod granted the interesting request of the Sovereign Grace Church in Veradale,

Washington that the PRC cooperate with them in sponsoring the Reformed Witness Hour over station KUDY in the area of Spokane, Washington.

A significant proposal of the MC to create a position of "Coordinator of Contacts and Information" was postponed until 1993 in order that the churches may study the proposal. The man would help the MC both by analyzing the contacts made by the denomination and by developing a more effective use of radio in missions.

Synod made \$2,500 available to evangelism committees of the congregations in matching funds for the translation of PR materials into Spanish.

Seminary

The Theological School Committee (TSC) reported that there were six full-time seminarians in the school this past year. Four are studying for the ministry in the PRC and two, for the ministry in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia. Synod approved the admission of another young man in the fall who will train for the PR ministry.

A schematic drawing of a proposed addition to the seminary building was approved. The estimated cost is \$440,000. Synod authorized the TSC to proceed with the construction drawings when one-half the estimated cost has been collected and to award construction contracts when 75% of the cost has been collected. Rector Robert D. Decker brings this project to the attention of our readers elsewhere in this issue.

Contact

Significant decisions for the PRC were taken in connection with the report of the Committee for Contact with Other Churches (CC). Synod approved the sending of an observer to the next meeting of NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council). It authorized the CC to use its judgment in accepting a possible invitation to attend a future meeting of the Alliance of Reformed Churches (ARC), although any participation would be that of an ob-



Officers of Synod: Revs. VanOverloop, Gritters, VanBaren, Cammenga

server. The same holds for a possible invitation to attend a "confessional conference" in 1993.

Synod expressed its deep appreciation and heartfelt support to Rev. and Mrs. Jay Kortering regarding their work in Singapore with the Evangelical Reformed Churches of Singapore (ERCS). Rev. Kortering has accepted the call of the Hope Church of Walker, Michigan to be minister-on-loan to the ERCS. The Korterings plan to leave for Singapore about the time that this issue of the *Standard Bearer* appears.

Rev. Jaikishin Mahtani, formerly pastor of the Covenant ERCS, was declared eligible for a call in the PRC as a minister of a sister church.

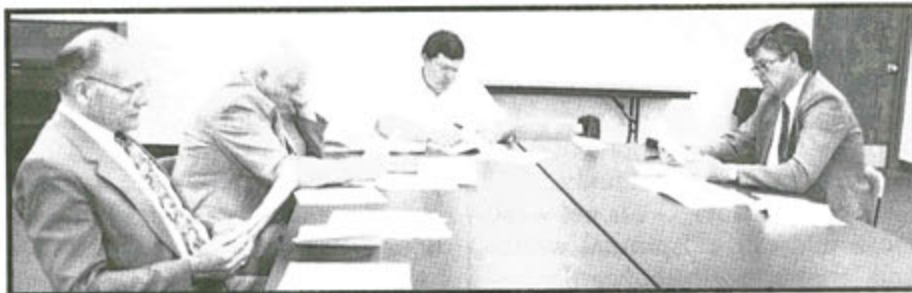
The ERCS sent a letter to synod that stated in part:

We are indeed thankful to God for your continued love and concern shown towards the spiritual welfare of our churches.... We are delighted to know that Rev. Jason Kortering will return to the ERCS as minister-on-loan for another three years to assist us in our missionary labour and in establishing a theological school. We are also encouraged by the love gifts sent by our churches to support the building project of First ERC. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless us in our sister-church relationship....

Synod granted the request of Wellington PRC of New Zealand for financial help for five more years for the support of their pastor, Rev. Rodney Miersma. Wellington also greeted and thanked the synod by letter.

Judgment

One vital responsibility of the major assembly is to judge on ap-



Committee work:

Elders Bruinsma and Doezema, Rev. Bekkering and Prof. Engelsma

peals, overtures, and protests. There were several of these at this synod. Synod rejected the appeal of the Norristown, Pennsylvania church against a decision of Classis East that required Norristown to use *The Psalter* in their worship. Synod's decision, upholding Classis East, stated that "the songbook of a denomination, in this case, *The Psalter*, is an important element of the unity of the denomination and, as such, may be revised only by synod."

Synod declared the protest of a member against the decisions of the synod of 1990 regarding a cross in or on a church building to be not legally before synod.

The appeals of the Grandville, Michigan church and of the Southwest PRC of Grandville, Michigan against decisions of Classis East were rejected. These decisions concerned the transfer of members from Southwest to other PRC churches. In upholding the decisions of Classis East, synod advised Southwest to transfer the members as they requested, considering them as "weaker brethren" according to Romans 14 and I Corinthians 8.

Another appeal of a member against a decision of a classis in a matter involving the member's consistory was treated in closed session.

This and That

Synod mandated a study of the possibility of a health insurance policy for all the ministers of the denomination that would be funded by synod. The committee is to report to the synod of 1993. Synod asked for the careful study of this concept, as well as recommendations on it, by all the churches.

Synod requested Classis West to investigate the advisability of the continued existence of the Isabel, South Dakota church and to bring advice on this matter to the synod of 1993. During the next year, no subsidy is provided Isabel for the support of a pastor.

In response to an overture from the Loveland, Colorado consistory, synod increased the delegation to synod from the classes of both ministers and elders to five. This will make for a total delegation of twenty instead of the present sixteen.

The synodical budget for 1993 will be \$570 for each family—an increase of \$100. The total approved budget is \$885,086.

Synod will meet next year in Hudsonville, Michigan.

God bless the synod of South Holland 1992 for the good of the churches and the advance of the Reformed faith everywhere. □

— DJE

Letters

■ A Southern "Other" Asks about Organs

I am writing to address two sub-

jects. First, like Craig Miklosik of Coos Bay, OR, I too am one of the "other" (see "Letters," the *Standard Bearer*, May 1, 1992; and "As Others

See Us," the *SB*, March 15, 1992). I could so easily relate to his letter and to the way he felt when he attended a PRC worship service and had fellow-

ship with those of like precious faith. I, too, have "...come to adore many of the PRC distinctives: exclusive use of the King James Version; particular grace; the unbreakable bond of marriage; and exclusive Psalmody...."

While Atlanta, GA is not what one would call a "spiritual wasteland," it is not exactly the heartland of the Reformation, either! My family and I are blessed to be a part of an Orthodox Presbyterian congregation which attempts to be faithful, but from time to time I do become frustrated with some of our "worship" practices. Very often I reflect upon my visit last November to Grandville for your conference on the Scriptures and to South Holland PRC for worship services on the Lord's day.

I could only say, "Amen!" "Right!" and "Yes!" to everything Mr. Miklosik said in his letter. We should pray for him and others like him who are stranded in a "spiritual wasteland as regards the Reformed faith." He is not alone.

Second, I would like to ask you a question in response to your excellent editorial entitled "Worshipping God as He Wills" (SB, May 1, 1992). I ask this with humility and sincerity because I really don't know the answer. This is something I am struggling with in my own church. It is a problem that a number of people who love the "regulative principle" probably wrestle with also.

In your editorial you state that the PRC "have acknowledged the 'regulative principle' as their creedal position." You also say that "the members of the PRC must not be embarrassed by their traditionally Reformed form of worship. It is our glory. We must maintain it, if necessary by struggle." Amen to that! That should extend to all Reformed believers as well.

My question is this: where in the Scriptures does one see justification for the use of an organ or piano in the worship service? Should we not be as upset about the use of an organ or piano as we are about liturgical dance, drama, trumpets or cymbals (Ps. 150)? Have the PRC kept the organ in their

churches due to practical considerations?

It would be very helpful to me (and probably a lot of people) to see a series of articles on the "regulative principle of worship" — from its biblical proofs to its creedal formulations to its present-day applications.

Charles H. Greenewald
Snellville, GA

■ Response

The Protestant Reformed Churches understand the "regulative principle" of worship to apply to the elements themselves of public worship — preaching; administration of the sacraments; congregational singing of the Psalms; prayer; and offerings. In keeping with the Dutch Reformed tradition, these Churches do not think that the "regulative principle" applies, or can possibly be made to apply, to every detail and circumstance connected with public worship.

Application of the "regulative principle" to instrumental accompaniment of congregational singing is, in the judgment of the PRC, not simply an overly rigorous application of the principle but rather a misunderstanding of the principle itself. This is evident in John L. Girardeau's *Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church* (New Covenant Publication Society, 1983). The book is one of the most vehement denunciations of musical accompaniment ever written. The southern Presbyterian damned musical accompaniment as "heresy in the sphere of worship" (p. 179). He charged that "a sin it is.... The people ought to be taught that in using it they rebel against the law of Christ, their King" (p. 207). But when Girardeau came to state "the law of Christ" against which instrumental accompaniment transgresses, he expressed the "regulative principle" this way:

Whatsoever, in connection with the public worship of the church, is not commanded by Christ, either ex-

pressly or by good and necessary consequence, in his Word, is forbidden" (p. 200).

This is serious misstatement of the "regulative principle." Neither Question 96 of the Heidelberg Catechism nor Questions 50 and 51 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism speak of "whatsoever in connection with the public worship of the church," that is, of every detail and circumstance connected with public worship.

The "regulative principle" governs the elements and activities themselves that make up the church's worship. It is of no concern to the "regulative principle" whether the preacher wears a business suit or a Geneva gown when he preaches; whether the people stand, sit, or kneel during prayer; whether communicants take the Lord's Supper standing about the communion table, sitting in the front of the auditorium, or remaining in the seats they occupied during the sermon; whether the place of worship is a million-dollar edifice, a barn, or the open field; or whether the congregation is assisted in singing by a precentor (who avails himself of a tuning-fork or a pitch-pipe) or by an organ. In the area of the details and circumstances of public worship, the church has freedom to arrange the service of worship as she deems beneficial (cf. the Belgic Confession, Art. 32).

Indeed, I maintain that no church on earth can, or ever could, carry out the "regulative principle" as Girardeau defined it. Girardeau himself could not find a command of Christ in the New Testament for "whatsoever is connected with public worship."

In using an organ or a piano to aid the singing in public worship, the PRC have neither forgotten the "regulative principle" nor allowed "practical considerations" to compromise the principle. The use of musical accompaniment and adherence to the "regulative principle" are perfectly compatible. In his commentary on Lord's Day 35 of the Heidelberg Cat-

echism, Abraham Kuyper affirms the Reformed tradition's holding the "regulative principle" of worship:

Completely rightly, therefore, have our fathers established the precept, that not man but God Himself alone can determine how we shall serve Him. And, thus, (is established) that every form of worship which God had not commanded is excluded as self-willed service and arbitrary invention, and is forbidden.

In the very next paragraph, Kuyper insists that the use of organs in the service of worship in no way violates the "regulative principle": "Indeed, after the initial reaction, they (the Reformed fathers — DJE) speedily allowed the organ again into the churches, since that organ was intended to *serve* and not to *rule*" (*E Voto Dordraceno*, Hoveker & Wormser, 1905, Vol. III, p. 570; my translation of the Dutch).

A warning arising out of Girardeau's diatribe against musical accompaniment does seem to me to be in order for those churches that use an organ to accompany the congregational singing. In his favorable review of Girardeau's work in the July 1889 issue of the "Presbyterian Quarterly," R.L. Dabney charged that organs "tend usually to choke the congregational singing, and thus to rob the body of God's people of their God-given right to praise Him in His sanctuary." The history of congregational singing in the Dutch Reformed churches in general and in the PRC over the past seventy years in particular disproves this rash charge. Nevertheless, it reminds us that the purpose of organs in the churches is the help of the congregation in singing. The organ, therefore, must not be so loud as to drown out the congregation; so slow as to discourage the congregation; or so fast as to leave the congregation breathless. Organists must dedicate themselves to helping the people of God praise God by singing. The best organist is the one who is least noticed.

— DJE

■ More on the "Regulative Principle"

In response to your editorial, "Worshiping God as He Wills" (the *Standard Bearer*, 5/1/92), permit me to make a few comments.

I wish to acknowledge with admiration how ably, with firm confidence, without apologies, you promote the Protestant Reformed teaching on this subject. You firmly establish the PRC position as, "It is our glory. We must maintain it, if necessary by struggle." A desire to be *distinctively different*; as written in the *regulative principle*; and proudly claiming the *Reformed tradition*.

In support of the PR position you honor the teaching expressed in the Heidelberg Catechism, as well as Westminster Shorter Catechism, both giving Scriptural proofs. Such teachings condemn the usage of images as a support in helping the worshipers in their approach to God.

In past ages, long before the mentioned Doctrinal Standards were drafted, during the seventh and eighth centuries, the church fathers opposed all usage of icons. Statutes, pictures in stained-glass windows, crosses with affixed images — all such was judged as idolatry.

In past generations, there was a great disturbance in the churches concerning the introduction of organs as a proper instrument to lead the singing congregation.

In times more recent, the worshiping congregation seems to have no iconoclastic notions about organs for use in public worship. In addition to preludes (the playing of hymn tunes), offertories, and postludes, organ playing is allowed during the serving of the communion elements, all in "Reformed tradition."

As much as your editorial afforded pleasant reading and seems to agree with the teachings of the "church fathers," I find it rather distressing that you give your readers no Scriptural references for what is termed the "regulative principle," which is the "creedal position" of the PRC. You write:

The manner of worship in the public services of the PRC is regulated by the Word of God.... Nothing may be introduced as part of the worship that is not prescribed by Scripture.... Even though the activity does not conflict with the Word of God, it must be excluded.

Such wonderful statements, without Scriptural references. However, you do quote from the teachings and conclusions of fallible men in support of the PRC position.

Consider if you will, a few Scriptural references in support of hymns. "And when they had sung an hymn"; "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs"; "...teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs..." (Matt. 26:30; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). "In the churches only the 150 Psalms of David... the morning and evening hymns, and the hymn of prayer before the sermon shall be sung" (*Church Order*, PRC, Art. 69).

Again you write:

One reason why the PRC sing only the Psalms in public worship is their conviction that the Psalms are the inspired songbook of the church.

Conclusion: The Holy Spirit does not use the singing of hymns as a means of inspiration? That warrants the exclusion of hymns for singing in public worship? That makes for the PRC being "all-fenced-in" within the Reformed church world?

Some place along the line of continued generations it seems that the PRC have lost the singers. King David appointed him singers (I Chron. 15:16ff); he wrote the first Psalm for singers and gave it to Asaph (I Chron. 16:7); Ezra writes about 128 singers (Ezra 2:41); the singers were in a separate class after the return from captivity, 245 singing men and singing women (Neh. 7:67); 200 singing men and singing women (Ezra 2:65). "And the whole congregation worshipped, and the singers sang..." (II Chron. 29:28).

Your editorial strongly suggests that worshiping in the "Reformed tra-

dition" allows no room for singing hymns nor for singing men and singing women (choir).

Please recognize, if you will, that there are hundreds of Protestant Reformed families worshipping in the Christian Reformed Church (for several decades), who are edified by the singing of hymns, and the hearing of singing men and singing women (choir).

May the "voice" of the *Standard Bearer* be heard near and far.

Henry Doorn
Kentwood, MI

■ Response

The biblical basis for the "regulative principle" of public worship is the second commandment of the law of God with all the passages in Scripture that explain and apply the second commandment. I stated this in my editorial.

The "hymns" in your references (Matt. 26:30, Eph. 5:19, and Col. 3:16) are all, in fact, the Psalms of the Old Testament. Permit me to quote what I have written elsewhere in explanation of Colossians 3:16:

But even if the issue of exclusive Psalms-singing versus the singing of hymns also were to be decided on the basis of Colossians 3:16 alone, the churches would sing only the Psalms. "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" are not three different kinds of songs: the inspired Psalms of David; uninspired hymns based on the New Testament; and uninspired spiritual songs treating of various religious themes. Rather, they are all the inspired Psalms of the Old Testament. The inspired Psalms are of two different kinds: hymns and spiritual songs. "Hymns" are the Psalms that explicitly praise God, e.g., Psalm 150 ("Hallelujah! Hallelujah! In His temple God be praised"). "Spiritual songs" are the Psalms which deal with other aspects of the believer's life and experience, e.g., repentance (Psalm 51: "God be merciful to me") and the duty to obey God's Law (Psalm 119: "How I love Thy law, O Lord!"). The proof of this, namely, that "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" in Colossians 3:16 are all Psalms, is immediately plain to all:

The church of Paul's day, specifically, the congregation at Colosse, Asia Minor, had no other songs than the Psalms! She had no "hymns" in the sense in which we are accustomed to speak of hymns today, referring to such songs as "Glory be to the Father," or "Rock of Ages." Besides, the meaning of the Greek word, "hymn," is "song of praise to God." Elsewhere in the New Testament, the word, "hymn," is clearly used to refer to a Psalm which consists of the praise of God. Such an instance is Matthew 26:30: "And when they had sung an hymn, they went into the mount of Olives." The reference is certainly to the Psalms; undoubtedly, the reference is to Psalms 113-118, the "Great Hallel" (Song of Praise to Jehovah), which the Israelites customarily sang on the occasion of the Passover. In addition, in the Greek Old Testament used by the apostles, the Septuagint, the Psalms were exactly labelled, "Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs" ("Music in the Church," *Beacon Lights*, February, 1983, pp. 12, 13).

The mention of a few hymns in Article 69 of the church order of Dordt was a concession to a difficult situation then obtaining in the Dutch Reformed churches (cf. VanDellen and Monsma, *The Church Order Commentary*, Zondervan, 1954, pp. 282, 283). The spirit and intent of the article, however, are that only the Psalms be sung in the public worship of the Reformed churches.

There is a basic difference between the statement that the Psalms are the inspired songbook of the church and the statement that the singing of hymns can be inspiring. The latter refers to the effect of singing on the singer and others. The former asserts that the Holy Spirit Himself gave the church her marvelous and adequate songbook for worship in Holy Scripture.

The Protestant Reformed Churches are not fearful or embarrassed to be "all fenced in" within the Reformed church world, on this or any other issue, when obedience to the Lord Christ requires it.

The members of the PRC allow

for, and are edified by, the singing of good hymns (as distinguished now from Psalms) and choirs of singing men and women outside the public worship of the congregation.

The PRC have lost the singers of the Old Testament, with a good deal that belonged to the church of the shadows, in the interests of finding the congregational singing of the New Testament.

Consider whether the alternative to the "regulative principle" of worship is not that the churches themselves introduce into the public worship of God whatever under heaven suits the fancy today of the minister, council, worship committee, or vocal element of the congregation. That is, not God Himself in His Word, but the people decide how they will worship God. This is what is going on presently in Reformed churches. The result is that the worship in some churches is barely distinguishable from that of Roman Catholicism, the worship in other Reformed churches resembles nothing so much as a frenzied, old-west camp meeting, and the worship in yet other churches comes perilously close to the ritual prostitution of old paganism, as the troop of dancing girls cavort on the stage. I do pray, with some ardor, that God mercifully spare the PRC all such "worship."

The question governing worship is not, "Do I feel edified?" Some feel edified by a troop of dancing girls. But the question is, "Has God revealed in His Word that He is pleased to be worshiped in this way?" This will edify.

Whatever are Protestant Reformed families doing in the Christian Reformed Church? Protestant Reformed believers and their children and grandchildren belong in Protestant Reformed churches. We must talk about this.

May the voice of the *Standard Bearer* be heard near and far. □

— DJE

Protestant Reformed Seminary

4949 Ivanrest Avenue
Grandville, Michigan 49418
Phone: (616) 531-1490

Robert D. Decker, Rector

Professor of Practical Theology and New Testament

June 16, 1992

Dear Friends in Christ:

Last week the Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches made some important decisions affecting our seminary. Synod approved "the schematic drawing of the proposed addition (with full basement) at an estimated cost of \$439,880." The ground for this decision is: "The plan adequately meets the needs for: the additional library space (bookshelves), a quiet study area for the students, and a separate study area for the professors who use the seminary as their place of work." We might add that the planned addition also contains much needed storage space for the archives of our churches. Synod also authorized the Theological School Committee: "to proceed with producing the construction drawings of the proposed addition when one half of the estimated cost has been collected, to negotiate the construction price with invited contractors and award a construction contract when 75% of the estimated cost is collected, to borrow the remaining cost of the expansion and continue fund raising to pay off any debt necessary for this project."

Fully aware of the fact that our people are supporting several church and school building projects, and not wanting to place any additional burdens on our people, Synod decided not to budget any monies for this project. This addition is to be financed by voluntary contributions and freewill offerings from our people and churches. To date about \$115,000 has been contributed to this project.

Our hope is that we will be able to begin work soon, in order to take advantage of the lower bids in a depressed building industry. If you are able to help us financially please send your contributions to the Synodical Treasurer, Mr. Joel Zandstra, 4949 Ivanrest Ave., Grandville, MI 49418.

But, above all, continue to pray for us that we may be faithful in committing the truth to our future ministers and missionaries (II Timothy 2:2).

May God richly bless you.

Cordially in Christ,



Prof. Robert D. Decker,
for faculty, staff, and students

The Site and Work of Synod



South Holland Protestant Reformed Church, Illinois



Rev. Koole, Rev. VanBaren



Prof. Engelsma, Rev. Kamps



Rev. Cammenga



*Committee II of Pre-Advice:
Mr. VanMeeteren, Rev. Houck, Prof. Hanko,
Mr. Brummel, Rev. Cammenga*



Rev. Houck



Rev. Kamps, Rev. Bekkering



Noon Break



*Rev. Terpstra, Rev. Mahtani,
Prof. Decker*



*Committee III of Pre-Advice:
Rev. Gritters, Mr. Engelsma, Prof. Decker,
Mr. Schipper, Rev. VanOverloop*



Rev. Koole

All Around Us

Prof. Robert Decker

■ Schlissel Deposed

Classis Hudson of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) at its regular meeting, May 13, deposed Rev. Steven Schlissel, pastor of Messiah's Congregation Christian Reformed Church in Brooklyn, New York. This means Schlissel no longer holds the office of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the CRC. Schlissel was suspended by a special meeting of the Classis on April 2. The vote to suspend was 22 - 5, the vote to depose was 16 - 12. The four basic grounds for deposition were the same as used to suspend Schlissel. Ground one is Schlissel's refusal to heed the admonition of the Classis regarding his written and public statements, "whose tone and approach to correction in the body of the Lord are scripturally unacceptable." Schlissel "persisted in making statements characterized by abrasive and accusatory language that in sweeping generalizations questions the Christian integrity of fellow officebearers in the CRC." Schlissel called professors at Calvin Theological Seminary "whores" and "stinking heretics" and labelled others who disagreed with him "blasphemous bums," "feminist maniacs," "schizophrenics," "worms, vermin, and dogs."

Ground two charges Schlissel with conduct unbecoming a minister of the gospel. Schlissel, said Classis, "publicly slanders our denomination and its leaders on a number of occasions without first addressing them personally and through their consistory, classis, or synod." The third ground charges Schlissel with a lack

of integrity in promoting division in the denomination. The fourth ground charges that Schlissel and his congregation broke the covenant the church made with the CRC in November 1986 "to be faithful to the gospel as expressed in our common confessions and to work for the upbuilding of the CRC in Brooklyn, in Classis Hudson, and throughout the denomination."

Schlissel and Messiah's council are appealing the decision to depose him to the 1992 Synod of the CRC. The synod's Judicial Code Committee will recommend action to the synod. Dr. Nelson D. Kloosterman, professor at Mid-America Reformed Seminary in Orange City, Iowa, will act as counsel to Schlissel and his council before the Judicial Code Committee.

Schlissel has indicated that he will continue to "be in the pulpit as an exhorter" during the appeal process.

Christian Renewal

■ Leakage or Hemorrhage?

In a recent interview with *The Grand Rapids Press*, Dr. Melvin Hugen, professor at Calvin Seminary, downplayed the exodus from the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), calling it "leakage," a normal occurrence in most, if not all denominations. Judging by the numbers, this may be wishful thinking on Hugen's part. Here are the statistics to date:

- Trinity CRC in St. Catharines, Ontario seceded with 415 of 616 members. This church is now called Trinity Orthodox Reformed Church.

- First CRC in Lethbridge, Alberta seceded to form Trinity Reformed Church with 513 of 685 members.

- Riverside CRC in Wellandport, Ontario seceded with 300 of 527 members.

- Pompton Plains CRC (New

Jersey) seceded with approximately 280 or 295 members. This church is now called Pompton Plains Reformed Bible Church.

- The council of Telkwa CRC (British Columbia) seceded with 122 of 222 members to form the Reformed Church of Telkwa.

- The council of Washington, Pennsylvania seceded to form Christ Presbyterian Church of Washington with approximately 20 of 63 members.

- A majority of the council joined three deposed elders of Sunnyslope CRC in Salem, Oregon to form the Independent Reformed Church of Salem with approximately 120 of 375 members.

- 132 members of the 500-member Maranatha CRC in St. Catharines, Ontario seceded to form Immanuel Orthodox Reformed Church.

- 100 members of the 827-member Aylmer, Ontario CRC seceded to form the Independent Christian Reformed Church of Aylmer.

- 201 CRC members in the Flamborough, Ontario area seceded to form the Independent Reformed Church of Sheffield. Rev. Jerome Julien is pastor of this congregation.

- 85 CRC members in Winnipeg, Manitoba seceded to form the Independent Reformed Church of Winnipeg.

- 127 CRC members of Edmonton, Alberta seceded to form the Orthodox Reformed Church of Edmonton.

This represents nearly 2,700 individual members or 670 families who have seceded from the CRC to form independent congregations between February 1991 and February 1992. In addition 15 Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches have been formed over the last ten years for similar reasons. Meanwhile small groups of members in various churches are pre-

Prof. Decker is professor of Practical Theology in the Protestant Reformed Seminary.

paring to organize independent churches.

In addition a number of CRC families have left that denomination and joined the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Free Reformed Churches, the Protestant Reformed Churches, and other Reformed denominations because of the troubles in the CRC.

Estimating conservatively the CRC has lost over a thousand families and about 3,500 to 4,000 members because of the creation/science and women-in-office issues.

Is this leakage or hemorrhage? You decide. The CRC has about 310,000 total members.

*Christian Renewal
The Reformed Witness*

■ Banner Editor Resigns

The Rev. Galen Meyer has resigned as Editor of the *Banner*, the weekly magazine of the Christian Reformed Church. Meyer will return to the classroom at South Christian High School in Cutlerville, Michigan.

The CRC Board of Publications has appointed Dr. John H. Krommenga and Dr. Harvey Smit as Interim Editors. According to Rev. Douglas Kamstra, who chaired the sub-committee charged with developing an interim plan for the editorship of the *Banner*, Krommenga and Smit were selected because of "their reputations as churchmen, who had clear name recognition in the CRC, had earned the trust of the people, and could lead the church

through troubled times."

Krommenga, 73, served as president of Calvin Seminary from 1953 until his retirement in 1983. Since that time he has served as president of International Theological Seminary in Los Angeles. Smit, 64, currently serves as editor-in-chief of the Education Department of CRC Publications.

These men will co-edit the *Banner* from August 1, 1992 to August 1, 1993. Krommenga will do most of the writing and Smit will do the administrative work. Both will be involved with the *Banner's* staff in planning issues. □

*The Banner
Christian Observer
Christianity Today
REC News Exchange*

*When Thou Sittest
in Thine House
Mrs. Mary Beth Lubbers*

Spiritual Olympics or Olympia's ABC's

*I have fought a good fight, I have
finished my course, I have kept the faith....
II Timothy 4:7*

The Olympic torch has been extinguished in Albertville. The jagged, snow-capped slopes, rising from virtual anonymity to worldwide recognition, lie in pristine silence once again. This small French village, so recently a kaleidoscope of color, resumes its quiet, small-town ways. The torch has not yet been lit in Barcelona. Even now the runners, holding lighted torch aloft, are hastening towards this Mediterranean city to open the greatest "show on earth" — the Summer Olympics. Here men and women

*Mrs. Lubbers is a wife and mother in the
Protestant Reformed Church of South
Holland, Illinois.*

from nearly every nation on earth, having dedicated themselves for hours each day to jumping, running, twisting, pirouetting, will compete for one round piece of crystal banded with gold, the Olympic medal. Several million people attend the games, and millions more watch them on television. The original Olympic Games (776 B.C. - A.D. 396) honored Zeus, the king of the Greek gods. The only event in the first 13 Olympics held in Greece was a foot race of about 200 yards. Throughout the years, longer running races were included, and a wrestling event was held — which very likely accounts for the Apostle Paul's several references to wrestling and striving for mastery. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood..." (Eph. 6:12). The victors of the races and matches were garlanded with olive leaves.

The Olympic Games were so important to Greek life that they were used as a basis for their calendar, the Olympiad. However, about 100 B.C., the Roman Empire conquered Greece, and the games soon lost their religious significance. Because the contestants seemingly had lost sight of the original purpose of the games and were interested only in the purse, Emperor Theodosius ordered the games closed. For more than 1,500 years, no Olympic Games were held. Then in 1896, in an effort to promote world peace, the games were revived. Since that year, the games have been held every four years, with the exception of the duration of World Wars I and II.

What will we, Reformed Christians nearing the end of the twentieth century, learn from the 1992 Olympic Games?

We will be reminded once again that fame is fleeting (can you name even ten out of the thousands of recent Olympians?), and that artistry on ice or track or parallel bars is vanity.

We will learn that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong... nor is favor shown to men of skill" (Eccl. 9:11).

We will become aware that the Lord taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man (Ps. 147:10).

We will discover that Albertville's and Barcelona's Olympians obtain a corruptible crown [medal] (I Cor. 9:25).

And yet....

There is a lesson in Albertville. There is instruction in Barcelona. Otherwise the Bible would not include so many references to the Olympic Games. Beneath all the dazzle and panoply, we catch a glimpse of the real gold.

We see that strenuous effort towards holiness is not depleting, nor do rigorous spiritual workouts sap the believer-exerciser of his life juices. We must run and skate and ski the spiritual race with all our effort and strength and skill and stamina. We must endure this battle of faith to the end of the race. We must not tire in

doing good works. "And let us not be weary in well doing..." (Gal. 6:9). Our spirits must not flag in promoting the cause of God's dear kingdom. Husbands and wives, fathers and mothers carrying their little ones, young people and children—all of us must tirelessly run the race. The race that we run does not evoke the glory that was Greece's, but rather the grandeur that will be heaven's. We look for our medal in the Celestial City where the faithful will receive victory through grace. That is why we keep our eye focused on the Cross, running with intense concentration and devoted purpose.

We pattern ourselves after Scripture's memorable marathon runners: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and all the others listed for our inspiration in Hebrews 11. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith..." (Heb. 12:1, 2).

For everyone who does not fall by the side of the slope, nor stumble on the great running track, there awaits an incorruptible victor's lau-

rel. And so we exercise ourselves unto godliness (I Timothy 4:7), keenly aware that bodily exercise profiteth little in the marathon which each Reformed believer must run. Nor do we run for the praise and adulation of men. Just as we do not give our alms before men, so we do not "strive for the mastery" (II Timothy 2:5) for the sake of men. But rather we run quietly before God. And the Father who watches us in secret will reward us openly.

Winners in Albertville and Barcelona receive their Olympic medals in an impressive ceremony while an orchestra plays the national anthem of the homeland of the gold medal winner.

Who can envision the stirring ceremony which all of us endurance runners will attend in the Celestial City? As we cross the last hurdle, bruised and thirsty and weary, the notes of our homeland will fall sweetly on our hearts. Christ Himself will crown us. And the Song of Moses and the Lamb will reverberate through all eternity.

A is for Albertville.

B is for Barcelona.

C is for Celestial City. Contend for it. □

Taking Heed to the Doctrines

Rev. Bernard Woudenberg

But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

Galatians 5:15

Rev. Woudenberg is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

The Fragmenting of the Churches

No sooner had the letter of Prof. Holwerda been published in the *Standard Bearer* than the life of the denomination began visibly to fragment.

It was ironic. Those were the very days during which we were celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of our churches, and great effort was being made to demonstrate our strength and unity as a small but thriving Reformed denomination.

And indeed from many points of view there was reason to believe we were just that. We had always had a firm doctrinal foundation upon which to build, in the theology of Rev. Hoeksema; and he, together with Rev. Ophoff, had worked effectively in preparing young men for the ministry of the Gospel in our churches. Not only were these young men well taught in Reformed theology, but also

their exegetical and preaching abilities reflected those of their teachers. Although to a degree they may have lacked some of the niceties of higher education, when it came to the requirements of the ministry, they were well-prepared. In turn, the *Standard Bearer* constituted a theological journal of high quality; and, being read by our people generally, it served to join the denomination together into a functioning spiritual organism. Our people and officebearers had developed sound doctrinal discernment. Together they were unified in a common cause, with a love of the gospel and a longing for spiritual advancement.

At the same time, however, the letter of Prof. Holwerda lifted a corner of the tent sufficiently to expose the fact that not all was well within. There was a spirit of division and schism at work which thereafter could not be hidden or ignored.

Almost immediately a furor arose — not, as might have been expected, against the letter and its content, but rather against Rev. Ophoff for publishing it. It was a classic example of whipping the messenger because the message was not wanted. He had brought a problem to the fore which no one wished to hear; and the fury broke upon him, particularly from The Netherlands. It had been nearly a year since the synod of Amersfoort had decided to seek correspondence with our churches, and as yet nothing had been heard from the committee which it had appointed. And now it was revealed that that committee, rather than contacting the officials of our churches, had met secretly with two of our men visiting in their country, men who had no official capacity whatsoever. From them they had elicited testimony which could hardly be considered to represent the official position of our churches; and, on the basis of this testimony, advice was being given to those who were considering membership in our churches. And now, the irregularity of this having been exposed, a torrent of public letters began to arrive — from Dr. Schilder,

Prof. Veenhof, and from Prof. Holwerda himself — filled with ill feelings toward Rev. Ophoff for having made them known.

Perhaps, in a way, there was some validity in their grievance. Rev. Hoeksema himself had advised him not to publish the letter before discussing it with the parties involved; and in the end he did apologize. Accordingly, it might be, and has been, argued that the publication of the letter, at least in the way that it was done, had made a bad matter worse, and caused a situation which might have been contained to reel out of control. One never knows, of course; the Lord does not tell us what might have been. But the fact is that the letter itself was not of Rev. Ophoff's making; and it was with this letter itself that the basic problem lay. It had already been broadly distributed among the immigrants by the time Rev. Ophoff obtained a copy; and what it said very much concerned our denomination as a whole. Both we in our history and the Liberated in theirs had often suffered from secret connivances; and the best way of dealing with such had often been found to be to lay out everything for all to see. There was reason for Rev. Ophoff to do what he did. And, as Rev. Hoeksema soon began to argue, without approving of the publication as such, the problems of the letter were there, and they needed to be addressed. That was what really mattered.

To begin with, there was the outright repudiation of Protestant Reformed theology on the part of Prof. Holwerda before any discussion had taken place, as he said, "If Rev. Hoeksema's conception was binding, I would say, Never join." And what he had in mind was "his conception regarding election, etc." This had to strike deep, for it was Rev. Hoeksema's conception of election that lay at the very foundation of our churches. Because of it we had been cast out of the Christian Reformed Church in 1924, and we had organized as a new denomination. It constituted, in effect, the official commit-

ment of our churches, and in accord with that most basic principle of Reformed church order, set forth in Article 31, was to be considered "settled and binding" by them.

This did not mean, and the point was made clear to all who joined our churches, particularly among the new immigrants, that no one should or could become a member of our churches unless he understood and agreed with every aspect of our doctrine. It was recognized full well that when the Church Order speaks of such matters being "settled and binding," it is not expected thereby that everyone will thereafter immediately exchange his own convictions for those of the new decision. After all, spiritual convictions are not simply arrived at by ecclesiastical fiat or demand. With Calvin, we understood the evils of "implicit faith," a faith implanted in the church rather than in the Word of God. True Christian convictions can come only from personal study of the Scriptures by the moving of God's Spirit. And no other way should be expected.

Thus it was acknowledged that, especially with their historical background, new immigrants exposed to our preaching for the first time would meet thoughts and concepts which they did not understand and with which they might well have difficulty. And with such we would work in good faith and kindly. But, at the same time, it should be realized that our preaching could not be changed simply to satisfy them. It was expected to be in accord with our principles, as we understood the Word of God, and those who joined our churches would have to receive it as such. Neither should they agitate against them. These were the positions of our churches, and would remain so, at least until such a time as they were duly and properly changed.

And such changes could be made. In fact, it was this activity of reconsideration and development of doctrinal positions which was, to the heart of Rev. Hoeksema, dear above all else. He relished theological dialogue and discussion, considering it,

when properly done, the source of true strength within the church. It was for this very reason that he had looked forward to contact with Dr. Schilder, and then with the Liberated churches as a whole. The simple exchange of ecclesiastical greetings, or preaching assignments, or even church memberships, had relatively little interest for him. They might come in the end, or not. His concern was with the development of Christian doctrine and understanding through committed theological discussion. That for him came first. And for it he was waiting.

And that was what made the professor's further suggestion so disturbing. He was, it seemed, advising those who joined our churches to infiltrate them with the purpose of spreading contrary views from within. As he said, "I believe that joining the Prot. Ref. Church is calling. And let them then as Liberated preserve their contact with Holland by all means, and also spread our literature. Our Liberated would be doing a fruitful work, if they then labored in the Prot. Ref. Churches to remove misunderstanding and to deepen insight." What could this mean other than that those who joined the Protestant Reformed churches were being advised to maintain their primary loyalty with the Liberated churches from which they came, while at the same time seeking to supplant "Rev. Hoeksema's conception" with theirs. It was pretty difficult to take this as anything else than an advocacy of schism within the churches, on the assumption, apparently, that we didn't really "un-

derstand" Reformed theology anyway

Moreover, this all sounded doubly threatening because of what was being heard from over the sea. From the beginning Rev. Ophoff had warned that what was being taught by the Liberated theologians there was hardly compatible with our positions; and his claim was being rapidly validated. At the very time all of this was going on, Prof. Veenhof was publishing in The Netherlands a little booklet entitled *Appell*, in which he set forth the Liberated view of the covenant. It was filled with ideas which could hardly be taken as anything other than a kind of Common Grace within covenant bounds. The theory it expounded was that every baptized child receives covenantal grace, head for head, without any consideration of election or reprobation. It had to be that way, he said; and that challenged the deepest roots upon which our churches were built. With it not even the most sympathetic of our ministers could find the courage to agree. And surely, if this was what was being suggested, and if it should be promoted within our churches, it would be schismatic indeed.

But, apart from all of that, the most disconcerting of all was the quotation attributed to our own two ministers. They were reported to have said, "Indeed, we have much to be grateful for to Rev. Hoeksema. But his conception regarding election, etc. is not church doctrine. No one is bound by it. Some are emitting a totally different sound. Their opinion

was that most (of the Prot. Ref.) do not think as Rev. Hoeksema and Rev. Ophoff. And sympathy for the Liberated was great also in the matter of their doctrine of the covenant." It was astounding. These men themselves, as those of whom they spoke, were all men who had studied under Rev. Hoeksema and Rev. Ophoff; and it was generally understood that they reflected what they had learned in their preaching. But now, it was being said, they had no real commitment to it; and they were quite ready to exchange those views for others, and to do so without having expressed one word of disagreement. If this was not true, it was a scurrilous slander; and, if it was true, it constituted a problem that preempted all else.

* * * * *

From that time on Rev. Hoeksema labored editorially, not only to parry the blows aimed at Rev. Ophoff, but especially to elicit some definite answers to the implications of Holwerda's missive. Especially he wanted some public explanation as to what had actually gone on at those secret meetings. But it was to no avail. Clear answers could not be obtained. And any effort to bring about meaningful discussion of real issues came to naught.

And with that, efforts to work with the immigrants in Canada began to grind to a halt as well. The only question anyone seemed to be interested in was whether we had an official doctrinal position or not. Everything stopped — until, that is, the synod of 1950. □

Day of Shadows

Rev. John Heys

Rev. Heys is a minister emeritus in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Blessed by Divine Decree

Last time we considered that work of God's grace whereby He made a sharp distinction between Jacob and Esau, blessing Jacob even

though he did not deserve it, and revealing that there was absolutely no blessing for Esau. We also noted that God very clearly revealed to

Rebekah, their mother, that He determined before these sons were born that the elder son would serve the younger one of these twins. Esau, the firstborn, would serve Jacob, who came forth out of his mother's womb with his hand holding on to Esau's heel.

In Genesis 27:29 we read that Esau would be God's tool that would be used by Him for the good of Jacob. There we read about Jacob: "Let the people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's son bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be every one that blesseth thee." Putting this verse together with the one God declared to Rebekah, before the children were born, we have an awesome and blessed truth. We also have here a clarification of that mother promise in Genesis 3:15. There will be enmity in the human race between believer and unbeliever, there called the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Looking at the above verse, Genesis 27:29, in the light of verse 28, we have an important truth which we should never forget, and by all means never deny.

Yes — and do not overlook this fact — here already is the promise of the cross of Christ, and of our salvation through Him. The unbelieving Jews — the seed of the serpent — are going to crucify Christ, who is the seed of Jacob by a virgin birth (Acts 2:30 and Romans 1:3), and they will seem to have been victorious when they crucify this descendant of David, the One who is the seed of Jacob. But the struggle of Jacob with Esau, before they were born, does reveal the enmity that exists between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

We do well, when dealing with these incidents presented to us in the day of shadows, to consider also that the truth in Genesis 3:15, and a fulfilling of it manifested in our God's Word, namely through Isaac in Genesis 27:29, is still being fulfilled today. We are not living in the day of shadows of Christ's coming as our King. He has

come. And on His cross He had His "heel" crushed. What is more, Satan and his spiritual seed have already in a sense had their heads crushed. Legally our salvation has been realized. All the elect have been justified. All their guilt has been removed. Every elect child of God — even those not yet born in our flesh, but eternally chosen in Christ, and in God's counsel members of His body, the church — have that God-given right to live with Him in the coming new Jerusalem.

What is also extremely important is that we let God tell us what He caused to happen in the day of shadows. We must not, and may not, let the seed of the serpent, as tools of Satan (who came in that serpent in the Garden of Eden), explain to us what our God presents in His Word. We may not let the ungodly, unbelieving evolutionists explain to us God's amazing work of creating this world in which we live. We must take hold of that mother promise in Genesis 3:15, and take hold of the truth that all the seed of the serpent — all those not born again by the Spirit of Christ — hate God!

Let us never forget that the human race is divided into only two different kinds of people from a spiritual point of view. They either love God as born again in His grace, or they hate Him as the seed of the serpent, and thus as Satan's tool. There just is no grace of God upon Satan and his spiritual seed. There is God's work of providence that may please the world, even though they hate God. But the whole human race has (as God declared in that mother promise of Genesis 3:15, namely, that there are from a spiritual point of view, and thus in God's judgment) only two kinds of people, namely, those born again and with the love of God implanted in their hearts, and those spiritually *dead* people who hate Him every minute of their lives here in His creation. Genesis 3:15, that mother promise, reveals God's hatred toward the seed of the serpent. He declares that He will put enmity in the seed of the woman against the seed of the

serpent and its seed.

In answer then to this evolutionistic stand that God created the world in six days in the sense of six periods of thousands upon thousands of years, let us turn to God's law as He gave it to us through Moses at Mt. Sinai! God Himself tells us through Moses that in six days He created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain. How dare we change the meaning of the word "day" in that law? And did He rest that way the seventh day, that is, for a period of thousands upon thousands of years? But does He not command us to "remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy"? May we in God's law change that word "day" to thousands upon thousands of years?

Still more, read that awesome truth our God gave us through Elijah in I Kings 18:21. He said through Elijah, "How long will ye halt between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." Today that truth means, "How long will ye halt between what I said in Genesis 1-11 and in My holy law, and what the unbelieving seed of the serpent say about when and in how long a period of time I brought this world into being? Serve Me, or serve the evolutionists. You cannot serve both!" If you please, our God uses the same word for day in Genesis 1 as in Exodus 20 wherein He gives us His law.

Those evolutionists do not believe what we find in God's Word. They do not believe what we find in Exodus 16, namely, that our God in six days of the week gave the Israelites manna in the wilderness, but not on the seventh day. And the striking and awesome thing is that on those six days the manna could not be kept to eat the day after God gave it. It would breed worms and send forth a terrible stink. Yet, on the sixth day the Israelites were to keep the manna for that seventh day; and there would be no worms in it, and it would not stink! Do the evolutionists believe this? No, a thousand times, NO! And shall we then, with them, say that these six days in the law must not be taken

literally, but that those days, like the six days of creation in Genesis 1, should be explained to be long periods of years? Are there times when we may listen to the enemies of God, the evolutionists, and let them explain some of the things our God presents to us in Scripture? Still more, are we listening to God when we let the seed of the serpent tell us how to explain what God says? Did it help Adam and Eve to believe what Satan said through a serpent? Or was it not Satan who spoke through that serpent? And what about Revelation 12:9, namely, that "old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan which deceiveth the whole world"?

What will we do then with Hebrews 11? There we read about Abel, Enoch, and Noah, who are listed in the same category as are the believing saints. Is Hebrews 11:1-3 and 8-40 the presentation of historical fact; but verses 4-7 what must be presented the way the unbelievers present them, namely, as names in a parable, a story, but not the presentation of literal reality? Are we then acting as believers, or as unbelievers who cannot and will not take God at His word?

But now, to return to what we first presented in this article, our calling is to hold on tightly to that truth which our God gave Isaac, namely, "Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be every one that blesseth thee" (Gen. 27:29). Our God through Moses gives us this truth for our comfort, as He also wrote through Paul in Romans 8:28 that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

Esau was interested in the wrong things. He did say to his father, "Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me." For him a blessing was the possession and enjoyment of this world's goods. Fathers at that time usually gave their earthly possessions — or at least the largest part of them — to their first-born son. And Esau was in such a position, as the firstborn of Isaac's twin sons.

And what we should believe,

and hold on to for our comfort, is that what counts is not what our flesh wants, as Esau's did, but what our new man in Christ has been promised. Esau was, as he literally stated, interested in what his father could give him. And that meant earthly things which man's flesh enjoys. He was not — as a child of the flesh that had not been born again with a new spiritual life — interested in that which he might use to serve God. He did not look at this earth with its material as that which we are given in order to serve God. He saw it as that which his flesh wanted. He saw it as Satan presented that tree of knowledge of good and evil to Adam and Eve, namely, that which would make them become gods. Get that! Satan did not teach Adam and Eve how to serve God, but how to become gods and do as they please with this earth and all it contained. Although our God told Adam that if he would eat of the tree of life he would die, and thus at once lose his spiritual life, Satan caused them to want what would enable them to separate from God, and no longer serve Him. That they would become gods meant that they could do as they please. They could and would turn their backs upon God and make Him, at least to a degree, serve them. They did not want any spiritual life!

Esau revealed this wicked desire; and his father, Isaac, trembled. Isaac knew very well that he could not change things. He could not promise Esau some of that which he had promised Jacob — and God did this through him — by taking some of it away from Jacob and giving it to Esau. Our God, the only God, is the I AM, which means that He never changes His mind. Isaac knew this and believed. He could not, and must not, try to change things. By God's grace he saw clearly that God had chosen Jacob, and that Esau was rejected by our God.

Indeed, even as our God told Satan, in Adam and Eve's hearing, that He would put enmity between the elect and reprobate, God now through Isaac expresses this enmity between Jacob and Esau and their

seed. Esau was rejected in God's holy wrath, and Jacob was blessed in His grace! Jacob, and we also in God's grace, do not deserve the smallest part of a blessing because of what we did. Jacob sinned greatly here. But by His mercy our God blessed him; and also for us salvation is a 100% gift of God's grace. We are saved by grace, and not because of our works. Salvation is God's grace. We are saved by grace, and not because of our works. Salvation is God's free gift to us.

Yes, Jacob's name means supplanter, that is, one who follows after and replaces someone else. Jacob did not only follow Esau at his birth, holding on to his heel, but by God's grace he supplanted him as far as the birth-right blessing is concerned.

By the divine decree of our God, namely, of sovereign election, and not by what we have done, we receive that free gift of salvation, because of what He does, and not because of what we did. □

EXALT HIM!

My heart is lifted up in praise,
My joy no bounds can know,
The song I shall forever raise,
Which from my heart shall flow,
Exalts the holy name of God;
My sovereign Friend is He.
His love, so high, so deep, so broad
He gave to rescue me.

My life, 'twas overrun with sin,
My heart was filled with pride.
Not one good thought was there
within;
Naught stemmed the evil tide.
Yet God, in His redeeming love,
Sent down His only Son.
His death erased my sins — His blood
For me the vict'ry won.

Thelma Westra,
Faith PRC, Jenison, MI

Report of Classis East

Classis East met in regular session on Wednesday, May 13, 1992. Each church was represented by two delegates. A special welcome was given to Rev. D. Kuiper, pastor of Southeast PRC, who came to the classis from Classis West. Rev. M. Kamps was the chairman of this session.

The agenda for this session was light — with one exception. One case of discipline regarding the censure of a member was brought to the classis.

Classical appointments were granted to Grandville; Venice, Florida;

and Northern Ireland. The following schedule was adopted: VENICE: May 31, June 7 — Flikkema; June 28, July 5 — Woudenberg; July 26, August 2 — Joostens; August 23, 30 — Slopsema; September 20, 27 — Koole; NORTH-ERN IRELAND: May 17, 24, 31 — Slopsema; June 28, July 5, 12 — denHartog; September 13, 20, 27 — Kuiper; GRANDVILLE (p.m. only): May 24 — Kamps; May 31 — VanBaren; June 7 — Gritters; June 14 — Kamps; June 21 — VanBaren; June 28 — Gritters; July 12 — Kamps; July 19 — VanBaren; July 26 — Bruinsma;

August 2 — Gritters; August 16 — Bruinsma; August 30 — Kamps; September 6 — Gritters; September 13 — VanBaren; September 20 — Bruinsma.

Norristown informed the classis that they were appealing their case regarding the use of *The Psalter* to Synod 1992.

The expenses of classis amounted to \$2,042.52. Classis will meet next in Byron Center on September 9, 1992.

Respectfully submitted,
Jon J. Huiskens
Stated Clerk

News From Our Churches

Mr. Benjamin Wigger

Congregational Highlights

On May 19 Rev. C. Hanco, one of our churches' emeritus ministers, celebrated his 85th birthday. In recognition of Rev. Hanco's many years of labor in and for our churches, the Council of the Hudsonville, MI PRC (the church of which Rev. Hanco is now a member) sponsored an open house on Wednesday evening, May 20, in the Fellowship Room of the church. Hudsonville's congregation, as well as all our West-Michigan congregations, were invited to come and extend personal congratulations to Rev. Hanco.

Rev. Hanco was asked that night when was the first time he conducted a worship service for one of our churches. His answer was that his

first experience leading a worship service came in Byron Center when he was just nineteen years old. That means, if my math is correct, that Rev. C. Hanco has served our churches for 66 years.

Personally, having had Rev. Hanco as my own pastor twice in my life, I can say that God has truly blessed our churches by giving us a faithful minister like Rev. Hanco.

This might also be a good time to remind our readers to remember in prayer all our emeritus ministers and their families, as well as our ministers' widows. You might also like to send them a card. Their addresses can be found in the back of your 1991 Acts of Synod and Yearbook.

The Building Committee of the Peace PRC of Lynwood, IL reported to their congregation that they have met on two occasions with an architect and builder to determine how best to proceed. But before they go ahead with preliminary plans and drawings for a church building, the committee had to come before the Council to determine just what the congregation could afford in the way

of a church building. And presently the Council is trying to answer this question. Hopefully, what the congregation needs and what they can afford are close together.

When it came time for Rev. Kuiper and his family to leave Immanuel PRC of Lacombe, AB, Canada, the congregation organized a farewell supper for the family. After the supper, a short program was also given. And then, following the evening service on April 5, the congregation spent an hour of fellowship and song together to bid farewell to the Kuipers.

On May 1, the congregation of the Southeast PRC in Grand Rapids, MI organized a welcome program for Rev. Kuiper and his family. A light luncheon was served in the church basement following the program.

Since Rev. Kuiper's departure in early April from Immanuel PRC, the congregation there has been receiving classical appointments on a regular basis. One such appointment brought Rev. S. Houck to Immanuel for two weeks in late April. Immanuel's Evangelism Committee

Mr. Wigger is a member of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.

took this opportunity to sponsor a lecture given by Rev. Houck on the topic, "Is the King James Version Still the Best?"

The Ladies' Society of the Randolph, WI PRC served as sponsor for a couple of slide programs. First, on June 4 Rev. B. Woudenberg showed slides on Hungary/Romania and spoke about the state of the Reformed church there and of their survival under communism. This was a public presentation. The next night Rev. Woudenberg took the opportunity to show Randolph's congregation slides of Tasmania/Australia, and to speak to them about his labors there with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The last Thursday-night catechism class for the year at the Doon, IA PRC was a combined meeting. The classes got together to look at the

history of the split of 1953 in the Protestant Reformed Churches. A handout was prepared for this class, and it was also suggested that parents and grandparents might be able to give the catechumens stories about these days from their experience.

The Council of the Faith, Jenison, MI PRC has authorized the videotaping of their worship services for the benefit of their sick and shut-ins.

The Young People's Society of the Grandville, MI PRC sponsored a beach volleyball tournament at Holland State Park on Saturday, May 30.

Ministerial Calls

The congregation of the Hudsonville, MI PRC met after the morning service on May 24 and extended a call to Rev. B. Gritters to serve as missionary to Larne, Northern Ireland. He hoped to have an

answer by June 21.

The Grandville, MI PRC extended their first call to fill the vacancy created when Rev. Kortering accepted the call to Singapore, to Rev. C. Haak. His subsequent decline of that call meant that Grandville would have to call again. This they did on June 7 when they called Rev. Ron VanOverloop, from a trio of Revs. Bruinsma, Gritters, and VanOverloop.

We want to end with a word of congratulations to all our graduates for this school year.

To you graduates, as well as all the rest of us, we pass along words of wisdom borrowed from Heritage Christian School's final weekly note for the year.

"Have a great summer
...with the 3 R's —

Rest, Relax, and Read!!" □

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The members of the Covenant Reformed Fellowship, Northern Ireland, would like to express their Christian sympathy to our friend and brother, Rev. Kenneth Koole, and his family, in the sudden death of his father,

MR. PETE KOOLE.

May they find comfort from God's Word in Philippians 1:21: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Mr. John McAuley, Chairman

Mr. John Clarke, Secretary

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Jr. Mr. and Mrs. Society of Faith Protestant Reformed Church would like to express its Christian sympathy to our leader, Rev. Kenneth Koole, and his wife Pat and their family in the loss of their father,

PETER KOOLE.

It is our prayer that they find comfort in God's Word: "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

Jim Mol, President

Denise Decker, Secretary

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Lord willing, on June 16, 1992, our parents,

MR. and MRS. JAMES HUIZINGA, celebrated their twenty-fifth anniversary. We give thanks to God for them and for the care and guidance which they gave to us. We pray that God will continue to bless them in the years that lie ahead.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant and to those that remember his commandments to do them" (Psalm 103:17-18).

• Michael, Shari, Jared Bosveld
• Julie, Barb, Brenda, Susann, Tom, Sara, and Laura Huizinga

Hope (Walker) Protestant Reformed Church

NOTICE!!

The new bulletin clerk for our Grandville Protestant Reformed Church is:

Elizabeth Boverhof
6870 Homrich

Byron Center, MI 49315
(616) 878-1963

IN MEMORY

On April 25, 1992, it pleased our heavenly Father to call our beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather,

BERNARD WINDEMULLER, to his heavenly home at the age of 74 years.

We miss his presence here but rejoice in the glorious hope of the resurrection and eternal life of which, according to his own testimony, he was fully assured.

Wife: Jeanette

Children:

Glen and Judy Windemuller
Robert and Mary Windemuller
Elaine and Gerald Koop
Paul and Kathy Windemuller
Marcia and Bernard TenBroeke
Susan and Randy Boeve
John and Mary Windemuller
19 grand children
4 great grandchildren

Holland, Michigan

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On June 19, 1992, our dear parents and grandparents,

CLARENCE and ANNE PRINCE, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. We thank God for them, and for the love and covenant upbringing they gave us. We pray for God's blessing on them in the years to come.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Psalm 103:17).

- ☛ Chet and Sharon Haveman
Janna and Mike
- ☛ Doug and Mary Jane Prince
Hilary

Jenison, Michigan

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Jr. Mr. and Mrs. Society of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church expresses its Christian sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Tim Koole in the death of his father,

MR. PETER KOOLE.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Revelation 14:13).

Marinus Kamps, President
Elaine Rau, Secretary

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On July 28, 1992, our dear parents and grandparents,

MR. and MRS. DICK KOOIENGA, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary. We rejoice with them and are thankful to our heavenly Father for the love and instruction we have received from them. It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to bless them in the years that He may give to them.

- ☛ Bob and Joan Miedema
- ☛ Earl and Lois Dykstra
- ☛ Rog and Lou Kooienga
- ☛ Arnold and Donna Dykstra
- ☛ Don and Judy Sall
- ☛ Don and Mary Kooienga
- ☛ Stan and Bette Dykstra
- 35 grandchildren
- 83 great grandchildren
- 1 great, great grandchild

Hope, Walker, Michigan

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 23, 1992, our dear parents and grandparents,

MR. and MRS. ANTHONY DEYOUNG,

celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. We rejoice with them and also thank our gracious Lord for the years they have shared and for the constant love, covenant instruction, and guidance they have given us. It is our prayer that they may experience the blessings of the Lord together for many years to come.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant and to those that remember his commandments to do them" (Psalm 103:17, 18).

- ☛ Jozsef and Anna Mae Postma
Phillip, David, Daniel, Steven
- ☛ Rev. Meindert and Beverly Joostens
Faith, Timothy, Steven, Joy, Paul

South Holland, IL

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The consistory and congregation of Holland Protestant Reformed Church express their heartfelt sympathy to the family of

MR. BERNARD WINDEMULLER, a faithful officebearer for many years, who was taken to his eternal home in glory on April 25, 1992.

"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts" (Psalm 65:4).

Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma, President
John VanUffelen, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Sr. Mr. and Mrs. Society of Southwest Church expresses its Christian sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Peter Feenstra and family in the death of

MR. CHARLES FEENSTRA, Peter's father.

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Psalm 27:14).

Dan Boone, President
Joyce Kraima, Secretary

NOTICE!!

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet in Loveland, Colorado, on Wednesday, September 2, 1992, at 8:30 a.m., the Lord willing. All material for the Agenda is to be in the hands of the Stated Clerk 30 days before Classis convenes. All delegates in need of lodging or transportation from the airport should notify the Clerk of Loveland's Consistory, using the forms provided for that purpose.

Rev. R. Hanko, Stated Clerk

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Lord willing, on July 9, 1992, our parents and grandparents,

GEORGE and EPKE JOOSTENS, will celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary. We thank God for them and pray that God will continue to bless them in the years to come.

"...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15b).

- ☛ Rev. Meindert and Beverly Joostens
Faith, Tim, Steve, Joy, Paul
- ☛ Bill and Alice Joostens
Rachel, Rebecca, Joseph, Sarah

Venice, Florida

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On June 20, 1992, our parents, **MR. and MRS. WILLIAM SWART**, celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary. We are thankful to our God that He has given us these parents.

We are grateful for the blessing of being brought up in a covenant home and then also to establish our own covenant homes. As children and grandchildren we say "congratulations" and may God bless you in the years to come.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Psalm 103:17).

- ☛ Rev. Ronald and Sue Van Overloop
- ☛ Calvin and Linda Kalsbeek
- ☛ Jay and Judy Kuiper
nineteen grandchildren

First PRC, Grand Rapids, MI

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On July 30, 1992, our parents,
**LOREN and BEULAH
DE ZWARTE,**

will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. We give thanks to our heavenly Father for giving us God-fearing parents. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless them and keep them in His care for the years to come.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep his covenant and to those that remember his commandments to do them" (Psalm 103:17, 18).

- ✿ Larry and Lila Gullion
Lori, Joel, Daniel, Timothy, Edward, Jonathan
- ✿ Darrell and Deb DeZwarte
Darin, Kelli, Kerri, Kasie
- ✿ Larry and Jan DeZwarte
James, Jason
- ✿ Jim and Sheila VanDonselaar
Jeremy, Amy, Jaimy, Anthony, Andrew, Jennifer, Anna, Tina
- ✿ Kevin and Lisa Rowe
Alyssa, Jacob
- ✿ Tim and Tresa Koole
Jordan, Phillip, Seth
- ✿ Lon, Angie, and Pam DeZwarte
- ✿ LeAnn DeZwarte and Anthony DeZwarte (who are now in eternal glory)

Pella Protestant Reformed Church

NOTICE!!

Classis East will meet in regular session at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, September 9, 1992 at the Byron Center Protestant Reformed Church. Material to be treated at this session must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk by August 8, 1992.

Jon J. Huiskens, Stated Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Men's and Ladies' Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan extends sincere sympathy to the family of

MR. BERNARD WINDEMULLER,
who was for many years a faithful member of our society.

May they find their comfort in the words of the inspired apostle, that, through our Lord Jesus Christ, "death is swallowed up in victory" (I Cor. 15:54).

NOTICE!!

Corrected pages are available for the green, ring-bound "Church Order of the Protestant Reformed Churches," to update the book with amendments made after the original printing.

A set of these selected, replacement pages can be obtained without charge, on request to the Stated Clerk:

Rev. Meindert Joostens
2016 Tekonsha Rd. S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

NOTICE!!

A group of students dedicated to the historic Reformed faith is making plans to meet together again this year for a Bible study. The meetings, sponsored by the Protestant Reformed Churches in the area, are held on Monday evenings at 7:00 in the Dordt College library. Any student at Dordt is welcome to attend. This year we plan to study Philippians using a study guide by Rev. Carl Haak (free copies will be given at the meetings). If you have any questions, please call Rev. Russ Dykstra (712) 726-3383.

CLASSIS WEST OFFICEBEARERS' CONFERENCE

When:

Tuesday, September 1, 1992
beginning at 9 a.m.

Where:

Loveland Protestant Reformed
Church
Loveland, Colorado

Theme:

"Shepherding God's Flock"

Keynote Address:

"Called to be Pastors"

Rev. Ron Hanko

Sectionals:

"Has the Emphasis on Pastoral
Counseling Gone Too Far?"

Rev. Ron Cammenga

"Dealing with the Depressed"

Rev. Carl Haak

"Does Psychiatry have a Place in
Pastoral Counseling?"

Rev. Russ Dykstra

"The Role of the Elders and Deacons in Pastoral Care"

Mr. Robert Brands

"Ministering to the Terminally Ill"

Rev. Mike DeVries

"Dealing with Teenage Problems"

Rev. Steve Key

All past and present officebearers, as well as anyone who is interested, is invited to attend.

Hope to see you there!

NOTICE!!!

The new clerk of the Council of Hope Protestant Reformed Church (Walker) is Mr. David Moelker, 4625 Ju-Le-On Dr. S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504 (phone: 616-791-7077). Please note this change.