



THE **STANDARD BEARER**

***A Reformed
Semi-Monthly
Magazine***



**On behalf of PRC Synod 1995,
Rev. Gise VanBaren congratulates
Candidates Allen Brummel and Douglas Kuiper**

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In This Issue ...

From this issue of the *Standard Bearer*, interested persons, particularly the members of the Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC), can learn something of the 1995 synod of the PRC.

The editorial reports on many of the main actions.

The numerous pictures by Mr. Don Doezema, including the picture below of the delegates and advisors, convey some impressions.

The meditation is the text of Rev. Ron VanOverloop's sermon at the worship service attended by the synodical delegates the evening before synod convened.

Something, but by no means everything.

There is nothing of the hospitality of the Hull congregation that hosted synod.

Nor is there mention of the fellowship with many members of the three churches in the area, especially at and after the pre-synodical service and the graduation exercises.

Besides, the report is necessarily brief. There were many other decisions. The decisions that are noted had grounds. For this, good churchmen and churchwomen will have to read (and study) the "Acts of Synod."

—DJE



Synod, 1995

Submitting One to Another

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Ephesians 5:21

The apostle begins this section of his epistles by calling upon the Ephesians to walk "worthy of the vocation (calling) wherewith ye are called" (4:1). Then he explains in the next verses: "with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (4:2, 3). Those who have become "light in the Lord" (5:8) are to be "not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit" (5:18). When we are filled with the Spirit, the Spirit equips us for proper worship (5:19, 20) and for dealing with our fellow-saints. That is our text. Those filled with the Spirit have the responsibility of "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

We absolutely need the Spirit to be submissive. One filled with wine does not submit but asserts himself. He usually does a lot of talking — about himself. On the contrary, when one is filled with the Spirit, he has everything he needs to be equipped to submit one to another.

Our text informs us of the proper spiritual disposition required for living together as a fellowship of churches. It also tells us of the disposition of heart that is needed for

us to cooperate as fellow-officebearers and as delegates to Synod. We need to be filled with the Spirit, and being filled with the Spirit we will be able to submit one to another.

We take our theme from the text: Submitting One to Another.

First, we consider the activity of submitting ourselves one to another. Then we will consider four reasons for submitting ourselves one to another. Finally, we will consider how we will be able to submit one to another, what must be our motive. What is the activity; why do we do it; and how is it possible for twenty-three men with many years of experience, well-trained and equipped, to submit one to another?

The word "submit" means "to be in subjection." This word can be used in three different ways. First, it is used in the realm of the physical: it is the submission of the inferior to the superior because of greater strength or more intelligence. Second, there is a submission which is spoken of in the following verses, namely, a legal submission to a God-given authority. Thirdly, there is a submission which is spiritual; it comes from inside.

In classical Greek this word is used to refer to soldiers under an officer. The soldiers did everything the officer commanded. If they did anything other than what the officer commanded of them, they were insubordinate. But God takes this word out of its normal context and uses it in the Scriptures not in a regimented, legal sense. The text gives us two reasons why God's use is dif-

ferent from the classical Greek use. God requires a spiritual submission which arises from within because, first, it is a submission of "one to another." The same one to whom I am submitting is, in turn, submitting to me. This is a mutual submission of everyone to all others all the time. There is no instance when I can consider myself superior to another. The second reason why this submission is inner is because of the words "in the fear of God." In awe of the majesty of God I have the ability to submit to others. What soldiers must do by command, the soldiers of the cross do *voluntarily*.

Willingly we submit one to another. This consists of a thinking about one another. We do not think only about ourselves. We think about what others are saying, and we take into consideration why they are saying it. We consider who they are. Who are the delegates speaking at a meeting of Synod? I think



Rev. Ron VanOverloop

Rev. VanOverloop is pastor of Georgetown Protestant Reformed Church in Bauer, Michigan.

about them, I consider thoughtfully rather than act impetuously. Most troubles and clashes in the home and church result from thinking about ourselves rather than about others. Then we individuals become individualistic, asserting ourselves. But we must first think about others. Where are they coming from? What are they intending to say? What do they mean?

Secondly, submitting ourselves one to another means that we are always ready to put ourselves under others. It is not doing things through "strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Phil. 2:3). It is looking not on our own things, but "every man also on the things of others." This was the mind-set of Christ, who humbled Himself to us by setting aside all His own glory to become like unto us. Jesus esteemed you more than His own life. Can you not esteem each other more than yourself?

So important is this putting ourselves under each other, that the apostle begins Philippians 2 with the powerful words, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (1, 2).

Submitting one to another is to remember that we are joined together in one mutual bond of love. Then we can hold our tongue, listening patiently, letting others speak, being charitable, considering them in the best possible light. Submitting one to another is not resenting criticism. It is not being impatient with the opinions of others.

Submitting one to another means that we will not despise "the less comely parts" (I Cor. 12:23). We realize that there is no part of the body of Christ which has a right to despise the less visible or beautiful parts. I have no right to look on another delegate to Synod and think, he does not know what he is talking

about, but I know what I am talking about.

This is the kind of instruction given to us in seminary, when we were advised that in the ministry, we must listen to our elders, who, though they may not have had a seminary training, can teach us much. Maybe those elders' usage of the English language is poor, but when they speak, we should listen. And does anything really change when we have twenty, thirty, or forty years of experience in the ministry? Do we, after so much experience, have the right then to despise the less comely parts? The old and the young do not conflict, but complement each other. God can use an illiterate, old, godly man, and He can still mighty enemies with babes (Ps. 8:2). God can use the old saint to teach us, and He can use the young one, just out of seminary, to teach us, because it is not they who teach, but He. Officebearers with God-given authority over other humans in the church, do not have the right to lord it over others. This was not only the mind of our Reformed fathers when they wrote the Church Order, demanding equality among office-bearers, but this was also the mind of Christ in Matthew 20:25-28. The ungodly lord it. "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

You delegates have God-given authority, but that authority is not given in order that you might be ministered unto, but in order that you might minister, or serve. The position of minister, elder, or professor is to be respected, not because the persons in the position are greater, but because God gave the position. The responsibility is to serve. Fellow-delegates, this week we are to serve each other. Are you ready to do that, brethren? Are you ready to serve the church and each

other? We have this privilege, not so we can be greater, but so that we can serve the Body of Christ.

Why must we submit one to another? Why must we esteem others better than ourselves?

The first reason is that you and I must live the confession of Paul in I Timothy 1:15. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." The perspective is not that I *was* chief sinner, but that I *presently am*; I always am chief. This is the awareness that within us lies the power of the body of this death, which has the capability of sinning terribly. I must and will submit to others, because I, more than seeing others, see my God who sent His Son to die for me, which consciousness makes me see how great a sinner I am.

Secondly, we submit ourselves one to another because of the truth of I Corinthians 4:7. "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" Everything you are and have, you have been given. If you have an insight into a truth or an issue, it is not that it came to you by yourself, but it was given to you. It was a gift from God, so you cannot take credit. If God gave you more intellect or more skill in an area, if God gave you more ability or talents than others, wherein do you have the right to glory over others? Glory in what? You cannot glory in yourself, because it is not of you. Do we not mean it when we say, "By the grace of God I am what I am"? This means that you and I have nothing in ourselves in which to glory. But all that we have has been given to us, and God must receive the glory.

The third reason for submitting ourselves one to another is found in Galatians 3:27, 28. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond

nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." This was the apostle's emphasis in Ephesians 4. We are all equal one with another. You cry to the same Father to whom I cry. You were washed in the same blood that washed me. You say to the same Lord that I do, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" You have the same Spirit in you that I do. So how is one greater than another? Not at all.

Fourthly, we submit one to another because we are saved, not individually, but covenantally, as part of an organism. Not individually, but together. We are members together of one body (Eph. 4:11-16; I Cor. 12:27). In Christ, the whole matters most, not the parts. Thus we are to consider the whole rather than just our own good. Christ gave gifts, especially that of the preaching, to equip the saints to be able to serve one another (Eph. 4:11, 12). Then we become willing to forgo personal rights because we are so grateful to be a part of this glorious body.

How can we submit one to another? There is only one way. There is only one way that we can appreciate the beauty of the body. There is only one way we can tame our pride. This one way is found, not by looking at each other, but by looking at God. "... in the fear of God." The spiritual strength to appreciate and comply with this command to submit one to another comes from "the fear of God."

There must be constantly burning within us the consciousness of God. That I submit to you is not because of you, but because of God. I may owe someone nothing with respect to himself, yet I owe him something in respect of God. The fear of God must motivate us because nothing is more contrary to human nature than submission. Only God can tame our selfishness and subdue our pride, and only He can make us be considerate of others.

The motive of the fear of God

consists first of knowing God — not comprehending Him, but knowing Him as the infinite One, as the One whose majesty fills the heavens. Know Him as the One whose glory would make a heaven filled with suns seem like a candle. Knowing Him as the One who is sinless and thrice holy, before whom the sinless angels cover their eyes and bodies as they serve Him. This knowledge of God makes us fear Him.

This knowledge of Him makes us fear Him even more when we know Him to be our Father. The wonder that this majestic God would condescend to see and know us! This is the only way we can say, "Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." We do not look at each other, but at Him who would save wretches like us. This is to know God in the sense that everything we know of Him is another reason to love Him because our knowledge of Him shows us His love for us first. When the knowledge of the great Majesty becomes knowledge of the Father, then that takes the terror out of the fear of God and makes it love.

This knowledge of love becomes deep spiritual reverence, awe, and wonder. It is not fright, as Adam and Eve were afraid when they tried to hide themselves, before God gave them skins with which to cover themselves. It is the knowledge of childlike faith which approaches Father, which says, "Father, help"; "Father, I need thee." Aware of the Father's love we know that He will respond. Then there is no fear in love (I John 4:18). We do not want

to displease the God who used such great grace to save us.

"In the fear of God" means that you and I, delegates and advisors to Synod, live and walk and think this week with each other in the consciousness of the majesty of our God, acknowledging our indebtedness to Him for our creation and for our redemption. Then we see God behind each other. Then we hear Him using each other. Then when His Word comes from the other, we submit. Then, when we realize He gave His Son to die for the other, we will submit to him. Then, to make our point, we do not have to do any table-pounding. Then, to make our point, we do not have to use our pulpit voices, especially not in a deliberative assembly. Then we can talk humbly, submitting one to another in the fear of God.

I have directed these words, of necessity, to the delegates of Synod; but, congregation, this is the way we are to live with each other all the time. God uses my wife to speak to me and I must submit. God uses my children to speak to me and I must submit to them. Our Savior submitted Himself to us and that is what saved us.

Fear God, and if that does not move you to submit yourselves, then nothing else will. Fearing God we want to submit ourselves quietly to His will when He commands us to submit to each other. Then it is not a grief nor is it irksome to serve.

Fear God, submitting yourself under the mighty hand of God, and then you can submit one to another. Amen. □



Rev. VanOverloop, Rev. Terpstra, Prof. Engelsma

PRC Synod of Hull, 1995

The synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC) met from June 13 through June 20 in the impressive, new church building of the Hull, Iowa PRC. The officers of synod were Rev. Gise VanBaren, president; Rev. Dale Kuiper, vice-president; Rev. Russ Dykstra, first clerk; and Rev. Barry Gritters, second clerk.

Members of the Hull congregation, of the Doon, Iowa congregation, and of the Edgerton, Minnesota congregation nearly filled the

History, and the practical matter of their call to the ministry. They also submitted written exegesis on assigned passages from the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament. Synod approved the examination of the two men and declared them candidates for the ministry in the PRC. They are eligible for a call on or after July 15, 1995.

The graduation exercises were held in the Hull church building on Monday evening, June 19. The president of the denominational Theo-

ment Hebrew Bible (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*) from the American Bible Society in recognition of achievement in Hebrew Old Testament studies. Mr. Brummel received a New Testament Greek Bible (*Textus Receptus*) from the Trinitarian Bible Society in recognition of achievement in Greek New Testament studies. Again, members of the area churches, as well as family and friends of the graduates, filled the auditorium.

Missions

Synod heard reports on denominational mission work in Northern Ireland and in Colorado. Rev. Thomas Miersma has recently begun working in the San Luis Valley area in Colorado. Synod approved the policy, in connection with the work in Northern Ireland, that "it is not permissible to administer the Lord's Supper ... until (a mission group) are organized as a church." The Covenant Reformed Fellowship — mission group in Northern Ireland — greeted the synod by letter:

We rejoice that during the past year it has pleased our Sovereign God to use the PRC as the means to be a great blessing to the saints in Northern Ireland and throughout the British Isles. We greatly appreciate the faithful ministry and diligent labors of our highly esteemed and beloved missionary pastor, Rev. Ron Hanko. We are encouraged by the progress that has been made both in the spiritual growth of the members of the Fellowship and in our outreach work. During this coming year we would ask you to remember us in your prayers, that God might give



Officers of Synod:
Revs. Kuiper, VanBaren, Dykstra, and Gritters

spacious church building for the pre-synodical worship service on Monday evening, June 12. Rev. Ron VanOverloop, president of the previous synod, preached on Ephesians 5:22, "Submitting to One Another."

Examination of Seminarians

Much of Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of the first week was devoted to the oral examination of senior seminarians of the Protestant Reformed Seminary, Allen Brummel and Douglas Kuiper. Both preached specimen sermons before the synod and were examined in Dogmatics, Old Testament History, New Testament History, Church Polity, Church

logical School Committee, Rev. Dale Kuiper, led the meeting and presented the candidates with their diplomas on behalf of synod. Prof. David Engelsma spoke on "Judging Ministers" from I Corinthians 4:1-5. Mr. Kuiper received an Old Testa-



Seminarians Brummel and Kuiper



Elders E. VanGinkel and A. Rau, Rev. Bruinsma, Prof. Decker, Rev. Bekkering

us wisdom and guidance as we make plans to become organized as a church.

Synod approved the decision of its Domestic Mission Committee informing a church that had inquired, that "divorced and remarried persons cannot be received as members of the PRC." The ground is that Romans 7:2, 3 and I Corinthians 7:39 teach that such persons are "living in sin." This is a significant decision, not so much because it again expresses the sacred conviction and firm stand of the PRC on divorce and remarriage as because it maintains this stand in the sphere of missions. Historically, churches have compromised relatively rigorous stands against divorce and remarriage under the pressure of situations confronted on the mission field. The result has been that the adultery of divorce and remarriage has flooded these churches themselves.

The report of the Foreign Mission Committee (FMC) brought to the synod the possibility of beginning a work in Ghana, Africa. The FMC had sent Rev. Richard Moore and Elder Don VerMeer to Ghana in 1994 to investigate. The 1995 synod instructed the FMC

to study the feasibility of calling a missionary (missionaries) to Ghana, and come to Synod of 1996 with definite proposals. Grounds: a. Although the FMC favors the calling of a missionary in the future ... it is not prepared to offer a specific proposal at this time.... b. There are

questions which ought to be faced before a final decision is taken, among which are: Should one or two missionaries be called? Are our churches able to finance this work? Who could/would be able and willing to serve in a foreign field? Would a period of preliminary training be necessary to prepare a man to work in a Ghanaian culture?

Synod permitted the FMC to send another delegation to Ghana in 1995.

Seminary

Two students were admitted into the seminary in the fall of 1995. One is Mr. Garry Eriks from the Peace PRC, Lansing, Illinois. The other is Mr. Jason Whitman from the South Holland PRC, South Holland, Illinois. With these newcomers, the student body will again number eleven. Synod granted Prof. David Engelsma permanent tenure in the seminary, which appointment he accepted. A seminary-sponsored conference on "Reformed Church Gov-

ernment" was approved. The conference will be held at the Southwest PRC, Grandville, Michigan on September 21, 22, 1995. Brochures giving full information on the conference are available from the seminary.

The rector's report informed synod that five seminarians are licensed to speak a word of edification in the churches; that eight seminarians helped the churches in Western Michigan by teaching catechism classes this past year; that fourth-year seminarians Henry DeJong and Richard Smit will do their internships the first semester of the 1995/1996 school year, Henry at Hudsonville PRC, Hudsonville, Michigan and Richard at Southeast PRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan; and that the judgment on the recently implemented intern program has been favorable.

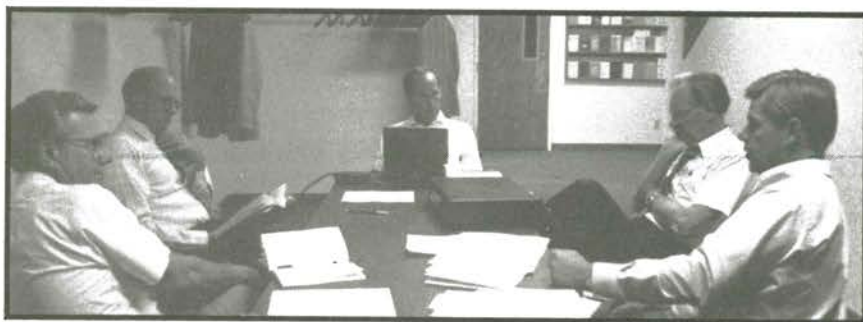
Synod noted with appreciation that Prof. Herman Hanko has served the churches in the seminary for thirty years.

Contact Committee

A highlight of synod's work of contact with other churches was the presence at synod of Rev. G. I. Williamson as an observer from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Synod received Rev. Williamson and gave him the opportunity of addressing synod. Having thanked synod for the privilege of speaking to the assembly, Williamson stated that, "though our two churches do not, at this time, have any established official relationship, we of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church — or



Rev. Kuiper, Elders E. Gritters and D. Poortinga, Rev. Terpstra



Elders C. Kuiper and H. Hoekstra, Rev. Gritters, Prof. Hanko, Rev. VanOverloop

the OPC, as most people call us — would like to know you better." He gave a brief history of the OPC and concluded:

I am most grateful for the warm welcome I have received. It has been a privilege to be here to observe some of the business of your Synod, and I will report as faithfully as I can what I see and hear. It is my own personal hope that this may mark the beginning of a greater degree of mutual interest in, and concern for, one another as we both strive to be faithful in these difficult days.

The full text of Rev. Williamson's address will be published in the "Acts of Synod."

Also present at synod was Rev. Rodney Miersma, pastor of the PRC of New Zealand (PRCNZ), a sister-church with the PRC. Rev. Miersma was seated as a delegate. He addressed synod on behalf of the PRCNZ. This address will appear in the "Acts of Synod." In closed session, synod advised the New Zealand church on a discipline case. An overture from a member of the PRC that synod investigate the possibility of having the PRCNZ become part of one of the classes of the PRC was rejected.

Synod authorized the Contact Committee to send observers to NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council).

The request of the First Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore that minister-on-loan Rev. Jason Kortering's stay in Singapore be extended for two more years was

granted. The Theological Training Committee of the Evangelical Reformed Churches of Singapore is presently training a man for the ministry, Cheah Fook Meng, in the Protestant Reformed Seminary. The PRC are helping financially in the support of this student.



Rev. Slopeema, Elder J. Kalsbeek

Overtures

Synod adopted the overture of the Doon, Iowa consistory (regarding emeritation), to change Article 13 of the Church Order. By the change, Article 13, which originally located the office of the emeritus (retired) minister in the local church that he last served and declared that church to be responsible for his sup-

port, now makes the denomination responsible for the support of all emeriti ministers. Article 13 has now been made to read:

Ministers who by reason of age, sickness, or otherwise, are rendered incapable of performing the duties of their office, shall nevertheless retain the honor and title of a minister, and the churches which they have served shall provide honorably for them in their need (likewise for the orphans and widows of ministers) out of the common fund of the churches, according to the general ecclesiastical ordinances in this matter (the change is noted by italicizing — DJE).

Supervision of the emeritus minister's work, support, and spiritual care was given by synod to whatever local church the minister may decide to join after retirement. This is to be accomplished by the transfer of the minister's "credentials," that is, office, with his membership.

Doon's overture regarding the calling of a professor, which would have had a local church in Grand Rapids call the professor, was rejected.

Other Decisions

A new denominational committee, the Catechism Book Committee, was created. This committee will work at the improvement of existing catechism materials and the addition of new materials.

Synod approved the organizing of a new Protestant Reformed congregation in the Standale, Michigan



Elders C. Hunter and E. Ophoff, Revs. Haak and VanBaren

area, the soon-to-be-instituted Grace PRC.

Synod defeated a motion that urged graduating seminary students to be part of the Social Security program. A special committee of businessmen, appointed by the synod of 1994, had recommended this to the synod of 1995 in view of possible

"catastrophic expenses for our Emeritus Fund." Nineteen of the twenty-nine ministers have opted out of the Social Security program.

Synod accepted the resignation of Rev. Meindert Joostens as stated clerk of synod, thanking him for his faithful labors over the past twenty

years. Mr. Don Doezeema was chosen to replace him.

The synodical budget for 1996 will be \$595 per family, the same as this year.

The synod of 1996 will meet on June 11 at the Southwest PRC in Grandville, Michigan, God willing. □

— DJE

The Reader Asks

Was the Tempter Satan?

Because of your commitment to excellence in exegesis, I'd like to ask that you consider addressing the matter of Satan in Genesis 3. It is commonly taught that it was Satan who deceived Eve, using the serpent. Yet there is no specific reference to Satan in the passage. Where did this teaching originate? I know Revelation refers to Satan as a serpent, but I cannot think of any other passage which gives us reason to believe Satan was the tempter in Genesis 3. What exegetical method or manner of hermeneutics has led to this teaching? Have we ruled out the possibility that God, in His own sovereign will and purpose, and for His glory, might have created the temptation?

Duane L. Burgess
Tucson, AZ

RESPONSE:

It is true that Satan is not mentioned in Genesis 3.

Nevertheless, Scripture elsewhere teaches that Satan was the tempter in the fall of man as revealed in Genesis 3. There is his name, "old serpent," with the description, "which deceiveth the whole world," in Revelation 12:9, which is unmistakable.

In addition, John 8:44 calls Satan the "murderer from the beginning" (the Greek is 'killer of humanity') and original liar, again clear identification of the real tempter in Genesis 3.

Matthew 4:3 names Satan "the tempter."

The Reformed creeds state that Satan was the tempter in Eden (see the Heid. Cat., Q. 9; Bel. Conf., Art. 14).

If the devil as a personal being was not using the serpent, how can it be explained that a mere animal spoke and tempted humans?

To say that God "created the temptation" is vague. Does this mean that He Himself tempted Eve to sin? This would contradict James 1:13 and make God the author of sin.

It is true that the temptation and Fall occurred under God's sovereign control and according to His decree. God is God, also regarding sin. He realized His decree concerning the Fall, with Christ as the goal, in such a way as to maintain the full responsibility of Satan, Adam, and Eve, while remaining blameless Himself. Indeed, He hated the deceit of the devil and the faithlessness of the human couple.

— Ed. Comm.

Taking Heed to the Doctrine

Rev. Bernard Woudenberg

Election and the Covenant Promise

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Romans 9:67

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To us in the Protestant Reformed Churches, what we read in the pamphlet of Dr. C. Veenhof, called *Appel!* (in English, "Appeal!"), was amazing and not a little disconcerting. Had it not been that the letter of Prof. Holwerda, and its publication

by Rev. Ophoff, had become the center of attention, Veenhof's pamphlet certainly would have gained more prominence than it did. Still, it did not go unnoticed. Even the most adamant defenders of the Liberated churches among us were stunned, hardly knowing what to say. We, after all, had been thrown out of the Christian Reformed Church because of our refusal to accept common grace, and had been forced to form a new denomination. But this pamphlet, written by one who we thought understood and agreed with us, set forth a kind of common grace in a most grievous form, particularly when he wrote:

Above all we must know and maintain ... that God, our God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself baptizes the little children of the Church! ... When a child is baptized the LORD Himself comes to that child, He Himself sprinkles the water on its head and says very really and personally: *John, Mary, Anna, I, the LORD Himself, baptize you in my Holy Name. You are now of me!*... That is, He says to all those children, head for head, day in and day out, meaningfully and sincerely: *I am the LORD your God. I establish my covenant with you. I wash you from all sin in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; My Holy Spirit lives in you. In short: I declare to you the complete forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation: all the treasures and riches of which I can and will give to mankind....*

It was difficult for us to see in this anything other than a common grace in the most crucial area of Christian life, the covenant of grace.

As it was, however, it soon became apparent that this was no passing fluke. What Dr. Veenhof had written stood at the emotional heart of the Liberated covenant view. In fact, it is very difficult to overestimate how important it is to the Liberated people to be able to say of each and every one of their baptized children that they have the personal promise from God that they are his, and that should they die tomorrow

they will go to be with him in glory. Around this their whole doctrinal position seems to revolve, so that any compromise of it would constitute a loss of the essence of the covenant as they see it, and an impingement upon the very veracity of God. If baptism and the covenant are to have any meaning to them, and if God is indeed true, the expression "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" must mean that the individual child upon whom the baptismal waters fall is very really saved, and that what is said in the traditional Reformed baptismal form will hold for that child personally, namely

that God the Father witnesseth and sealeth unto us, that he doth make an eternal covenant of grace with us, and adopts us for his children and heirs.... the Son sealeth unto us, that he doth wash us in his blood from all our sins, incorporating us into the fellowship of his death and resurrection so that we are freed from all our sins, and accounted righteous before God.... the Holy Ghost assures us, by this holy sacrament, that he will dwell in us, and sanctify us to be members of Christ, applying unto us, that which we have in Christ, namely, the washing away of our sins, and the daily renewing of our lives, till we shall finally be presented without spot or wrinkle in the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

The "us" of this statement, they feel, must relate unequivocally to that individual who is being baptized, whether adult or infant, or its significance is gone.

For us, however, this presented numerous problems.

To begin with, as much as we might wish it were otherwise, the fact is that when children who are baptized and raised within the church come to years of maturity, inevitably some of them forsake the life of the covenant to live in the world. It is part of Christian experience for us just as it was in Bible

times. In the end it simply does not hold that with each child who receives the covenant sign and is raised within the church God "doth establish an eternal covenant of grace with him," adopts him for his child and he ... washes him "in his blood from all his sins, incorporating him into the fellowship of his death and resurrection ..." and dwells in him, and sanctifies him to be a member "of Christ, applying unto him, that which we have in Christ, namely, the washing away of his sins, and the daily renewing of his life, till he shall finally be presented without spot or wrinkle in the assembly of the elect in life eternal." In the end, gratefully, this is true of some, but certainly not of all. This is something that may be said of the church of God generally, of "us" as a group (as the form states it, and as it was true of Israel as a nation); and it is something for which we may pray, as we do in both prayers of the baptism form; but it is not something that is guaranteed to every individual. Rather, it is the sad experience of God's church that there are many that do go astray and finally end up far removed from "the assembly of the elect in life eternal." Eli knew this sorrow, as did Samuel, and David when he wept so bitterly at the death of Absalom; and one cannot doubt that it is true in the Liberated churches as well, as it is in the Protestant Reformed, in Presbyterian churches, Baptist, and all others. Baptismal waters do not insure salvation for anyone anywhere.

This position, accordingly, would appear to us to stand in direct contradiction to such basic biblical and Reformed truths as that of the perseverance of the saints. If every particular child has the promise of the covenant and eternal salvation individually bestowed directly by God, how is it possible that some should thereafter fall away? Certainly it would seem self-evident that, if such a child falls away, he was either never truly a covenant child, or the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints does not in ac-

tuality hold. And so, as far as we are concerned, the question for our Liberated friends remains, how can every child born and baptized in the church be very really a participant in the covenant of grace and a recipient of its promises of eternal salvation when some do not persevere to the end?

Nor is it essentially different regarding the doctrine of irresistible grace. If every covenant child personally receives the promise of God and salvation, and that grace of God is irresistible as the Canons teach, must it not be impossible that such a child should not grow in grace to the end? And, yet, in the mentality of the Liberated churches this does not seem to follow. Somewhere in their way of thinking there is a twist which is different from our thinking.

Above all, the problem comes with predestination. This doctrine has stood at the center of Reformed theology ever since Calvin was compelled to defend it against men such as Pighius, Costellio, Bolsec, and others, especially after the Synod of Dordt felt moved to protect it from the views of Jacobus Arminius and his followers. Historically it was called the *cor ecclesiae*, or "heart of the church." Moreover, when we examine the Scriptures we find that this doctrine was set forth most often as a warning against that very presumption which the Liberated seem to advocate. No one, simply because he has been born of believing parents and has received the sign of the covenant (whether circumcision in the Old Testament or baptism in the New Testament), should presume that he thereby is a child of God and an heir in the covenant of grace. Ishmael was certainly among those commanded to be circumcised (Gen. 17:9-14) even when Abraham was already pleading almost plaintively, in verse 18, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" as though it were already evident that he was not inclined so to do. Jacob and Esau undoubtedly were both circumcised; and yet Esau stands as

the primary example in Scripture of one who had been rejected of God even prior to his birth (Rom. 9:10-13). And we are told that upon leaving Egypt the children of Israel (1 Cor. 10:2) "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea"; and yet most of them perished in the wilderness (v. 5), including Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their "little children," even as Achan and his sons were certainly circumcised (Jos. 5:2) and yet perished under the judgment of God (Jos. 7:25).

But even more distinctly was this pointed out by Jesus, who used the doctrine of election precisely to bring home the fact that no Jew, just because he had received the sign of the covenant as a descendent of Abraham, should take for granted that he thereby belonged to God as an heir of the covenant promises, for, as Jesus said (Luke 3:8), "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," or more pointedly, perhaps, to these very Jews (John 10:25), "ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." And so Paul also concluded in Romans 9 concerning this very point, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Rom. 9:6, 7), after which he went on to develop the doctrine of election in one of its most pointed presentations.

The problem is, however, that when election is brought in regarding this, the Liberated almost inevitably call, "foul." They are very determined that the doctrine of predestination — which they at other times acknowledge — is not something that ought to be brought into consideration regarding the covenant of grace. As J. Kamphuis says in his book *The Everlasting Covenant*, "We should not, as it were, burden the concrete speaking of God with the mortgage of 'the eternal counsel.'" Repeatedly they claim that to do so is to become scholastic and overly logical, as though this were a very bad thing. And it is there, per-

haps, where our inability to work together enters in. Their logic is different from ours.

Underlying all human thought, as we sought to bring out in a series of articles some time ago, there is a flow of thought which we call logic, based on the principle that if one thing is true the opposite cannot be true, much as we find stated in Numbers 23:19, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" God, the source of all truth, cannot say one thing and also the opposite; and it is from this that we derive our most basic rule of Bible interpretation, namely, that in seeking to determine the meaning of any particular passage of Scripture one must do so in the light of and in harmony with all the rest of the Scriptures. As God is one, so must his revelation be one, even as Jesus said, (John 10:35), "the scripture cannot be broken." The Word of God cannot be set in contradiction with itself.

Nevertheless, through the ages there has been another view of logic which has at times prevailed, that called "rhetorical logic." Its concern is not so much in avoiding contradiction as it is with being influential and persuasive; and in order to do this it has allowed in certain instances for what has been called *duplex veritas* (double truth). Sometimes it is necessary, this view of logic holds, that truth must be seen as coming in opposing forms; and so, in order to be effective and persuasive, human speech may need to maintain ideas that are contradictory to each other. Already in the early Medieval period there were those at the University of Paris who argued that while God created the world theologically, philosophically it is eternal — in striking similarity to the recent claim by Dr. Howard VanTill of Calvin College that scientifically the world evolved, even while we maintain theologically that it was created. So too Dr. C. VanTil ar-

gued, in order to defend common grace, that room must be left for "apparent contradictions." And it would seem that it is to this same framework of thought that our Liberated brothers would appeal, so as to avoid having to bring their view

of the covenant into harmony with the doctrine of predestination. Both are to be maintained, but not in immediate conjunction with each other. Each must be treated in its own place and apart from the other, lest the

effectiveness of the gospel should be lost. Rhetorically it will not accomplish that to which it is sent.

But the problem also goes deeper than that; and to it we must return. □

The Story Of Two Margarets

Introduction

In previous articles we have noticed how a bitter struggle went on in Scotland after the Reformation to preserve the truth of Scripture and the biblical way of worshiping God. The Stuart kings were determined to impose prelacy¹ on the realm; the Presbyterians were determined to resist it. With only a brief respite during the days of Oliver Cromwell, the struggle went on from the time of James I to Charles II. Our present story begins during the reign of Charles II.

While we have discussed the stories of leaders and theologians who bravely opposed prelacy but died "normal" deaths, the pages of Scotland's history are covered with the blood of many martyrs who suffered the cruelest of torments and finally were killed for the sake of their faith. They join a company of illustrious saints who, throughout the ages, "loved not their lives unto death."

As examples of the faith of many such martyrs whose names are recorded in heaven, we turn to the lives and deaths of two women who shall serve as illustrations of those

others whose stories we cannot tell here. Though both bore the name of Margaret, one was an aged saint of 70 and the other a young girl of 18 when they were cruelly put to death for their faith.

Their early lives

Margaret MacLachlan was the widow of John Mulligen. Her husband had farmed about a mile west of the small village of Wigtown. Wigtown was at the head of the Firth² of Solway in the Stewartry of Galloway. To the south were high moors and rugged mountains which gave beauty and remoteness to the area. Margaret was left to tend the farm herself and support her simple life from its products.

She was a very plain woman, uneducated for the most part, early old with the rigors of farm life. But she was noted throughout the area as a woman of unusual intelligence and piety.

She had become persuaded of the biblical character of Presbyterianism and of the wickedness of prelacy. Not one to believe one thing and live differently from what she believed, she refused to go to her church to worship when a curate led the services and the worship was according to Anglican rites, but insisted on worshiping with like-minded people on the Lord's Day in her home. Only when non-con-

formist ministers conducted the services would she attend. This was not simple stubbornness, but a deep conviction that God was pleased only with worship which was according to His injunctions.

She was not alone in her stand; many people throughout Scotland took the same unwavering stand. But many were also forced to flee their homes and parishes to escape arrest and civil penalties. These became wanderers in their own country who sought refuge and food here and there. When they stopped at Margaret's home, her doors were always open and shelter could always be found with her.

But this was a crime in the eyes of the law, and, although she was never caught in the act, the soldiers, who knew her absence from church and opposition to prelacy, took every opportunity to plunder her farm and rob her of her few possessions.

¹ Our readers will recall that "prelacy" involved not only the hierarchical form of church government practiced by the Anglican Church, but also the heresy of Arminianism. It is probably true that at least some of the Stuart kings were so insistent on imposing prelacy because their ultimate objective was to restore Roman Catholicism in England, and Anglican prelacy was a giant step in that direction.

² Because it is important for our story, our readers ought to know that a firth is a narrow arm of the sea sometimes running deeply inland.

Before we proceed with her story, we have to tell of another Margaret, Margaret Wilson. Hers is a strange story indeed.

She was the oldest child of Gilbert Wilson, a farmer of Glenvernock, in the parish of Penningham, Wigtownshire. She had one brother, Thomas, who was about 16 at the time of Margaret's martyrdom, and one sister, Agnes, a girl of about 13 when Margaret died. They lived near and knew well Margaret MacLachlan.

The parents lived on a prosperous farm with good soil, abundant crops, and many sheep and cattle. But religious division characterized the family, and, strangely enough, it was division between parents and children.

How this is to be explained is not known. Most probably the entire family was in fact sympathetic to the Presbyterian cause; but the parents, for one reason or another, were not prepared to stand for their principles, and so worshiped in the local church under the curate and in the manner of prelacy.

But the children were different and apparently had stronger convictions than their parents. They refused to attend church when the curate presided, and they considered such unbiblical worship to be a denial of Christ their King.

Even though they were children, their absence from church did not go unnoticed. They were reported to the authorities, and when the government threatened punishment, they were forced to flee from their home to seek refuge with other wanderers in the caves of the rugged mountains of Galloway.

The parents did not escape suffering and were persecuted for their children's sake. They were forbidden to give their children food and shelter and were constantly harassed to reveal where the children were hiding. Soldiers (sometimes as many as 100) were quartered in their house and on their land, and the family was expected to support them. They were summoned repeat-

edly to the courts to give account of themselves. Their possessions were pillaged. They were soon reduced to abject poverty.

Such were the circumstances on the eve of the tragedy.

Their martyrdom

The cruel and heartless Charles II died. The wandering and homeless saints thought they would now have some surcease from danger. The two Wilson girls came out of their hiding to seek the comfort and encouragement of Margaret MacLachlan.³

They were permitted to spend only a few days with her before a friend whom they trusted betrayed them, and soldiers were hastily sent to arrest them. Both girls, along with their host, were apprehended, and immediately the two girls were thrown into "the thieves' hole," while Margaret MacLachlan was put into the prison in Wigtown. Some time later the two girls were also put into the same prison, where they at least had each other's company.

They were brutally treated. Deprived of warm fires and beds on which to sleep; given insufficient food to stave off the pangs of hunger, they were mocked and tormented.

One weapon especially was used against them. Charles II, before his death, had given various commissions throughout the land the power to require of anyone what was called an oath of abjuration. It was a kind of cruel tool which had a certain legitimacy about it. The Cameronians, a Scottish clan from the Highlands, had earlier drawn up a manifesto which vowed to resist the king if he continued his persecuting and God-defying ways. The oath of abjuration was an oath required randomly from people in which they would swear to renounce the manifesto of the Cameronians. To refuse was considered an act of treason subject to the penalties of death. Not only did commissions randomly require the oath of anyone who came their way, but soldiers, roaming the coun-

tryside, also took it upon themselves to require it of anyone they pleased. As often as not, if one refused to swear the oath, he or she was summarily shot in the open fields or in their own homes.

The three women (two, only girls), Agnes and the two Margarets, were required to swear this oath. They refused to do this, for it had become a Shibboleth of orthodoxy.

On April 13, 1685 they were summoned before the commission. Several formal charges were brought against them: they had been, so it was charged, on the battlefield of Bothwell Bridge — a charge false on the face of it; they had attended field preaching and conventicles — almost certainly true.⁴

However, since none of the charges could be proven, the three were once again required to take the oath of abjuration. Again they refused and a jury found them guilty of treason. Sentence was pronounced, and all three were ordered drowned in the Firth of Solway. The date of execution was set at May 11.

The frantic father of Agnes and Margaret hurried to Edinburgh to see if he could possibly stir up in the authorities some sense of mercy and clemency which would save his daughters. All he succeeded in doing was to buy the freedom of his youngest daughter Agnes for £100; but Margaret he could not save.

When the awful day came, the two Margarets were led by soldiers in chains to the banks of the firth. It was low tide, deliberately chosen as the time for execution. Although the townsfolk pleaded with the two Margarets to save their lives by taking the oath, they steadfastly refused.

Margaret MacLachlan was tied first to a stake pounded into the sandy soil far out in the firth where the waters of the incoming tide

³ Thomas stayed in the snows of the mountains, and his life is lost from the records.

⁴ Conventicles were house meetings where the faithful would gather for worship when they could not worship in the churches.

would cover her. Margaret Wilson was tied to a similar stake closer into shore so that she could witness the death of her aged friend and fellow saint before the waters would bury her.

It seems as if the older Margaret, spent with the sufferings of many years, said not a word. One of her tormentors shouted: "It is needless to speak to that damned old bitch; let her go to hell."

As the cold sea waters, gradually rising higher, engulfed the old saint, and as Margaret Wilson was forced to watch her drowning struggles, one of the soldiers mockingly said: "What do you think of her now." Margaret responded: "Think! I see Christ wrestling there. Think ye that we are sufferers? No; it is Christ in us, for He sends none a warfare at their own charges."⁵

When the now limp form of the first Margaret was being tossed about by the swirling tide, the waters began to engulf Margaret Wilson. Her lips were not silent. First she sang the stirring words of Psalm 25.

My sins and faults of youth
Do thou, O Lord, forget:
After thy mercy think on me,
And for thy goodness great.
God good and upright is:

The way he'll sinners show;
The meek in judgment he will
guide
And make his path to know.

And, upon finishing this Psalm, she quoted the words of Romans 8: "Who shall separate us from the love of God...?"

When the waters had finally choked her, but she was not yet dead, the soldiers loosed her from her stake, dragged her to shore, revived her, and once again confronted her with the demand to pray for the king. All the villagers, eagerly wishing to see her spared, cried, "Pray for the king!" Her response was that she wished the salvation of all men and the damnation of none, and that, if God willed, He would save the king: "Lord, give him repentance, forgiveness, and salvation, if it be Thy holy will."

But the soldiers were not content with that: "Damned bitch, we do not want such prayers." So once again they attempted to force her to take the oath of abjuration. Her response was: "No! No! No sinful oaths for me. I am one of Christ's children. Let me go."

But it was not to be. They hurled her back into the waters of the firth, and there she drowned, to

be brought through martyrdom into the company of just men made perfect.

The soldiers departed, congratulating themselves on a job well done; the townsfolk returned to their homes to try to pick up the threads of their lives; but two more saints sealed their confession with their blood.

"Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were slain with the sword: they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." □

⁵ That is, "which they must fight alone."

Strength of Youth

Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma

Living the Single Life

A little over a year ago we wrote an article that addressed the fear of single life (Vol. 70, No. 11, March 1, 1994). It was an article aimed at

those young people who are afraid that marriage might pass them by. Out of panic, these young people might resort to some desperate and sinful means to solve their perceived problem. For that reason we encouraged our young people to rely on God in faith. If it is His will that we marry, He will guide the events of

our lives that we will meet and marry that young man or woman He has chosen for us. We need not fear or force the issue. We must simply in faith follow the Lord's guiding.

In connection with this we were also reminded that it is the Lord's will for some that they remain single

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their whole life. In these instances God has a purpose for these individuals as single persons in His church. Singles also are a valuable and necessary part of the church of Jesus Christ. When we trust in God, He will make us realize that single life also can be as fulfilling as married life and can bring us great reward.

We review all this because I received a fair amount of response to this article — not so much from young people, however, as from younger and older single adults. They appreciated the encouragement the article gave to them. One wrote: "I really appreciated your article in the S.B. It not only pointed out the dangers of marrying foolishly, but it helped me to realize that as a single, I fear it. In order to fight the battle of faith, we must realize who the enemy is." This response and others like it serve to remind us as God's people of the various needs that exist among the members of the church. There are those who are beyond *fearing* the single life. They are resigned to *living* the single life.

But this raises an important question: what is the place of the single person in the life of the church and covenant? All of us must be sensitive to that question. As churches we stress the covenant fellowship and friendship that God establishes with us and with our children in the line of our generations. This blessed truth has been a great comfort to us in all of life's difficulties. There is not one individual in the church of Jesus Christ who does not benefit from this truth. There is nothing more encouraging to a believer than to know that in every circumstance of life God is our sovereign Friend who will always be there for us, to uphold and strengthen us. The comfort God's covenant affords us has been our mainstay as Reformed believers. Never, therefore, would we want to forsake this glorious truth of God's covenant.

Yet, as with all truth, there follows life. Our covenant theology has

shaped and molded our world and life view. Since God has established His covenant in the line of continued generations, we place much stress on the need for covenant homes and marriages. That is only natural. We hear many sermons and read many an article and book on the subject of marriage. We emphasize the need to establish a good marriage, since there is no room for divorce and remarriage. We are taught the duties of husbands and wives toward each other in that marriage bond. We are taught that this relationship reflects the intimate bond of fellowship that exists between Christ and the church. Not only are we taught repeatedly of marriage, but we are constantly reminded as well of our calling as covenant parents. No doubt the baptism sermons in our denomination dealing with this subject can be numbered in the thousands! Covenant marriages, covenant children, covenant homes and families — we hear it all the time! The very life of the church quite naturally centers in and revolves around the family.

But, where does the single person fit in all of this? What is his or her role in the covenant life of the church? It is true: "God setteth the solitary in families" (Ps. 68:6). But God does not set *all* the solitary in families. What function does the single person serve in the church and covenant? That question is a real one — especially when singles find themselves standing on the fringes of the life of the church. Here is how one single person expressed it to me:

Your article ("The Fear of Single Life") concludes that the church would be incomplete without us.... I believe that. However, experience often makes me *feel* otherwise.... It is my experience that many members of our churches look at the single (especially the never married) as not fitting. This accounts for the pressure people put upon their teenagers to marry. It also accounts for the fact that while people may greet the single in the

vestibule of church, the fellowship often ends there.... For the person who already feels "inferior, worthless, and undesirable" such exclusion compounds the problem. The fear of single life (which is inherent in us) increases because there is very little if any support from our fellow saints.

This thought has been expressed by several to whom I have spoken. Now, whether that is real or imagined on their part makes little difference. It places all of us as members of the church (whether single or married) before the question: where does the single believer "fit" in the sphere of God's covenant and church? If the church is incomplete without them, how, in fact, do they fill out that body of Jesus Christ?

That is a difficult question to answer, of course, because there are so many varying circumstances in the life of every single person in the church. For example, some may be single, yet fully involved with the families of their own brothers and sisters. These feel their life complete. Other singles would just as soon be left alone and on their own. They enjoy their independence, and are involved in the church as much as possible. On the other hand, however, there are certain singles that are alone, away from family, and wanting so much to be a part of the covenant life of the church. The church and her members must be sensitive to the varying needs of these brothers and sisters in the church.

Still, where do singles fit in the sphere of the church? The answer lies in large part with the single saint himself. I can answer theoretically, of course. The Bible teaches us clearly that all have a place and function in the body of Christ. Paul instructs us of this in I Corinthians 12:12-27. There he teaches us that the body is made up of many different members. Some of these members we may think to be more important than others, but in reality they cannot function well without

the other members. Every member has his proper function and part in that body. Even those members that may seem more feeble or uncomely, on these we bestow, quite often, the greatest honor. The single saint may think of himself as one of those uncomely members of the church, but this is far from true. God has tempered the body together in such a way that He gives more abundant honor to that part which lacks.

What more really can we say? With that in mind the single person in Christ's church must set himself to the task of discovering what is his particular calling in the church. To do this requires of him, first of all, contentment. He must learn what each of God's people must learn, "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." We all must learn that our value as a person does not consist in whether we are married or not. Our joy and satisfaction in life are found in belonging to Christ. Christ is our all! He has taken away our sin and guilt and has incorporated us into the body of the church. He has called us and separated us unto Himself that we might be His servants in all of life — no matter if we are a married person or a single. That is what is all important to us! And in that we can find contentment too!

With that joy in our hearts we then can set ourselves to discover what our function as an individual is in the body of the church. As we do, we bear in mind the Word of God in I Corinthians 7:32-34: the single saint "careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord." This simply means that the child of God who is "unencumbered" with marriage and a family is able to devote much more time to the things of the Lord. A minister I listened to recently stated it well: "We must view single life not as an obstacle, but as an opportunity." What talents has God given

me in particular? How can I use them in the service of the church? How can I be involved in the labor of the church in order that God's covenant might be carried on in the generations of the believers I know and love? Can I be a school teacher? Can I be a Dorcas who is known for her almsdeeds? Can I serve

... the single person in Christ's church must set himself to the task of discovering what is his particular calling in the church.

on committees of the church that require the time and effort that a married man cannot give? How can I find my particular niche in the body of Jesus Christ? With that positive attitude, we will find our function in the church, and understand that we are as much a part of the body of Christ as those who are married.

There remains, however, another side to this whole question. Perhaps the single saint does discover this for himself. Yet, what about the feeling (whether perceived or actual it does not matter) left by others that despite all the single does, he or she simply does not fit. How sensitive are we to the need of the single person in our midst? It is true that those with similar interests often seek each other out.

When we are married, it is natural to seek out another married couple. When we have an infant, it is natural to talk to another person who has a baby. When we are raising teenage children, it is quite natural that we seek out others who have teenagers at home. But what room does this leave for the single man or woman of our congregation to be a part of our lives? With some singles, as we said, this may not be a problem. With others it certainly is. (By way of an aside, the same difficulty often exists with couples who cannot have children, or with widows and widowers in the church. They feel like a fifth wheel.) As fellow saints we must be sensitive to these needs.

What can be done to aid these

brothers and sisters, to make them feel like they fit? Simple inclusion in our activities as families. When I visited one of our churches in the West I noticed a particular family that included a single woman of the congregation in all of their family's activities. She was a natural part in many functions, even meals of that family. She fit! And she felt like she fit too! Who can withhold their "bowels of mercy" to that single person who states: "The message needs to be told that it is so helpful to me when people invite me over for coffee after church." Is there scriptural warrant for this? There surely is warrant! I Corinthians 12:24-26: "... God hath tempered the body together ... that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." Galatians 6:2: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." Matthew 25:40: "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

By busying ourselves in the church as single members, and by including our single brothers and sisters in the Lord in the events of our families, we help alleviate the stigma that may belong to living the single life. In turn, this will assist in alleviating much of the fear of living single. Then, the blessed fellowship we experience together in the family of God will extend to all the members of God's household. □

"We must view single life not as an obstacle, but as an opportunity."



Remember!

What a wonderful gift is memory! The ability to recall words, ideas, and experiences belongs to man's creation in the image of God. More particularly, the ability to remember belongs to that aspect of the image of God called true knowledge. Memory allows the child of God to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, and to enjoy friendship with God on the basis of that knowledge. Truly we have been fearfully and wonderfully made. Those who study the mind and memory inform us that the ability to recall increases until the age of maturity (18-20 years); that repetition and review are great aids in fixing information in the mind; and that the accumulation of data seems to be a hindrance in remembering more information. Clearly, our children should be kept from storing up frivolous, useless facts lest their "memory banks" become too full to retain those things which are of eternal and spiritual importance. God's comforting promise, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6) implies a remembrance of spiritual instruction and direction.

Both the Hebrew and the Greek have a word, really a family of related words, that have a rich variety of meanings: to make, to mention, to call to mind, to recount, to remember. Monuments or memorials also belong to these families of words. Since the Christian religion is based on God's progressive revelation, we will see that the gift of memory is vital to God's covenant of friendship with us and our children.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the God who remembers! He has perfect understanding of all things; ever before Him are all His works. God remembers His covenant (Gen. 9:15-16); His servants (Deut. 9:27); His people for good (Neh. 13:31); our frame that we are dust (Ps. 103:14); His mercy and His truth (Ps. 105:80); and His promise (Ps. 105:42). The Lord writes a book of remembrance for them that fear Him and think upon His name (Mal. 3:16). God's remembrance is not limited to His faithfulness to His people, but He also has in memory the wicked, especially for what they have done, and do, to His people. God remembers in wrath Amalek for what they did to Israel when they came forth from Egypt (Deut. 25:17); Edom for destroying Jerusalem and dashing her little ones against the stones (Ps. 137:7); Balak and Balaam for their attempt to curse those whom God blessed

(Micah 6:5); and the entire anti-Christian world power, Babylon the great, for her iniquities (Rev. 18:1-5). God remembers and punishes all unbelief and sin with plagues, death, mourning, famine, and fire. The result is that everlastingly the wicked remember with useless remorse the sins they have committed against God and His church (Luke 16:25).

Although the remembrance of God is perfect, there is one thing God forgets, and loves to forget. He does not remember our sins but is the One who blots them out (Is. 43:25); He does not remember the sins of our youth (Ps. 25:7); in mercy He remembers no more our unrighteousness, sins, and iniquities (Heb. 8:12). The gospel truth that God sets our sins behind Him, that He casts them into the sea of everlasting forgetfulness, is not a fault or imperfection in the Godhead, but is a matter of righteousness and truth! Our sins are no more because they have been blotted out, paid for, taken out of the way, through satisfaction and atonement at the cross of Jesus Christ. The cross God remembers and never forgets!

In thankfulness for so great a salvation, we are called to remember God (Deut. 8:18); His commandments (Num. 15:39); His marvelous works (I Chron. 16:12); the Sabbath Day (Ex. 20:8); our Creator in the days of our youth (Eccles. 12:1); our guilt before God (Deut. 9:7); the poor (Gal. 2:10); all the saints (II Tim. 1:13); the Lord's death until He comes (I Cor. 11:24-25); those that have the rule over us in the church (Heb. 13:7); the welfare of Zion (Ps. 137:5, 6); the words of the Lord Jesus (Luke 24:6); and in the negative, warning sense, Lot's wife (Luke 17:32).

All these things are to be remembered, not merely by the mind with its chemical/electrical impulses, but by the mind under the influence of a believing heart. They are to be remembered in faith, which is composed of the knowledge of all that God has revealed in his Word and of confidence that God's wonderful Word is not only for others but also for *me*! Remembering these things works conversion of life every day, in sorrow for the fact that we have provoked this good God by our sins, and in rejoicing in God through Jesus Christ by delighting to do the will of God in all good works.

Do we know the Word of God as we should, calling to mind His mighty works, His faithfulness, His promises? Do we pray to God, calling upon Him to remember us for good, and beseeching Him to remember our sins no more? As people of the Book, remember! □

Rev. Kuiper is pastor of Southeast Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

SYNOD 1995



Examination



Prof. Decker examines the students in Church Polity



Congratulations

One of the highlights of Synod 1995: Seminar-ians Allen Brummel and Douglas Kuiper successfully sustain their examination before Synod and are declared candidates for the ministry of the Word of God in the PRC.



Graduation



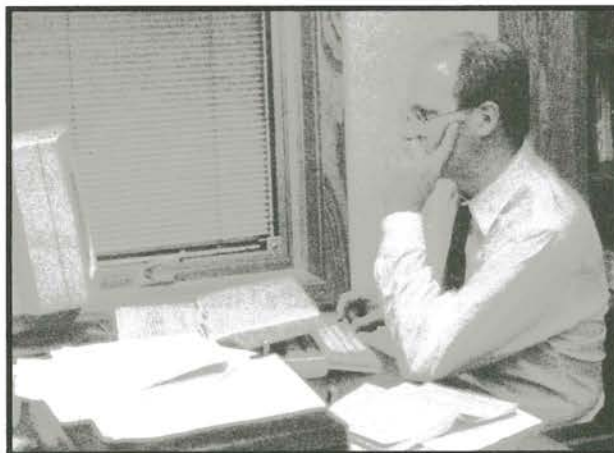
Rev. Gritters, Rev. VanOverloop



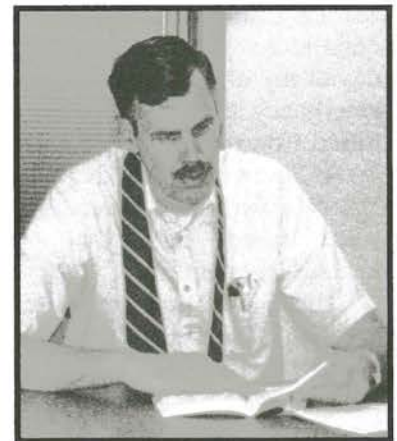
Rev. Dykstra, Prof. Hanko



*Rev. G.I. Williamson
addresses Synod*



Rev. Bruinsma



Rev. Slopsema



Rev. Kuiper, Rev. VanBaren



Elders E. VanGinkel and A. Rau

Is It Morally Justifiable to Terminate Ordinary Medical Treatment for Dying Persons?

"So when artificial nourishment provides no detectable benefits but does cause various sorts of hardships, one can argue that withdrawing it signals covenantal concern, not abandonment. We conclude, then, that withdrawing artificial feeding should sometimes be permitted and even recommended."

Christian Faith, Health, & Medical Practice, Bouma et al. (Eerdmans, 1989)

The phone call came about 4:00 P.M. on a melancholy March afternoon as I was concluding a routine day at my office. "We're calling an emergency meeting of the Board's Ethics Committee at 5:00 P.M. today at our South building," said the Rest Haven's Executive Director. "Can you be there? Dr. DeJong is going to chair the meeting."

Later, hurrying across the wet asphalt parking lot in the light drizzle toward the offices on the west wing of Rest Haven convalescent home, I had a premonition that this was to be a difficult meeting. The resident director introduced our Ethics Committee to the family — two middle-aged daughters, one from Iowa and the other from Indiana. They had demanded this meeting with the Board members, the resident director explained, because Rest Haven was failing to comply with the family's demands to terminate medical treatment for their 83

year old mother who was suffering from advanced stage Alzheimer's disease.

The family explained that their mother, a total care patient for almost ten years, had recently contracted a mild pneumonia (often caused by aspirating food) and was also temporarily unable to swallow food or water. The director had contacted a doctor who prescribed penicillin to combat the pneumonia and a nasal feeding tube to provide nutrition and hydration. With angry tears, the irate daughters implored our Ethics Committee to overrule the resident director and comply with their written request to terminate the penicillin and withhold all nutrition and hydration. It was God's will, they insisted, that their mother die from the natural consequences of advanced Alzheimers, even if this entailed malnutrition and dehydration. "She is not dying because she's starving," said the Iowa daughter, "but she's starving because she's dying." Also their mother's "quality of life" was minimal, the daughters reminded us, since she had been incoherent, unresponsive, and totally bedridden for several years. To prolong her life now by "artificial" feeding and medication, they argued, would be interfering with God's will that she die in this way.

The resident director calmly responded that since the penicillin medication and the tube feeding were "ordinary" and not "extraordinary" or "heroic" means, such rudimentary forms of medical treatment were the minimal moral obli-

gation of a Christian long-term care facility.

After a two-hour discussion, the resident's family was excused from the meeting and our committee faced the profoundly difficult ethical, religious, and legal question: Do we advise the resident director to comply with the family's wishes to withhold penicillin, food, and water from this dying woman, or is the nursing home ethically compelled to provide "ordinary" care to all residents, including nutrition and hydration?

Ethics, medicine, and law converge

In contrast to the early 1900s when two-thirds of the people in the United States died before age fifty in the family home setting, nowadays 65% of an ever aging population dies in medical institutions and nursing homes. Advancing medical technology, rapidly changing laws regarding patient's rights (including the so-called "right to die" and "advanced directives" legislation), and diverse religious ethical views have made death and dying issues extremely problematic for dying patients, their families, and Christian nursing homes and health care providers.

The perennial controversy over withdrawing "ordinary" medical care (see box) has recently focused on the controversial practice of withholding food and water from a dying patient unable to swallow. Evangelical Christians are now divided over whether the termination of nutrition and hydration is tantamount

Mr. Lanting, a member of South Holland Protestant Reformed Church, is a practicing attorney.

to euthanasia, a practice condemned by Reformed ethicists.

But in their recent book, *Christian Faith, Health, and Medical Practice*, the authors (fellows at Calvin College's Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship) conclude that withholding food and water can "sometimes" be "recommended" (see lead quote above), but readily admit this view has "possibilities for abuse":

We conclude, then, that withdrawing artificial feeding should sometimes be permitted and even recommended. Our toleration for and cooperation with it, however, require the satisfaction of two important provisions: (1) safeguards must ensure that the welfare of the terminally ill or permanently unconscious patient is the primary consideration, and (2) appropriate means must be used to minimize the negative psychological side effects. For some, however, these provisions may seem infeasible. The possibilities for abuse and the powerful symbolic nature of withdrawing what is universally accepted as necessary to sustain physical life make us respect the stand of those who find it morally impermissible to cooperate in acts of withdrawing artificial means of providing nourishment.

The dangers

The author's concern about the dangerous implications of withholding food and water is real. A recent issue of the National Right to Life News reports the case of Marjorie Nighbert in northern Florida. In 1992 Nighbert signed a power of attorney for health care (see box), giving her brother complete control over her medical decisions, and allegedly instructed him she did not want a feeding tube should she be unable to swallow.

Early in 1995 she suffered a stroke and was admitted to a convalescent home. Because her doctor and family feared she would aspirate food, they withheld all nutrition rather than place her on a feeding tube. Two weeks after one nurse had been disciplined for giving her

a little milk, Nighbert touched another nurse on the arm and asked: "Would you please give me a little something to eat?" After this nurse reported the "starvation" to the authorities, a Florida court ordered that she be placed on a feeding tube until a full hearing could be held. But soon thereafter at the hearing, the Judge ordered that her feeding tube be removed. He ruled that because of her stroke she was not competent to revoke her 1992 power of attorney given her brother, and her pleas for food were to be ignored.

Is tube feeding "extraordinary" medical treatment?

Many states now treat withholding of food and water no differently than withholding medical treatment. In fact, in a 1987 North Dakota case spoon-feeding was held to be beyond normal medical procedure. And reportedly many states permit withdrawal of nutrition and hydration if a patient cannot communicate and has not previously made his wishes known.

Death and dying issues often turn on terminology open to vigorous debate. But a crucial distinction nearly universally accepted is the difference between "ordinary" and "ex-

traordinary" means (see box). It is generally agreed by ethicists that "ordinary means" are morally obligatory, while "extraordinary" means of medical treatment are not.

But in the context of modern medical technology, how do we employ that classical distinction today? Are respirators ordinary or "extraordinary" means? What about antibiotics and penicillin? What about nasogastric tube feeding or IV hydration?

Biblical perspective on death and dying

But because contemporary medical science has provided us with a seemingly endless and bewildering array of therapeutic instrumentalities, when does the Reformed Christian family terminate treatment of the dying loved one? John Frame in his excellent book, *Medical Ethics, Principles, Persons and Problems* (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1988), notes that "medicine's death-resisting instincts must be tempered by ones that are in some sense death-accepting." He reminds the reader that Christians know there is a time to be born and a time to die (Eccles. 3:3). Moreover, the believer knows that death is not final; it holds no

Power of Attorney for Health Care: a legal document authorizing a person (an agent) to make health care decisions on behalf of another (the principal). The Power of Attorney for Health Care (POAHC) has many advantages over a Living Will, another type of "advanced directive."

Living Will: a legal document stating that the declarant does not want death-delaying medical procedures used if the declarant develops a terminal condition. A "terminal condition" is often defined as an incurable and irreversible illness such that death is imminent.

Health Care Surrogate: many states now have a Health Care Surrogate Act under which a voluntary individual, called a "surrogate," may make life-sustaining treatment decisions for an incompetent terminally ill patient who has no Living Will or POAHC. The law usually provides the surrogate may be a spouse, adult children, parents, siblings, etc.

Ordinary and extraordinary means: Ordinary means are all those medicines, treatments, and operations which offer reasonable hope of benefit and which can be obtained and used without excessive expense, pain, or other inconvenience. Extraordinary or heroic means are medical treatments which are not ordinary. Most ethicists concur that ordinary means are often morally obligatory, even in the treatment of the terminally ill.

ultimate terrors; it is the doorway to eternal life.

Frame then suggests the following guideline for termination of treatment for the dying patient (which I shall call Principle One):

Principle One: When a disease has advanced to the point where no known therapy exists and death is imminent (within two weeks without intensive medical support) despite the means used, then forms of treatment that would secure only a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life may be discontinued or withheld. In truly terminal cases the use of certain means would not be therapeutic, but only

prolong an irreversible process of dying. By "terminal illness" is meant an incurable, irreversible, and hopeless illness.

To this general principle must be added the two additional death and dying guidelines that have been suggested by certain Roman Catholic scholars and ethicists:

Principle Two: Nutrition and hydration may not be withdrawn or withheld from a patient if to do so would result in death from starvation or dehydration rather than from the underlying terminal illness or injury unless the provision of such would cause complications or

exaggerate the compromising conditions of the terminal illness.

Principle Three: A dying person must always be afforded palliative care including pain management, normal nursing care, and the Christian love, compassion, and understanding needed when death is imminent.

It is suggested that these broad guidelines may be helpful for Reformed Christian families confronting death and dying issues in today's culture where the secular principles of medical economics, so-called "quality of life" issues, and euthanasia considerations are gaining frightening influence. □

Report of Classis East

First Protestant Reformed Church,
Grand Rapids, Michigan

May 10, 1995

Classis East met in regular session on Wednesday, May 10, 1995 at the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids. Each church was represented by two delegates. Rev. R. Flikkema was the chair of this session. Also in attendance were the delegates *ad examina* from Classis West, Revs. Houck, Key, and Terpstra.

The highlight of the meeting was the granting of permission by classis for the organization of the Grace Protestant Reformed Church to be located in the Standale/Tallmadge area. This is a daughter church of Hope PRC. Twenty-one families and eleven individuals had signed the request for organization. Hope Church was appointed as the com-

mittee of classis to oversee the organization of this new congregation. The delegates *ad examina* from Classis West concurred with classis in granting this request.

The report of the Stated Clerk and the Classical Committee were received.

Classis East bid farewell to Rev. Meindert Joostens, who will be moving to the Lynden PRC. The following resolution was adopted regarding the work of Rev. Joostens in Classis East: that Classis East recognize the departure of Rev. M. Joostens from our classis in which he has faithfully labored for almost 22 years and to express our gratitude to God for his labors and fellowship among us and pray God's

blessing upon him in his future labors at Lynden PRC and Classis West.

Classical appointments were granted to Byron Center for the evening service and to First Church, Grand Rapids. The schedule has been sent to all the churches and will not be duplicated here. Rev. D. Kuiper was appointed as the moderator for First Church and Rev. Slopsema as moderator for the newly-formed Grace PRC.

The expenses of classis amounted to \$1,208.42. Classis will meet next at Hudsonville on September 13, 1995.

Respectfully submitted,
Jon J. Huiskens,
Stated Clerk □

News From Our Churches

Mr. Benjamin Wigger

Evangelism Activities

In its ongoing effort to spread the Reformed truth throughout their community, the Evangelism Committee of the Immanuel PRC in Lacombe, AB, Canada made another tape available, free to church members or anyone else who would like

one. This tape of a speech given by Rev. G. VanBaren, pastor of the Loveland, CO PRC, was entitled, "Does God Desire the Salvation of All Men?"

Rev. VanBaren was also featured in an evangelism effort by the Hudsonville, MI PRC. Their Evangelism Committee advertised a ser-

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

mon given by Rev. VanBaren on Proverbs 29:15 entitled, "The Mother's Important Work." This offer, for either a cassette or video tape, appeared the week before Mothers' Day and promoted a Reformed, biblical view that honored women and showed the beauty of mothers.

The Reformed Witness Committee of the Doon and Hull, IA PRCs, along with the Edgerton, MN PRC, continues to sponsor their weekly live call-in radio broadcast entitled *Reformed Perspectives*. On a recent broadcast, time was spent introducing the PRC to the listeners, emphasizing our roots and our distinctiveness, and debunking some common myths about our churches. This program continues to be heard on station KTSB 93.9 FM at 9:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings.

The Church Extension Committee of the Loveland, CO PRC continues to be busy distributing pamphlets and bulletins to addresses in the area of their church. They also planned a special Sunday evening service on May 21, when their pastor spoke on the subject, "How Does One Get to Heaven?"

Rev. R. Flikkema, pastor of the Covenant PRC in Wyckoff, NJ, spoke at a public lecture sponsored by Covenant's Evangelism Committee on May 19. His theme, "God's Little White Church in the Woods," was designed particularly to inform others about Covenant, but also to serve as a reminder to the congregation of who they are.

In an effort to coordinate the evangelism activities and the needed follow-up labors of the Trinity PRC in Houston, TX, the Council there decided to organize an Evangelism Association. Their first meeting was held May 23.

This summer, as in the past, the congregation of the Pella PRC in Pella, IA, will host a series of seminars. The subject for this year will be, "The Return of Christ." The first seminar was held on June 8.

Rev. S. Key, pastor of the Randolph, WI PRC, again had the

privilege to preach in the First Christian Reformed Church of East Friesland, WI. He preached from John 21:22b, the uncompromising call of Christ, "Follow Thou Me."

Mission Activities

At the request of the Foreign Mission Committee of our churches, the Consistory of the Hull, IA PRC granted their pastor, Rev. R. Moore, leave to show the slides of Ghana for the information of our churches. You may remember that Rev. Moore, along with Elder D. VanderMeer, and their wives, were in Ghana, West Africa for six weeks at the end of last year. On May 16 Rev. Moore was in the Chicago area, at the Holiday Inn in Itasca, showing slides as the guest of the Bethel PRC. The next night the Evangelism Committee of First PRC in Grand Rapids, MI sponsored Rev. Moore as he showed his slides there. The following evening, the 18th, our Hope PRC in Walker, MI served as host for Rev. Moore. These programs proved to be a wonderful opportunity to hear an informal report of the mission work being done by our churches in Ghana and to learn about the future plans for developing this field.

Minister Activities

A farewell program was held for Rev. Joostens and his family at First PRC in Grand Rapids, MI on May 21, where he served for 17 years. The following Sunday evening, May 21, Rev. Joostens preached his final sermon at First, entitled "Farewell," based on Acts 20:18-22.

Since Rev. W. Bruinsma's decline of the call he had received from First in Grand Rapids, the Council of First formed a new trio of pastors: Revs. R. Dykstra, J. Slopsema, and C. Terpstra, and on May 28 the congregation there extended a call to Rev. J. Slopsema.

Rev. A. denHartog of the Hope PRC in Redlands, CA declined two calls he was considering to serve as pastor, one from the Byron Center, MI PRC and the other from the Edgerton, MN PRC.

Since that decline the Council of the Edgerton PRC formed another trio consisting of the Revs. Flikkema, Key, and Houck. Their congregation has since extended a call to Rev. Houck.

Denominational Activities

On May 11 parents and Sunday School teachers in the Grand Rapids, MI area met together at Faith PRC in Jenison, MI to hear Pastor R. VanOverloop explain the importance of Sunday School in helping to keep God's Word alive in the hearts of children over the summer months. Four sectionals were also given by four area school teachers.

We close this issue with a special note of congratulations to all our graduates for this year. May the Lord bless you in all your future efforts. This closing Food For Thought is just for you.

Food for Thought

"Education is what remains when we have forgotten all that we have been taught."

— Marquis of Halifax □

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 24, our beloved parents, **MR. and MRS. MARVIN HAVEMAN**, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

As their children, we would like to thank them for the covenant instruction we received from them and for their love and support shown in so many ways. We rejoice with them in the many blessings God has given them through the years.

"I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psalm 34:1).

- ✿ Brent and Wilma Overway
- ✿ Les and Joyce Haveman
- ✿ Clare Haveman
- ✿ Cal and Eunice Yonker
- ✿ Doug and Marleen Haan
- ✿ Deane and Donna Wassink
- ✿ John and Deb Haveman
- 29 grand children
- 2 great grand children

Zeeland, Michigan

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Christian Fellowship Society of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church expresses heartfelt Christian sympathy to Jeff and Rose Andringa and family in the loss of their infant son,

JAMES ANDRINGA,

whom God gathered to Himself in glory shortly after birth on April 13, 1995. May they find comfort and strength from God's Word: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee" (Psalm 73:24, 25).

Rev. Richard G. Moore, President
Patty Pollema, Secretary

NOTICE!!!

With thankfulness to God, the faculty of the Protestant Reformed Theological Seminary inform the churches that they have licensed seminarians Daniel Kleyn and James Laning to speak a word of edification in the meetings for public worship. Both have recently completed their second year of study at the Seminary. The scheduling of their speaking in the worship services of the congregations will be done by the Seminary.

For the faculty,
Prof. David J. Engelsma, Rector

NOTICE!!

Grandville Protestant Reformed Church is offering private notes to help finance the new classroom addition to their church building. Competitive rates and terms are offered. Please call John G. VanBaren for details at (616) 896-7333 (evenings); or (616) 669-5337 (days).

ATTENTION PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

Protestant Reformed Special Education has available scholarship money for anyone who desires to pursue a career in Special Education. For further information, please contact Dave Rau at (616) 453-4344 or Jerry VanderKolk at (616) 688-3533.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Council of Faith Protestant Reformed Church expresses their sincere sympathy to Elder Gary Kaptein and Deacon Mark Scholten and their families in the death of

MR. HENRY KAPTEIN.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Revelation 15:13b).

Rev. K. Koole, Pres.
F. Hanko, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Council of Faith Protestant Reformed Church expresses their sincere sympathy to Deacon Donald VanDyke and his family as well as to members Gary VanDyke and family on the loss of their father and grandfather,

HERMAN VAN DYKE.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Corinthians 5:1).

Rev. Kenneth Koole, President
Fred Hanko, Clerk

NOTICE!!!

The Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools is seeking applicants for the new position of Executive Director of the Federation. For more information, please telephone Gene DeBoer at (616) 669-2835 or mail to Gene DeBoer at 4702 40th Ave., Hudsonville, MI 49426. Deadline for application is July 31.

NOTICE!!!

Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School will be in need of a principal for the 1996-1997 school year. Those interested should contact the school at 1545 Wilson Avenue S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49544, (616) 453-9717 or John VanBaren, (616) 532-7367.

NOTICE!!

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet at the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church in South Holland, IL, on Wednesday, September 20, 1995 at 8:30 a.m., the Lord willing. (Consistories should note the late date, which immediately precedes the September 21, 22 Seminary Conference on "Reformed Church Government" to be held in Grand Rapids). All material for the Agenda is to be in the hands of the Stated Clerk thirty days before Classis convenes. Delegates who need lodging or transportation from the airport should notify the Clerk of South Holland's consistory, using the forms provided for this purpose.

Rev. Steven Key,
Stated Clerk

NOTIFICATION OF CANDIDACY

The consistories of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America are hereby informed that the 1995 Synod of the PRC has declared Mr. Allen Brummel and Mr. Douglas Kuiper candidates for the gospel ministry in the Protestant Reformed Churches. The two candidates will be eligible for a call on or after July 15, 1995.

Don Doezeema, Stated Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Council and congregation of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church extends their sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Glen Griess in the death of

MR. JOE BRUMMEL,

father of Mrs. Twyla Griess, and to their children and to Miss Patti Post in the death of their grandfather. May God graciously sustain them in the assurance that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Corinthians 15:49).

Rev. G. VanBaren, Pres.
Mr. David Poortinga, Clerk