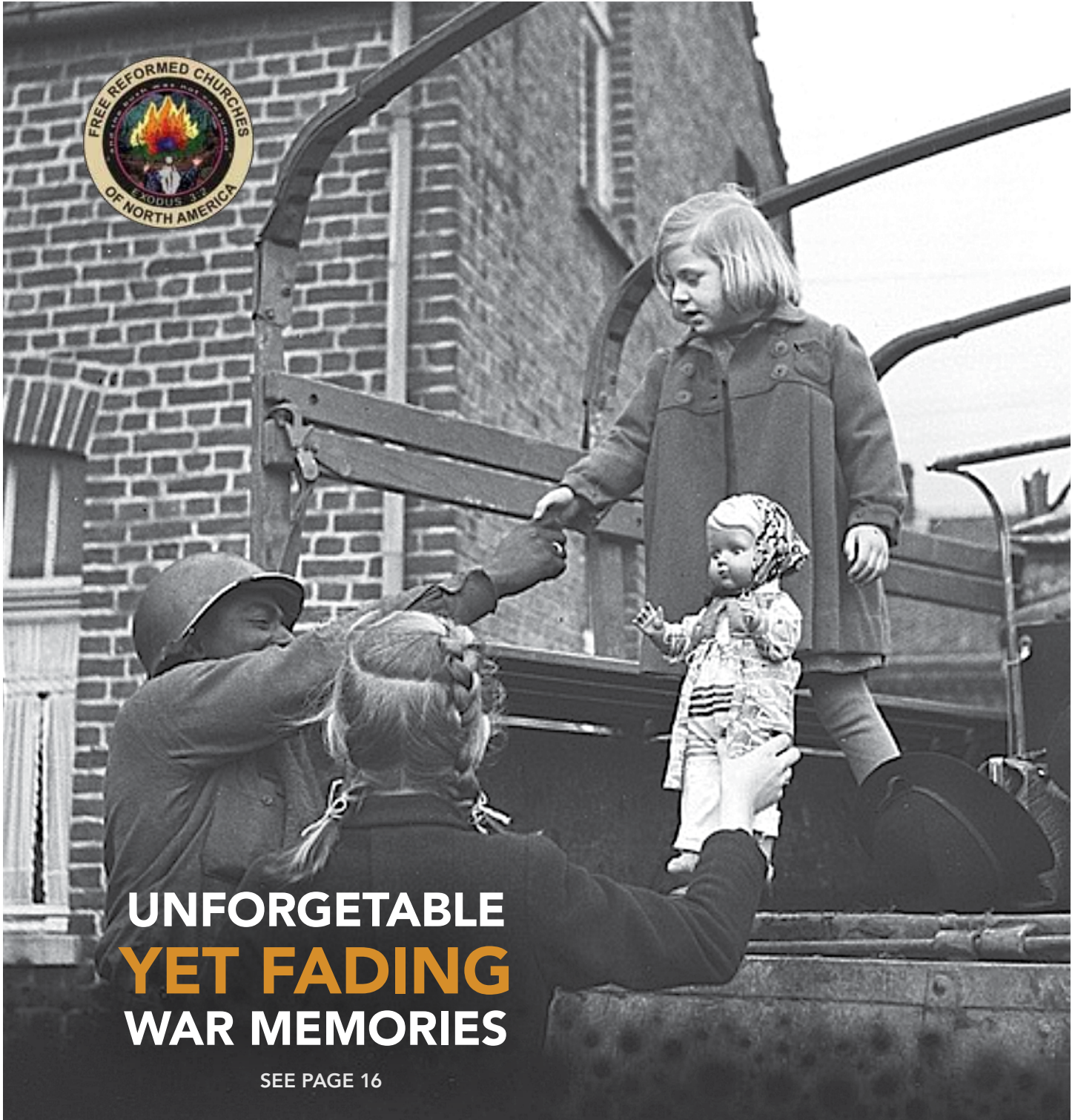


THE MESSENGER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA



UNFORGETTABLE YET FADING WAR MEMORIES

SEE PAGE 16

02 MEDITATION
THE RIGHTEOUS
SCARCELY SAVED

08 THE TIME HAS COME
A DENOMINATIONAL
CALL TO PRAYER

12 COVID-19:
REFLECTIONS ON STAYING
FOCUSED IN MINISTRY

THE RIGHTEOUS SCARCELY SAVED

And if the righteous scarcely be saved,
where shall the ungodly and the sinner
appear?

1 Peter 4:18

When Peter is speaking of being “scarcely saved,” we ought to pay attention to the fact that he is looking at the salvation of God’s people from a certain point of view. He is not speaking of the way of salvation as it has been conceived in eternity. In eternity, salvation was thought of as part of God’s eternal counsel. Neither is Peter speaking of the way of salvation as God has prepared it in Christ. From God’s side, I may say that the work of salvation is even broad. The work of Christ is perfect and fully sufficient. The entire way of salvation in Christ is as certain as it ever could be.

“Scarcely,” in my text, does not mean “almost,” as if the anchor of hope for a Christian is lodged in sandy ground. Then Peter would be contradicting himself. I would briefly like to refer to what he said in the first chapter. Have you ever noticed what he says right away in the very beginning of his letter? He says, “Peter, an apostle...to the strangers scattered throughout ..., elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you and peace, be multiplied.” He goes on to say, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”

When the apostle is speaking of salvation as being “scarcely saved,” he takes into consideration the attitude that *we* have with respect to the way planned by God. He is speaking in the subjective sense of the word and looking at all the obstacles on the way of salvation, from our part.

I stress that when Peter is speaking here of “scarcely,” that does not mean “almost.” What it does mean is this: All who are called out of darkness by the Spirit of God and brought into the kingdom of God come into the kingdom of God only by the wonder, the miracle of God’s sovereign grace. The way will go from the cross to the crown. Without that miracle of sovereign grace, there is no salvation. That God’s people do not perish in the battle of faith is an absolute *miracle of grace*. That they overcome innumerable dangers is a *miracle of grace*. That they are guarded against numerous sins is a *miracle of grace*. That, although they often stumble, they do not fall away, but

are always saved by God is a *miracle of grace*. That it is never so dark that the light will not break through again and there is never a night that is not followed by the day is a *miracle of the grace of God*. Finally, that in the last judgment, their justification will be certain before angels and men and they will not be condemned but will be eternally saved – that is an inconceivable miracle of God’s eternal mercy and grace.

Obstacles

There are so very many *obstacles* on the way of salvation for the righteous. When God brings a sinner out of the servitude of sin, and with His Holy Spirit and the power of His Word works regeneration and conversion into the heart, He does not bring a sinner into the bliss of heaven right away. No, there is a great distance between regeneration and entering into the kingdom of God on the other side of death. Scripture says that without sanctification no one shall see God. The Bible teaches us that in sanctification there is the struggle of daily conversion, as believers go step by step. The people of God will experience that it is indeed true: “scarcely saved.” If the Lord did not stop His people on the way in which they were going, if grace does not become our portion, not one sinner would ask for God.

Are God’s people better or more worthy than others who do not ask for God? Not at all! Only free, sovereign grace coming into a man’s heart changes his heart. Grace makes him ask for God. When the Lord comes, He comes with the uncovering light of the holy law. Then the sinner is shown his unrighteous existence. He comes to know, more or less, the state of his death. The power of the law seeks to put him to death, for it shows him his unworthiness before God. The law attacks the foundations of his self-righteousness. Man has to learn to see God as righteous and himself as lying in the midst of death. That sight stops us from cherishing the motions of our proud heart and we must say, “scarcely saved.”

There is more. We human beings so easily seek the ground of salvation in ourselves – our conversion, our prayer life, our tears, our attitude, or our frame of mind. How we seek to merit worthiness from our good works, which, alas, are nothing but filthy rags! How necessary it is to be more and more uncovered to our death and corruption, so that we seek the salvation that is outside of us, in the Lord Jesus Christ! Then we learn to perish with all our imagined things and learn that we can be saved only in and through the Redeemer – “scarcely saved.”

Struggle

You, God’s people, never rise above your struggle in this present valley of tears. There are many lions on the narrow way to threaten you. You should also know that there are many foxes that may ruin the vineyard. If, in the time of first love, you believe that you will leave sin forever, you will soon experience that sin does not leave you and that it is still in your heart. Oh, the indwelling sin and the power of the flesh, against which Paul warned so many times and so seriously! It is the greatest enemy of those who walk on the narrow way. The grace of God brings about a break with sin, but soon you find that sin keeps on following you and working within you.

The day of conversion brings into your life a struggle against your own flesh and blood – a struggle that goes on from day to day. You do what you do not want to do. That is what Paul says in the epistle to the Romans. You seek what you do not want to possess. Then the vapour of your unrighteousness, which comes out of the fountain of misery in your life, gradually becomes – not thinner – but I dare to say even thicker. All kinds of monstrosities arise out of your ungodly heart and soul. Where one sin has been defeated, two or three may even take the place of the first one. You suppress a sinful thought, but a word is already spoken unawares. If you withhold a sinful word, a sinful thought has already taken hold of you. In the life of conversion, heart corruption and enmity against God are uncovered more and more! It is “scarcely saved.”

Are God’s people better or more worthy than others who do not ask for God? Not at all! Only free, sovereign grace coming into a man’s heart changes his heart. Grace makes him ask for God. When the Lord comes, He comes with the uncovering light of the holy law.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

Meditation
The Righteous
Scarcely Saved

05

THE TIME HAS COME:
Denominational
Special Day of Prayer

06

EDITORIAL
Be Sober,
Watch Unto Prayer

08

BIBLE STUDY:
The Exodus on
the Cross

10

COVID-19 RESPONSE:
Reflections on Staying
Focused in Ministry

14

WAR MEMORIES:
Unforgettable Yet Fading
War Memories

18

WAR MEMORIES:
Post-War Hopes
and Fears

20

BOOK REVIEW:
Sweeter By The Dozen

22

SEMINARY NEWS:
Graduation &
Commencement

24

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Stillwaters

PS 23:2

Christian Retirement Community

- ❑ Life lease independent living with a pathway to full care
- ❑ Maintenance-free living with many amenities
- ❑ Close to several Reformed churches



A New Christian Retirement Development is Underway!

In Beautiful Norwich Ontario

CONTACT US
while suites are
still available!



Phone: 226-796-0250
Email: email@stillwaters.info



COAH

COME OVER AND HELP



VISIT WWW.COAH.ORG CALL 888-844-2624

**PARTNERING WITH CHURCHES IN EASTERN EUROPE
TO BRING GLORY TO GOD THROUGH GOSPEL
PROCLAMATION AND PRACTICAL MINISTRY.**

MEDITATION *Continued...*

There is more. The old friends of the sinful heart continue alongside the narrow way of grace. They sing their enchanting songs. They flatter us. They try to re-establish the old connections. Oh, the world has so much to offer! When we refuse one thing, there will be something else. If you despise its pleasure, it offers you wealth and possessions. If you do not care for the wealth of the world, it may oppress you with the troubles and obstacles of life. All too often, your foolish, sinful heart gives ear to it. How often does the world not drive men away from God and His Word? As far as our position in the midst of the world is concerned, it is again “scarcely saved.”

There is also Satan. He is a deceiver. He has only one purpose: to bring about the downfall especially of God’s people and to assault God Himself. He is willing to risk everything and promises everything, as long as salvation can be taken away from you. Human means are in his service. If he believes he can attain his purpose by taking away your humility, he will gratify your pride. He tries to achieve his purposes by making you afraid, by threatening you, or by making you despair. He will attack you with his temptations and oppress your soul. He tries to make you depart from the way of God’s Word and sanctification by tempting you to make you fall into sin.

Eternal Wonder

Do you not understand that what Peter says is true: The righteous is “scarcely saved”? If the Lord was not at the same time faithful, almighty, and merciful, we would perish. It is a miracle indeed that man receives grace. It is a miracle that he is kept on the way of life. It is a miracle, an eternal wonder, that he may enter into heaven. The righteous man is “scarcely saved,” but he is saved, because God is the faithful One! ^v

This meditation is drawn from a sermon preached by Rev. J. Tamminga fifty years ago, on May 3, 1970 in Grand Rapids, and can be found in full in Selected Sermons of Early Free Reformed Ministers, published by the Free Reformed Publications Committee. It was referenced in the Free Reformed Prayer day service on Saturday, April 25.

Don't discard used Christian literature or Bibles!

CHRISTIAN SALVAGE MISSION

“Worldwide Distribution of Evangelical Literature”

3 – 120 Lancing Drive, Hamilton, ON Canada L8W 3A1

Phone/Fax: 905-574-3334 Email: info@csmcanda.org

www.csmcanada.org

The mandate of Christian Salvage Mission is to gather Bibles and other evangelical Christian literature that is no longer needed from the shelves of people across Canada and ship it to Christians in third world countries who are less blessed than we are.

“Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.”

John 6:12

THE TIME HAS COME: DENOMINATIONAL SPECIAL DAY OF PRAYER



On April 16, 2020, Free Reformed consistories received the following letter:

Article 66 of our Church Order states: “In times of war, epidemics, persecution of the churches, and other calamities, prayer days shall be proclaimed by the committee appointed for this purpose by the Synod.” The two consistories appointed to proclaim such special prayer days are Dundas and Hamilton (Art. 66A).

Brethren, we are in the midst of a global COVID-19 epidemic. God has sent this plague (Ex. 8:19; 2 Sam. 24:15; Am. 3:6). The impact of this invading sickness is difficult to comprehend. It emphasizes the great need for our knees to bend, our hands to fold and our hearts to cry to heaven. We realize that the difficulty in this situation is that we are not able to gather together as congregations at this time. We recognize that, as well as the various local initiatives of prayer meetings etc. But with modern technology we believe we can join together with one online service listening to the same sermon and joining our hearts with one prayer.

In light of this global pandemic and in accordance with our church order, we issue a call to the Free Reformed Churches of North America for a special day of prayer on **Saturday, April 25 with a service at 1:00 PM (EST)** led by Dr. G.M. Bilkes in Grand Rapids Free Reformed Church through Sermon Audio. Information regarding Sermon Audio and church telephone information is included. (see page 2)

There is reason for us as churches to examine ourselves (Ps. 139:23-24), to confess and lament our sins (Ps. 51:1-4), to repent from our idolatrous inclinations, to petition Him for His forgiving, renewing, preserving and healing mercies, and to glorify Him for who He is and what He has done as Judge of all the earth and as Redeemer and Lord.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14).

Consistories encouraged families to engage in prayer personally and as families on that day and also join together with the whole

denomination for a service of prayer. While synodical prayer services can be joined by all in the denomination, never before has there been one service which all members were urged to join. In this service, Dr. G. M. Bilkes led in prayer and preached on 1 Peter 4:17-19 (available on sermonaudio). Here is a summary of the message of God’s word brought at that occasion.

Our denomination has been called to a special day of prayer and fasting in light of the COVID-19 global pandemic. For most of us, what we see, hear, and experience around us has been unprecedented. How are we to understand our times? Scripture helps us to understand the time in which we find ourselves. Written as part of a circular letter to Christians undergoing persecution and about to experience the fire of Nero’s persecution, 1 Peter 4:17-19 tells us that *the time has come*. The time has come, first, for *seriousness about life* (v. 17). God’s corrective or remedial judgments come first upon the church. We should search our hearts and ask what in our lives, also as congregations, that God is judging.

Secondly, the time has come for *urgency regarding salvation* (v. 18). Salvation is not something to be taken lightly. Believers are “scarcely saved,” meaning with much cost, much danger, much strife, much warfare, and much that humbles them. Though it is secure in God, yet it involves “violent sweating and striving” (Samuel Rutherford). In Peter’s words, those outside of Christ disobey the gospel, and without repentance their end will be something that Peter neither can nor dare put into words. Not answering his own question, Peter leaves us with “a holy shudder” at the prospect of those who reject the gospel of the cross of Christ for sinners. We need the gospel of the cross of Christ pressed upon us all with great compassion and urgency.

Thirdly, ours is a time to *commit our souls to the safekeeping of a faithful Creator* (v. 20). In His last saying on the cross, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit” the Savior procured and presents the place of safety for all His people: the faithful hands of God. There every soul committed to Him in faith is safe. He cannot deny Himself. He will not forsake the works of His own hands. 🕯️

THE EPIDEMIC OF LONELINESS: THE CHURCH'S CALLING



One of the hardest sufferings humans can endure is loneliness. Being in solitary confinement is considered a severe punishment. Many people in our cities and nursing homes will tell you that the hardest part of what they are going through is loneliness day after day, week after week. Many who have lost loved ones feel the empty place tangibly. Presently, with quarantines, social distancing, and isolation, many people are feeling the additional pain of being more alone.

Even apart from the quarantines due to COVID-19, loneliness has been on the rise for some time in the Western world. In 2018, the United Kingdom appointed a Minister for Loneliness for the first time. Broken families, social media use, transiency, and loss of connection through decline of the influence of religion are often considered causes for the epidemic of loneliness.

Loneliness is also on the rise among young people, according to two recent surveys. One survey found 29 percent of millennials “always or often” feeling lonely, and 27 percent having no close friends. These results are a contrast with baby boomers, whom you might expect to feel more lonely, who answered the same questions at a rate of 15 and 16 percent respectively.

Mental health, as well as general health issues, are bound up with loneliness. Depression worsens with loneliness and loneliness can exacerbate other mental health issues. Other common illnesses, and even death, are brought on or hastened by loneliness.

Biblical Voices

The Bible is not silent about loneliness. Many Psalms speak of the pain of loneliness (Ps. 38:11; 102:7). Because of his message and office, Jeremiah experienced isolation and expresses it (Jer. 15:17). The apostle Paul too was no stranger to loneliness. During those years in prison, when perhaps he had a visitor here and there, a guard here or there, Paul, who had loved people and moved among so many, must have felt lonely. In his last letter, it is not hard to hear the pain in some of the last words we hear from Paul: All men forsook me; only Luke is with me (2 Tim. 4:11-16)

The Lord Jesus knew all sorts of pain and suffering. We read of Him: “In all their affliction he was afflicted” (Isa. 63:9). Certainly, part of His affliction was His experience of loneliness or isolation. The great comfort He is able to give His people came at the cost of His own loneliness and suffering. On the night of His betrayal, He said to His disciples: “Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me” (John 16:32; see also John 8:16).

People were not made to be alone. By that, I am not referring in the first instance to the institution of marriage. God made man in His own image and likeness, that we might relate to Him, and to others. To be sent away from the communion of God was a punishment for sin, and broken relationships are a result of our sin in Adam. If love to God and our neighbour are the great commandments, separation from God and from other people is part of the misery in which we find ourselves due to the Fall.

Part of the trial and temptation of the sinless Son of God in our nature was loneliness. Yet, before the disciples were scattered, each to their own place, He gave them many comforts that He would obtain for them by His suffering and death. He

would not leave them orphans. He would come to them. Yet He is honest about the trials His people will face: “In the world ye shall have tribulation” (John 16:33).

The Gospel of Christ

The calling of the church in our world is bound up with the preaching of the gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ is needed in every age, as God’s answer to the deepest problems we have brought on ourselves. This gospel must be preached to all creatures, and the loneliest can and should not be forgotten. Modern media, though it also brings many problems, can be used to reach many lonely people with the gospel. In the gospel, we may proclaim a Savior from sin and all its devastation. His Word can comfort in the deepest loneliness we might be called to face. Many of our older readers might remember Queen Wilhelmina’s expression, which is the title of her Memoirs: “Lonely, but Not Alone” (*Eenzaam maar niet alleen*). Whether she drew this from the words of Christ, I am not sure, but Christ knew what it was to be “alone, yet not alone.”

Through Christ we can even learn to cherish times of being alone. Christ Himself would wake early and go into the wilderness to pray (Luke 6:12). Solitude can be blessed by God, as it was when the angel wrestled with Jacob who had withdrawn from his family and friends (Gen. 32:24). Because of Christ’s work on behalf of His people, there are many promises we may plead by faith. Think of Isaiah 49:15: “Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee.” Or Isaiah 50:7: “For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded.” Or Isaiah 54:10: “For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee.”

Pastoral Care

Sheep cannot survive on their own. They need the shepherd and the flock. One of the great benefits of worship is to be among the people of God. One of the great benefits of being part of a congregation is the tangible fellowship members have with each other. So much of the epistles’ teaching about the life of the church is about love towards each other in the body of Christ (e.g. Rom. 12, 1 Cor 12). In a day of great social disconnectedness, the church needs to be all the more striving to connect people to people. Pastors, elders, deacons, and all Christians should reach into the lives of people, especially people suffering from loneliness. Regular connection with people can help in untold ways.

During these days of social distancing, we need to be more creative and persistent in pursuing each other with real connectedness. Checking in regularly with members who need to quarantine themselves is only a first step. I remember hearing about a woman from our church who lived by herself, whose daughter called her in the evening, and the woman said: “It’s lovely to hear your voice. Yours is the first human voice I’ve heard all day.” Mobilizing people to send letters or drop off care baskets can help share the load. Young people can find their lives enriched by reaching out and connecting with members who are unable to leave their homes. When quarantines are not in effect, sharing meals or meeting for coffee can greatly help stave off the toll of loneliness.

Outreach and Prayer

One of the practical things that greatly helped the witness of the church in the book of Acts on a human level was how people formed a close-knit community, aiding the poor and vulnerable through the deaconate (Acts 6:1-6) and Dorcas-like ministries (Acts 9:36-42). To reach out into the very neighborhoods in which our churches find themselves, nearby urban centers, rural areas, or institutions such as nursing homes, prisons, or homeless shelters can be ways in which the fragrance of Christ’s care finds entrance into people’s lives, if not the gospel itself.

Nothing can and should be done without much prayer for God’s blessing. Prayer itself is communion with God and fosters communion among the people of God. Even when we pray alone, we are not alone. When we truly pray, Father, Son, and Spirit are near, and we are bound together with many needy supplicants.

One day, none of those supplicants will ever feel or be alone, for God will be all and in all. What a contrast that will be with those who will be outside, forever separated from communion with God. Let us set our sights on the place where loneliness will never come, and to be with Christ, which is far better. ●

EDITOR: Dr. Gerald M. Bilkes
2692 Bridge Place NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
USA · T: 616.977.0599 ext.121
E: jerry.bilkes@prts.edu

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Rev. David H. Kranendonk
T: 226.980.9607 · E: kranendonk@frcna.org
The Editors report to the Synodical Publications Committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Rev. J. Procee, Secretary
4234 Perth Line 20, St. Pauls, ON N0K 1V0
T: 519.801.6485 · E: joprocee@gmail.com
· Mr. David Tamminga
· Rev. Ian Macleod
· Dr. Gerald M. Bilkes
· Rev. W. Klaver
· Rev. Scott Dibbet
· Mr. Hans VanDoodewaard
· Mr. Michael Driesse
· Mr. John DenDekker, Treasurer

SUBSCRIPTION RATE
Canada & U.S.A. - \$33.00 ANNUALLY
PER SUBSCRIPTION The Messenger is published 11 times per year (July & August issues are combined).

SUBSCRIPTIONS/REMITTANCES
Subscription requests, invoices, and payments should be addressed to:
Janey Slingerland
(Publications Administrator)
18 Chapala Cres. S.E.
Calgary, AB T2X 3M4 CANADA
T: 403.254.6591 · E: bookorders@frcna.org

SUBMISSIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTICES: All articles, notices for family announcements, obituaries, anniversaries, and non-commercial advertisements for the **JULY/AUGUST 2020** issue should reach the editor no later than **TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2020** and should be sent to:
Mrs. Rhonda Kroesbergen
(Messenger Administrator)
E: messenger@frcna.org

OPEN WINDOWS
This bi-monthly publication for children is under the direction of the Free Reformed Publications Committee:
Rev. Jerrold Lewis, General Editor
160 West Parkway
Pompton Plains, NJ 07444
E: jlewis@frcna.org

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MISSIONS AND OUTREACH CAUSES SHOULD BE DIRECTED AS FOLLOWS:

FOREIGN MISSIONS
Dietrich DeKruyff, Financial Administrator
14 Southland Dr., London, ON. N6P 1C2
E: dietrichdekruyff@gmail.com

Keep in contact with your missionaries online:

RADIO EVANGELISM & HOME MISSIONS
Banner of Truth Radio Broadcast
Mr. John denDekker, Treasurer
16726 – 80th Avenue
Surrey, BC V4N 0G8 CANADA
T: 604.576.8935 · E: jdenDekker@telus.net

REFUGEE FUND
James Van der Zwan, Treasurer
26829 – 33B Ave., Aldergrove, BC V4W 3G8
T: 604.818.3423 · E: jplumber@telus.net

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY TO ISRAEL
Mr. John Wilbrink, Treasurer
8 Weneil Drive, Freeleton, ON L8B 0Z6
T: 905.659.7413 · E: john.wilbrink@gmail.com

Read The Messenger on the Free Reformed website: www.frcna.org



WAVES OF EXODUS 7: THE EXODUS ON THE CROSS

READ: LUKE 9:18-36

The theme of exodus does not continue on the same level throughout the Bible, as if there are just an endless series of “redemptions,” one after another. Instead, all the instances of redemption pictured throughout the Old and New Testaments anticipated the death of Christ on the cross. That was the true and final exodus or deliverance of sinners from all tribes, tongues, and nations. There true redemption was effected, as Christ Himself declared in triumph: “It is finished” (John 19:30).

That this redemption was to be viewed as an exodus is most explicit in the gospel of Luke, when Moses and Elijah appeared on a mountain and talked with Christ about His “Exodus” (9:31). The word translated into English as “decease,” “departure,” or “death” is literally “exodus” in Greek.

His Majesty

Just prior to the event of the Transfiguration, Christ had multiplied a boy’s few loaves and fishes, and fed a crowd of thousands on a hillside (Luke 9:16-17). After that, in Caesarea Philippi, Christ had asked the disciples whom people said He was, and Peter made his famous confession that Jesus was the Christ of God (Luke 9:20). Right on the heels of this confession, Christ began to foretell His rejection, betrayal, suffering, and death: “The Son of man must suffer many things,” He had said, as He called His disciples to take up their crosses and follow Him (Luke 9:22-26).

About a week later, Christ climbed one of the mountains in this region, either Mt. Tabor or part of Mt. Hermon. Commentators believe that it was nighttime. This makes sense because of several things Luke mentions: Jesus was going to pray, which He often did at night; the disciples were sleeping; and they came the next day back down from the mountain. The darkness of the night would have been a great backdrop for the Transfiguration as Christ’s face and clothes glistened more brightly than the sun (see Matt. 17:2).

What a confirmation this was for Christ. He was about to go the road of suffering, but here the Father gave Him a taste of the glory that was to follow suffering. What an important preparation this also was for the disciples. They were soon going to be offended because of His suffering. Yet somewhere in their hearts and minds they would not be able to forget this vision of the glorified Christ. It would stay with them until after the resurrection, when they would be able to piece all these events together (Mark 9:9-10).

Basically, the disciples were brought face to face with the heavenly world, a world which is all brightness and no darkness. Elijah and Moses, departed saints, were there, shining. The texts say

that they appeared with Christ “in glory” (Luke 9:31). Yet Moses and Elijah did not come close to being what Christ is. This glory was not an equally shared glory between Elijah, Moses, and Christ. The truly dazzling brightness came from Christ.

Certainly, the disciples had never witnessed anything like this before in Christ. This would leave a lasting impression on them. John later wrote: “We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). After the events of Christ’s crucifixion, the disciples would learn by the Spirit to see the glory of the cross as well. At the time it seemed so dark, but the brightness of the cross would all become clear by faith after the resurrection.

Peter would say: We were “eyewitnesses of His Majesty” (2 Pet. 1:16). Would this not have been an amazing sight to see? The dark sky lit up with something brighter than the sun! Wouldn’t that have been incredible? Yet, we can see this very glory through the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:19-21).

His Exodus

What do you think Moses, Elijah, and Christ would speak about when they would come together? Moses had led the people during the first exodus, through the wilderness, and to the edge of the promised land. He had witnessed great events that spoke of God’s redeeming power and mercy. He also knew that the first exodus would not be the final one, and that the sin of the people called for a Prophet and Mediator to come better than himself. Many centuries later, the prophet Elijah had led the people through a second exodus from idolatry in the land of promise. He too understood that a much greater Prophet would arise, and on the Mount of Transfiguration, he spoke with Him about the final redemption at Jerusalem! Christ would redeem His people, not with silver or gold, but with His precious blood. He would be their Passover Lamb, who would free them from the slavery of sin and lead into an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled (1 Pet. 1:3-5).

This was the subject of the conversation on the top of the mountain: Christ’s work of redemption. Moses and Elijah had seen it in the types and shadows. Now the reality would happen. Now God’s people would be redeemed from all their iniquity. Now the angel of death would put his sword into his sheath, for the Shepherd would die for His sheep. On the cross, God would see the blood and pass over His blood-bought people from every generation. On Calvary, what Elijah had witnessed would be fulfilled. Now an unseen fire would come down on Christ the sacrifice, who would be made a curse, so that the people would receive blessing! These were the sorts of things of which Moses,

Elijah, and Christ were conversing.

Isn’t this what fills “the more sure word of prophecy,” the Bible? On every page, it tells us not only of the glory of Christ, but also that that glory will come through sufferings. Do you have an eye for this from the Scriptures? Do you know your need of this work of redemption personally? If you do, you will also know something of the next thing to note about this Exodus.

His Voice

All the while that this holy conference was going on between Elijah, Moses, and Christ, what do you think Peter, James, and John would be doing? Don’t you think they would be listening to every word, with rapt attention? However, the disciples were not as attuned to this conference as they should have been. Like all God’s people, they were prone to misunderstanding and mistaking. Listen to Peter: “It is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses; one for Elias, and one for Christ” (Luke 9:33).

However well-intentioned Peter might have felt, Luke tells us he didn’t know what he was saying (Luke 9:33). Remember the three of them were just talking about the Exodus that Christ would accomplish at Jerusalem. It was time for Christ to be on His way. Peter had tried to stand in the way of Christ’s

suffering before (Matt. 16:22) and here he seems to do so again. Perhaps he simply wanted to stay with this “mountain top experience.”

Yet notice how God responded. He came in a cloud and overshadowed them while Peter is still speaking (Luke 9:34). The Father didn’t approve of Peter’s idea but interrupted it and directed him differently: “This is my beloved Son: hear him” (Luke 9:35). In other words: “He is greater than a tabernacle. He is greater than the Temple. Focus on Him, and especially, listen to Him.”

Literally, the verse says: “Him be hearing!” Be constantly listening to Him and everything He says. Listen to His commands, promises, doctrines, and warnings. Above all listen to Him, the final Word of the Lord (Heb. 1:1-3).

When we focus on Him, He is at the center of our gaze. Then after this life, I will see Him face to face. There will be no night in heaven. He will be the Lamp there. Robert Murray M’Cheyne penned these words:

When I stand before the throne, dressed in beauty not my own,
when I see thee as thou art; love thee with unsinning heart;
then Lord, shall I truly know; not till then how much I owe. 11

QUESTIONS

- 01 What comfort can believers draw from the fact that Moses and Elijah appeared in glory with Christ after what happens at the death of believers?
- 02 With Moses and Elijah, we have representatives of the law and the prophets, the whole of the Old Testament. Just like they talked with Christ about redemption, so too the Bible witnesses on every page about the redemption which Christ accomplished. Give some examples of this truth.
- 03 How do we know that Peter didn’t know what he was talking about when he brought up the tabernacles? How does Peter picture what we too often do?
- 04 How is “This is my Beloved Son: hear ye Him” the essence of the gospel and the Christian life?

REFLECTIONS ON STAYING FOCUSED IN MINISTRY

The whole world is facing a pandemic, which has resulted in governments implementing various orders and recommendations with the goal of controlling the spread of the virus known as COVID-19. How should we respond to these government orders and recommendations?

We should be concerned with two extremes. One states, “We must obey the government and therefore can’t even have a contrary opinion.” The other says, “We should just ignore the government’s orders and worship anyway.”

We should be very careful about blindly following the government. Scripture does not require us to do so. It teaches that there are reasonable limits on authority in every sphere of life – government, church, and family. In fact, there are occasions when we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). However, many today blindly follow every government order and recommendation without question. In many ways, our governments, for the most part, have abrogated their leadership responsibilities to health ‘experts’. Instead, our government should show leadership and be consulting with health professionals (which are not necessarily the health ‘experts’ on the news), business leaders, religious leaders, economists, educational leaders, and others, rather than just shifting responsibility to the health ‘experts’. The temptation for them is to try to politically insulate themselves behind health ‘experts’ or ‘science,’ rather than doing what is right themselves.

If you carefully consider the data published by your jurisdiction, you will realize that what is presented in the daily gov-

ernment press releases is often one-sided propaganda to sway the sheep to follow blindly. They present the facts that support what they are doing, but neglect those facts which do not help their perspective. This concerning approach is not in accordance with the ninth commandment. Government officials are largely developing a ‘narrative’ to control people to do as they desire. That’s what Hitler did before WWII (not that our government is like the Nazi regime). We should be very careful about blindly following our government officials or simply listening to our news media. We should listen critically to what is being said and think - even though I’ve heard government officials say, “Don’t think... just do what we say!” Please look carefully at the data of your jurisdiction, which varies considerably, and consider it in the light of a Biblical worldview and values.

I am not suggesting that there is some ‘conspiracy’ by the liberals or the socialists to change our society, but we need to acknowledge that our governments are guided by different principles, many of which are unbiblical. Remember that these same health ‘experts’ promote the wickedness of abortion and euthanasia. Governments are saying that they will follow science, but we need to realize that there is no unanimity among scientists about this issue, nor have their models proven to be accurate. Many have believed the lie that science is pure facts, while in reality it involves a great deal of interpretation of the facts in light of one’s worldview.

Realize that governments are increasingly being guided by unbiblical world views. They classify liquor stores, marijuana shops, and abortion services as ‘essential,’ but not the worship of the Lord. Home Depot is allowed to have as many people in the store as they want, as long as they can show they maintain physical distancing - but the church is only allowed 50 (yes, we are allowed 50 in British Columbia!), regardless of its size because it is non-essential. In Canada, at the time of writing, restrictions range widely. In British Columbia, gatherings of 50 are still okay, while the limit is 15 in Alberta, no more than 5 in Ontario, and just 2 in Quebec and Nova Scotia. Many people in the USA are locked down in their homes. Some of these restrictions were not even done during the height of the Spanish flu which killed 20 million people in 1918-1919! We could have had 100 in our church on Sunday, and still maintained better physical distancing than Walmart. Why is there a different standard for the church services than Walmart?

As I write this, various jurisdictions are talking about relaxing restrictions. Why are casinos open earlier than churches in some of them? Isn’t there much more chance of transmitting





the virus in casinos than churches? Are these not indications that the current decisions are not merely guided by ‘science,’ but by secular worldviews and ungodly values? As citizens in a democratic country, we have the God-given right and responsibility to ask questions about those who are appointed in leadership roles. We must do it respectfully as those who honour the authorities appointed by God (Rom. 13:1).

Though we must follow government orders as long as they are not contrary to Scripture, we have reason to point out government inconsistencies and highlight the importance of worship. Let’s phone our government representatives and respectfully inform them that the worship of our God is actually the most important aspect of our lives – and it involves physically gathering together on the Lord’s Day. It is a time when we meet with the LORD! We do so in a very particular way when we are sitting under the preaching of the Gospel. There we hear not only about the LORD, but hear from the LORD! In the worship service, the Lord speaks in a unique way, which is not true of any other time (Romans 10:14-17)! That makes the gathering place of the people of God a lovely place!

Some, even before this pandemic, have claimed that participating in worship via modern technology is a suitable replacement for corporate worship, but it is NOT, because the Bible speaks of physically gathering on the Lord’s Day. Gathering for worship is not just something we do, for God saved us to be together as an assembly, as a family, as brothers and sisters in the LORD. Paul uses phrases in 1 Corinthians 11 like when *you come together as a church* or later, he says, *when the whole church comes together*. The New Testament writers instruct churches to do activities that can only be done by meeting together, such as teaching and admonishing one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16), reading Scripture publicly (1 Tim. 4:13), encouraging one another (Heb. 10:24–25), and participating in the sacraments (1 Cor. 10:17, 11:18, 33). None of these can happen in a vacuum, but happen in the physical gathering of the congregation in space and time.¹ The government, for the most part, has no idea of the importance of worship. Do we understand the importance of the public corporate worship of the people of God? Why isn’t the corporate worship of the LORD classified as an essential service? I would recommend you read the wonderful article on this topic produced by ARPA (Association for Reformed Political Action). You can find it on their website. Let me quote one sentence from it: “Church services should not...be lumped in with things like concerts and sporting events and cancelled without consideration for reasonable accommodation. Such a one-size-fits-all approach denigrates corporate worship to the level of a hockey game.”²

TEACHING POSITIONS

HERITAGE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL invites applications for the following teaching positions for the current school year:

- PART TIME SECONDARY FRENCH TEACHER
- FULL TIME SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER (Beginning Dec. 2020)

PART TIME ELEMENTARY TEACHERS (Maternity Leaves March-June 2020)

And the 2020/21 school year:

- POSSIBLE, FULL TIME ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS
- POSSIBLE, FULL TIME EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

HCS has 660 students from K to 12, a supportive Reformed Christian community, and a cohesive, professional faculty and staff of 65+ persons, and beautiful, modern facilities.

We seek

- Qualified applicants who seek to serve Jesus Christ in the area of Christian education and who submit to Holy Scripture as confessed in the Reformed creeds
- Committed professionals who positively lead students to a life of dedicated service to our Lord
- Enthusiastic, dedicated rookies or seasoned veterans looking for a positive change

How to join us

Submit a resumé, a statement of faith, and references (including one from your current pastor). Teacher applicants, please submit your philosophy of education as well. Please forward inquiries &/or applications to:

Mr. Brian Kemper,

Principal, Heritage Christian School
2850 Fourth Avenue, Box 400, Jordan
Station, ON, Canada L0R 1S0

T: (905) 562-7303 • **E:** heritage@hcsjordan.ca • **W:** www.hcsjordan.ca

JORDAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Jordan Christian School is a learning community that embraces the God-glorifying calling of educating students for Christian service. Located in the heart of Niagara wine country near St. Catharines, JCS provides a JK-12 program that is actively taught from a solidly Reformed perspective, while preparing students with the fundamental skills for further learning. We are currently accepting applications for the following positions for the **2020-21 school year:**

- A PART- OR FULL-TIME ELEMENTARY TEACHING POSITION
- A FULL-TIME SECONDARY TEACHING POSITION
- A FULL-TIME EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT

Please include with your application, your philosophy of education and statement of faith and send it to the attention of Mr. Paul Wagenaar at principal@ourjcs.ca.

TEACHING POSITIONS

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

FULL-TIME TEACHING POSITION

Providence Christian School is accepting applications for a

FULL-TIME POSITION FOR A JR. AND SR. HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER,

commencing August 10, 2020. Our main areas of need are Science and Math, with ability to teach in our P.E. program a definite asset. We are also accepting applications for a *full-time Elementary School* teaching position.

We encourage applications by enthusiastic, qualified teachers who submit to God's Holy Word, subscribe to the Reformed Confessions, are committed to educating children and youth for the formation of a distinct Christian worldview, and have a passion for Christian education. Providence Christian School is a growing Christian school in Monarch, Alberta, a rural community minutes from Lethbridge. It has grades K-12 with over 150 students and with 11 FTE staff members.

PCS offers: a four-day school week, attractive working and living conditions, a growing, committed school community, and a dedicated team of teachers. Suitable candidates are encouraged to electronically submit: a letter of application, a résumé containing three references, and a brief philosophy of Christian Education statement.

Application deadline is April 3, 2020.

For inquiries check out our website:

pcsmonarch.com or contact the principal, Mr. Hugo VanderHoek, principal@pcsmonarch.com, 403-381-4418

COVID-19 RESPONSE *Continued...*

So, for now, most of us are following government guidelines, but shouldn't we prepare ourselves and our congregations to potentially face a time where we cannot do so anymore? Maybe we will have to go 'underground' to worship our God eventually. The devil rarely attacks the church with a frontal attack, but often does so indirectly. Is he doing so in our day? Perhaps we need to think about it.

Let me give some final pastoral thoughts for reflection:

1. We are called to rest in God's fatherly care which will enable us to live without fear (Ps. 91; Matt. 6:26-34)!
2. We are called to be charitable with each other, showing patience and understanding, allowing for different viewpoints as part of a healthy discussion (1 Cor. 13:4-7).
3. We must recognize that there are times in God's providence when we are hindered in worshipping the Lord in public corporate worship. This can be during times of sickness, frailty from old age, pandemics or plagues, or when we are doing works of mercy or necessity (Ps. 103:19; Matt. 12:1-14).
4. We are called to obey the government in all things proper, but this doesn't call us to follow them blindly (Rom. 13:1; Acts 5:29).
5. We are called to speak to government leaders and challenge them when they make foolish decisions (2 Sam. 12:7-14). We can and ought to push back gently and carefully on more draconian measures and note their inconsistencies.
6. We are called to pastorally lead our congregations as office bearers through and beyond this crisis (1 Peter 5:2).
7. We are called to think carefully, in consideration of the facts standing upon truth and fol-



lowing after wisdom (Prov. 12:22; 1 John 3:18). We should do so with humility recognizing that no one has all the facts or perfect understanding (Phil. 2:1-8).

What are we doing here in Chilliwack in light of some of these facts?

1. We continue to have full worship services twice each Lord's Day with <50 in attendance as required by the government order. Attendance is controlled by extending invitations to those who are able to attend. We are spaced out in our sanctuary to retain proper physical distancing.
2. We have regular prayer meetings every Wednesday evening because we don't have 50 in attendance. This is an increase from bi-weekly. While attendance is low, we have a wonderful time of prayer for various needs of the congregation and the world!
3. We have a mid-week newsletter which is distributed electronically to the congregation. It contains updates about the congregation, a short meditation, some links with helpful information, a video for the kids from a Sunday School teacher, etc.
4. We have Zoom meetings with all our youth where the youth leaders guide them through their topics.
5. We are finishing the Confession of Faith classes by Zoom, and will meet with candidates for Confession of Faith with a delegation of a few elders rather than the whole consistory.
6. We are having election of office-bearers, not in a public meeting, but by having a 'voting day' at the church on a Saturday from 1:00-3:00 PM where male confessing members drop by and cast their ballot. If no majority is achieved, we will have a second day scheduled for a week later. They also have the option of participating with an absentee ballot by asking an elder to pick it up from their home. This is to accommodate many of our older members or those who are immune compromised.
7. Our elders have been encouraged to have regular contact with their wards by telephone, asking them about their families, their worship on the Lord's Day, and other pastoral needs.
8. My wife and I visited the seniors and met with them at their front door at the required distance, dropping off a flower for them. We were also able to have a face to face conversation with them and pray with some of them.
9. My wife and I visited all the Sunday school children, leaving them each a small candy bag, taking their picture on the front porch, and making a video for the congregation of all the children.
10. We are able to have our regular consistory meetings while maintaining physical distancing in our gym.
11. We continue to pray for the end of this crisis and minister the Word of God in all its fullness, since God's truth is applicable in every circumstance and transcends the temporal problems of this life! ¹¹

Rev. J. Koopman is pastor of the Free Reformed Church of Chilliwack, BC.

1. <https://www.9marks.org/article/why-gather-thinking-about-gathering-when-churches-cant/>
2. <https://arpacanada.ca/news/2020/04/08/is-corporate-worship-essential-some-biblical-considerations-for-the-churchs-response/>

TEACHING POSITIONS

OXFORD REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Invites applications for the 2020-2021 school year:

- FULL-TIME ELEMENTARY TEACHERS
- HIGH-SCHOOL MATH & SCIENCE TEACHERS
- HIGH-SCHOOL ARTS & HUMANITIES TEACHERS
- SECONDARY CURRICULUM COORDINATOR

About us:

- An expanding student body of 350+ students from K to 12
- A dedicated, Reformed, parent-run school community
- New facilities in a rural setting in south-western Ontario (Mount Elgin)
- A unified, professional staff committed to a Christ-centered education

We are looking for enthusiastic, qualified teachers who have a passion for Christian education, and submit to the Holy Scriptures as summarized in the Reformed confessions. Seasoned veterans looking for a positive change, or young beginners looking to gain experience are encouraged to apply.

Applications must include a resume, statement of faith, philosophy of Christian education, and references. Email applications to [William Van Brugge](mailto:William.Van.Brugge@orcscschool.ca) (principal@orcscschool.ca). Visit our website (orcscschool.ca), or come and visit our school: 333182 Plank Line, Mount Elgin, Ontario.

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL (COPETOWN, ONTARIO)

Invites applications for possible
ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, AND
EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT POSITIONS
for the 2020/21 school year

We are looking for qualified individuals with a vision for Christian education to join our committed, vibrant community of learners. We are a K-12 parent-run school serving the families of four local Free Reformed Churches and beyond. Located on a beautiful rural setting between Hamilton and Brantford, RCS has been blessed with a strongly supportive community, and since our inception in 1978, have grown to an enrollment of 380 students. Please send a cover letter, resume, statement of faith, and references, including a pastoral reference (teacher applicants are also asked to include a philosophy of education) to the attention of:

Adam Kloostra, Principal
198 Inksetter Rd

P.O. Box 70, Copetown, ON L0R 1J0
t. 905.627.5977 e. principal@rehoboth.on.ca w. www.rehoboth.on.ca

UNFORGETTABLE YET FADING WAR MEMORIES

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS



May 5 is a national holiday in the Netherlands known as *Bevrijdingsdag*, or Liberation Day, marking the day in 1945 on which the Netherlands was freed from its years of German occupation. The five long years of war behind the Dutch gave them unforgettable memories and, at times, lifelong scars. Few who were adults during the war remain among us to tell us their memories. Some stories have been passed on through families to the children of today. Some stories were so difficult for them to share: how one of our members as a teenager had to bury a Jewish man in his backyard, how another saw his own father and brother(s) shot by the Germans at the time of the Liberation, how others had fought on the Grebbe line. The lively children of then are aged seniors now. Yet, some of them can still not hear the rumble of plane engines overhead without it bringing them back to the days of bombers and aerial dogfights. Some cannot see leftover food going into the garbage without thinking of wartime shortages. Some cannot think of death without remembering their fear of death during the war: “What if I die and I am not prepared to die?”

Some weeks ago, I stood waiting in our consistory room alone. I looked out over the old cemetery beside the church and thought: Who knows what griefs and joys these people experienced? The only trace of most of them is a stone with a few words. The reality of events etched indelibly in many hearts

tends to fade as those who experienced them pass. Maybe it is best that way. Let man be forgotten and the name of the LORD be remembered. All flesh is as grass, but the Word of our God abides forever. Yet, as ones who have lived in the most prosperous period of history with so many outward comforts, amenities, and pleasures, we do well to remember not only suffering in other parts of the world today, but also in our own relatively recent past. Though thankfully today we have members from many backgrounds, we do well to remember something of what those who founded most of our churches as post-World War II immigrants from the Netherlands went through in the war and what God did for them. If these memories lead us back to the God who rules, hears prayer, and continues His work of grace in times of war and peace, they have served their purpose.

This article will focus on the war-time experiences of our founding ministers. The point is not to elevate ministers above anyone else. Others have more gripping stories to tell. I would love to be able to convey more stories from our members, but I simply have more material from our ministers than our members. I have solicited the help of my colleagues to gather more memories. If you have your own war-time stories from your parents, please contact me or share them with your pastor who can forward them to me.

ONE STUDENT

Rev. Johannes deWaal, who later served the Smithville/Vineland congregations, lived in the Roman Catholic south of the Netherlands with his young family. When fuel disappeared during the war, they had to bicycle 25 kilometers to their *Christelijke Gereformeerde* church. He felt a call to the ministry and was able to start studying in 1943 as one of the first married students in Apeldoorn. During the war, he not only studied, but also had to peddle the tire-less rims of his bike to the northern parts of the country in search of food for his family. Since he was a member of the Dutch resistance movement, he had to flee with his family to Doornspijk during the last months of the war. With less than two years of seminary training behind him, he was appointed as a temporary assistant pastor in Doornspijk, until the liberation of Holland in May 1945. He then returned to Apeldoorn to finish off his studies.

TWO SOLDIERS

Rev. Cornelis Noordegraaf, who later served the Chatham and Toronto congregations, had been working in the accounting department of a meat-packing plant near Rotterdam; however, mandatory subscription brought him into the army, where he became an officer before the war. He



Battle of Grebbe Line.

was then involved in the action at the Grebbe line, one of the few places the Dutch offered real resistance to the German invasion in May 1940. Once the Netherlands surrendered, he immediately went into hiding because, already before the war, he had given speeches warning about the German regime and its view of the Jews. His name soon appeared on lists of wanted people. Yet the Lord spared him and enabled him to marry Frouke Douwes in August 1943. During the war, he was accepted as a student for ministry but was not able to begin his studies. The desire to preach the glorious gospel of salvation seems to have intensified during the war-time confrontation with the stark reality of human depravity and misery. During these years, he studied theology on his own, as time allowed, so that when he began official studies in 1945, he could complete his coursework a year earlier than usual.



Gerrit Bilkes

Rev. Gerrit Bilkes, who later served the St. Thomas congregation, was called to serve in the army in 1939 as the German threat increased, but was still allowed to get married (in military uniform) in November. They had to stay along the coast in Katwijk aan Zee where he engaged in military training. Bilkes often led evening devotions with other comrades, some of whom were killed during the German invasion. During the invasion,

he was involved in defending the Valkenburg airport which was attacked in the night. During that night, his wife was staying with her parents and only heard the planes and noises and saw the lights, but had no radio or way of knowing what was happening. But the text on the kitchen calendar was an encouragement to her: "Ik heb hulp bested bij een held" (Ps. 89:20). Four days later, just after Pentecost, she saw the bombers and smoke from Rotterdam. Two days after that, she finally received a note from her husband: he was thankful to be spared and wondered how she was because of wild rumours that Den Haag, where she was, had also been bombed. Later he told her what had happened. German par-

achutists came down on the airport in the night and opened fire. Many on both sides died. The Germans captured several hundred Dutch soldiers and put them in the church in Valkenburg. The Dutch military from Katwijk that was firing on Valkenburg hit the church. Bilkes saw dreadful dismemberment. Boys cried out for their mothers. He and his friend prayed and committed themselves to God: "Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." They were spared and eventually he was reunited with his wife, who was expecting their first child. During the war they lived in Zwolle, where Bilkes became a deacon and later an elder.

The first years of the war were rather quiet in Zwolle. They became alarmed when they saw that Jews had to wear the Star of David. Their neighbor was a Jewish man who married a Dutch wife and was left alone, but a Jewish family down the street was picked up. Over time, food became more scarce. The Germans also began picking up men to work in Germany. One day in 1944, they saw the soldiers in the street. Bilkes got ready to be taken. He was dressed. His wife made him a sandwich. Another man in the home wrapped up his leg in a bandage to make the Germans think he could not walk. Mrs. Bilkes sat looking out the window with their son Lawrence on her knees. The Germans came along. Their neighbour had hidden, and the soldiers dragged his wife by her hair through the home. Then they looked in the window, saw Mrs. Bilkes, and kept going. Their home being on the corner of the street may have confused them.



Church in Valkenburg that was hit with Bilkes inside.

As 1945 came, they began to hear reports of British and Canadian troops approaching. After the disappointments of the year before, they did not dare get their hopes up. Then, they began seeing military lights in the distance. Then, grenades began flying overhead. Then, the Canadians came in their Jeeps and on foot. Their faces beamed. They were celebrated by those weary of war. The Bilkes family went into the city to join those who were celebrating and flying Dutch flags. Yet, grief was not over. Someone they knew was in the city jail for being part of the underground. His wife was so happy that he would be released and began mak-

ing pancakes to celebrate. But he didn't come home. That night they heard the dreadful news that the German guards had shot six of the men rather than release them.

FOUR MINISTERS

Rev. Willem F. Laman, who later served the Hamilton congregation, was already a minister when the war broke out. He had just been installed as minister in the city of Haarlem. As the war broke out, he saw it as a judgment of God and heard in it the footsteps of the coming Christ. He not only pointed to the guilt of the nation and congregation, but also felt uncovered to his own guilt. In this way, the Lord led him personally to a deeper knowledge of Christ as surety for his guilt. A year before the war was over, Laman went to Rotterdam-West, preaching his inaugural sermon on 2 Corinthians 5:19: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." He came to Rotterdam in a time of need. City life during the last winter of the war meant enduring cold temperatures, food shortages, and army raids. One November night in 1944, the Germans sealed off the city of Rotterdam with 8,000 soldiers and took away around 52,000 of the 70,000 men between 17 and 40 years of age to work for them. The next Lord's Day, Laman's assembled congregation consisted of women, children, and the occasional man – all in deep grief. During that service, he received a strong conviction that all the exiled men would come home and said, "Congregation, all our men will come home!" After the War, God led all the men home.

Rev. Jacobus Tamminga, who later served the Chatham, Toronto, Grand Rapids, and London congregations, had



Enschede Church destroyed.

been in his second congregation, Enschede, for a year when the war broke out. Since Enschede was near the German border, bombings were common. His son, Mr. J. D. Tamminga, remembers watching air fights between Allied and German planes with his sister, only to be called inside. Shortly after, bombs dropped throwing them against their father's bookcases. The windows shattered, walls cracked, and a neighbour's head was found in the back yard. Around 150 people died from that event. But the Tamminga family was spared. A mistaken Allied bomb-

ing on February 22, 1944 left thirty families in his congregation without houses or possessions and left the church building, which had just received a new organ, in ruins. In October of 1944, a razzia sent most of the consistory to work in Germany. Rev. Tamminga was also picked up initially; however, the Germans let him go home before sending the rest to Germany. Fear of being sent to Germany kept most of the men in the congregation home on the Lord's Day for some months. These were difficult times for one minister to serve a congregation of around 1,500 people. He later recalls: "I had to work day and night" in Enschede. Furthermore, frequent confrontation with death made the value of souls weigh the heavier.

Rev. Cornelis Smits, who later served the Grand Rapids and Clifton congregations, began the war serving the congregation of over 1000 members in Sliedrecht, but felt compelled to accept the call to Dordrecht in 1942. In his farewell he said, "Tears have been shed over my departure;

I know, but do not make too much of it. I, a poor earthworm am leaving, but the Lord remains. I, a lowly instrument will be gone, but the Word of God remains." In Dordrecht, among his suffering members, he led many prayer services, preaching on texts such as Joel 2:12-14, Habakkuk 3:2, Jeremiah 14:22, 2 Chronicles 20:12, and Lamentations 5:16-21. But there were also



Dordrecht Centre CGK where Rev. C. Smits ministered

times of spiritual blessing. He wrote: "It was a fearful time. There was so much misery. The misery was written on everyone's face. But there were also times that it was good....The Lord in the war gave surprising outcomes, despite the heavy burdens... The Lord makes no mistakes." One time, German bombs shattered all the glass in the windows of the church while he was preaching and he said: "Let us stop, because everyone is concerned about what has happened at home," but one man called out: "Pastor, now you have to preach!" He began the new year of 1945 with Psalm 37:5: "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." Four months later on the Lord's day after the liberation he could preach on Psalm 66:13-15: "I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows, Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble. I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings,

with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.” Freedom was not just about dancing in the streets, but coming into God’s house with a broken heart of thankfulness for his mercies.

Rev. Jacobus Overduin, who later served in St. Thomas, Mitchell, Aldergrove, and Vineland, went through the war as well with his growing family. One story his daughter remembers him telling is of the time he heard that his parents, who lived in Leiden, were short on food. At his home in Franeker, he loaded up his bicycle for the over 150 kilometer trip. He knew it was dangerous and that he could easily be stopped by German soldiers, so he brought along some cigars as gifts. He later said, “The whole day I felt I was riding on the wings of the prayers of the elders and deacons.” There was a curfew, and he was afraid he was not going to make it because he became very tired and was unable to go on. A local man on a bike came by and offered to help. He tied a rope to Overduin’s bike and pulled him to his parents’ place. He was very thankful to God for sparing him and sending him help. His parents were overjoyed to see him and were very grateful for the food as they were indeed in need of food.

The Overduin family also received two girls from a family in Rotterdam who wanted their girls to stay in a safer place than the city with its food shortages and other dangers. Rev. Overduin’s daughter, Mrs. Ludy Luth, recalls: “This act of kindness on the part of my parents proved to be a blessing to our family in later years. I remember a few occasions where, totally unexpected, my parents would receive a sum of money from these people. They just wanted to express their appreciation for what our parents did for their girls in the war years, so every so often they surprised my parents with a monetary gift. The amazing thing was that each time our family received this unexpected money, it came at a time when my parents desperately needed it. We were a large family and we were very poor. The money always came as an answer to prayer. That is how my parents saw God’s goodness and care for them over and over again. It was a wonderful way for me, as a young girl, to see and experience that God cares and provides for our needs just at the right time.”

ONE ELDER-UNDERGROUND LEADER

Rev. Jetse Hamstra, who served the Dundas congregation, lived in the unique and less populated north of the Netherlands (Friesland). For some years already, he had served as an elder in the Veenwouden congregation. During the war, he received permission to exhort in his congregation. When the Netherlands was liberated, he preached a Liberation sermon that Rev. W. Kremer gave him and also used himself that same day. One man during the war owed him a lot of money as a customer but



Veenwouden with elder Jetse Hamstra, 2nd from left.

could not pay. Mr. Hamstra let him pay much less over a period of time. The man was troubled because he saw Hamstra had a large family and said: “I feel bad and pray for your family every day.” Hamstra said he valued that more than money.

He also led the local underground for some time until his brother took over as leader. Hamstra was one of the few with a telephone in town. When the allies approached in the fall of 1944, some wanted to capture the remaining Germans, but Hamstra cautioned: “No way, you don’t know how long it will be before the Allies come here,” which proved to be wise. During these years, the Lord was stirring a true spiritual hunger in the area, which drew many to the Veenwouden church, where He worked true and lasting conversion in quite a number. One of the members was a cheese-peddler who told his customers: “You must be converted and go to church in Veenwouden.” Sometimes people had to stand outside the church because it was completely filled. May God give us such days again. ①

Rev. D. Kranendonk is secretary of the Free Reformed Historical Centre, located in the Grand Rapids Free Reformed Church.



Dutch children receive food from allied soldier in 1946.

POST-WAR HOPES AND FEARS



De Wekker is the denominational periodical of the *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken* (the denomination from which most of our FRCNA churches have their roots). During the war, it had been shut down for some time. It was able to resume again in August 1945. In the first issue, various professors reflect on the war, liberation, and the future. Shining through these articles are the themes of thankfulness for God's deeds, concern about the response to God's deeds, calling to look to God amid the uncertainties, and urging to reach out to those in need of the gospel. They remind us when crises end, uncertainties remain. We need God as much *after* crises as *in* crises (of which the Covid-19 one is a very pale shadow of what the war crisis was).

Freedom

Up until five years ago, we knew "freedom" only as a word, an abstraction, an idea. Who understands freedom when they have never sighed in the bonds of deadly bondage? But now... after this fearful and long night of inexpressible suffering, freedom has come as a moving reality.

In the school of the greatest suffering, we learned to know freedom as essential for life.

When freedom arose as a sun full of glory to shine over our low-country along the sea, our heart was full of tears. We thought we had no tears left, but when freedom came, we sang with tears of joy: "Blest be the Lord Who made us not their prey; As from the snare a bird escapeth free, Their net is rent and so escaped are we." We seemed to be in a happy dream and feared we might wake up. We had sighed so long and had so often been disappointed.

The water had come to the lips of many: hunger in the west, destruction all over, large parts of Zeeland sunk under the waves of the sea, houses broken, harbours blown up, communication lines stopped, supplies stolen, beautiful cities in ruins. But despite it all, we are free! Free from tyranny! And we say with the psalmist, "If that the Lord had not with us remained, When cruel men against us rose to strive, We surely had been swallowed up alive." (Ps. 124).

We are free! What shall we do with our freedom? Now there are confused voices everywhere. But those who bow to God's Word put their expectation only in God's law and testimony. Whatever is not according to that will not see the light of day. That has always been the standard for all of life.

Less than ever do we know which way our society will go. We will not attempt to prophesy. But all things are in the hand of Him who has received all power in heaven and on earth. That is the comforting and strengthening knowledge amid all the rumours in the world. The church has a special calling to shine with that light in the world in the fear of the Lord.

ReformedBookServices

A CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE

STORE HOURS: MON.-WED. 10-5 • THURS. 10-9 • FRI. 10-5 • SAT. 10-3

230 LYNDEN ROAD (BEHIND GALAXY CARWASH) BRANTFORD, ON N3R 8A3
T: 519.304.4709 • E: SALES@REFORMEDBOOKSERVICES.CA

NEW NIAGARA DEPOT

195 VICTORIA AVE., FENWICK, ON L0S 1C0 • T: 905.714.6257

May land and people, government and royal family have learned that the secret of all blessing lies in the fear and service of the Lord. Then those five fearful years are not without fruit. The snare is broken! May bonds of grace bind our people to the Lord, who is worthy of all worship and honor.

- Prof. J. W. Geels

Amazement and concern

I hardly know how I should begin. My soul is filled and at times overflowing from blessed amazement over what the Lord has done. I think of the words of the Apostle: "cast down, but not destroyed." These words say it all. The Lord has smitten us heavily. Land and people; state and church; people and animal and field – all have been affected by this judgment. May this be truly felt

and may we not skip over that in superficial optimism. The Lord wills that we (and especially His people) show that we have heard the rod and who has appointed it. Woe, woe if this is ignored. Then the Lord will come again. That is what I do fear, when I see how our land and people have responded.... We have been freed as a blessed wonder of God. But we have not been freed, in order to provoke the Lord the more, or to think that it is enough to bring him some offerings of carnal worship.

- Prof. G. Wisse

New - Old

The new time! The new course! The new problems! The new youth! The

SOME WORLD WAR II FACTS

The Netherlands (1940 population: 8.8 million)

- 107,000 or 70% of the Jewish population were killed
- Over 100,000 other Dutch citizens died due to the war.
- Over 100,000 homes were destroyed and many more were damaged.
- Factories, infrastructure, churches, and other buildings were also destroyed.
- Farmland was damaged by salt-water flooding through broken dykes.

Canada (1940 population: 11.5 million)

- 1,159,000 served in the war.
- 44,100 military deaths
- 55,500 wounded

America (1940 population: 132.1 Million)

- 16,112,600 served in the war
- 291,600 military deaths
- 670,800 wounded

new possibilities! The new...!

But do not forget – the old man, the old sin, the old sigh of "I" – the old world – the old inclinations...

We run in danger of being carried along in the great stream of our imbalanced days, where everyone is talking about a new message and new future, but in which the church of Christ must focus on the old gospel, that had called the nations through the ages to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

- Prof. J. J. van der Schuit

Renewed Calling

We think of the youth. Who knows what has all gone through their heart? What went through them when they saw murder, maiming, and destruction? Have they come to repentance or do they sit

full of revenge?... Many of them have suffered health-wise and emotionally. But how is it with them spiritually? Must we not labour among these youth, who are the seed of the church? Must the church not be a mother, who lovingly receives her children? A mother who presses them to her heart to comfort them? Do many really believe that our youth do not long for attention and loving guidance? Do you not think that our youth do not have an eye for examples of the true fear of God?

The church must arise. Let office-bearers arise and go out in home visits, sick visits, youth visits. Let them go prayerfully, full of the love of Jesus Christ, to save and deliver. Home visits stood still. We will not get into whether that was always justified. But now it must begin. The church

and its office-bearers must be conscious that they may threaten to go under and that others are famished or sit with so many questions....

Now we must build spiritually in light of eternity. How many thousands live around us without God, without Christ, without life in their soul, confused, torn, suffering, in revenge, bitterness, and who knows what else? Who will bring them the Word of life, who will seek them out and seek to lead them to the feet of the Saviour full of mercy, and call: "Be ye reconciled to God"?

Church of Jesus Christ, arise and build! Church of the Lord, recognize your guilt and repent! Church of the Lord, recognize your calling in this fearful world and time, full of anxious questions. *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk*, be the church, the church of the Lord!

- Prof. L. H. van der Meiden



SWEETER BY THE DOZEN

MAKING JESUS THE LORD OF OUR FAMILY SIZE by Randall Hekman. Published by Reformation Heritage Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2019. Softcover, 182 pages.

This book is the personal journey of a Grand Rapids, Michigan retired juvenile court judge about a controversial subject that is not often discussed publicly. Probably, if my husband and I had not known Randy (as we used to call him) Hekman personally as a sincere, young, and highly respected judge, this book might have been dismissed as another of those success stories of a super-Christian. In a sense, this book is a success story, but there is more. Hekman pleads for “Making Jesus the Lord of our family size.” Readers may find some of his statements hard to swallow. Joel Beeke, in the foreword, warns the readers that they “don’t need to agree with every detail that the author writes to get the major takeaway from his book,” which is: “will I, or will I not let Christ be Lord also of this important area of my life that we call childbearing?” (p. viii). I like to believe that many of our readers will agree with the purpose of this book, at least based on the number of children born and adopted into Free Reformed families, despite the contrary message of our culture.

To bolster this premise, I believe it is important to read this well-written, well-researched, and easy-to-read book.

The **first part** of the book gives a brief and candid account of the personal journey that led the author and his wife Marcia to become the parents of twelve children – and is a real success story.

The **second and third parts** of the book are important explanations and defences of the decision he and his wife made not to place their own limitations on the number of children the Lord would give them: twelve in number. In several short chapters, he lays out the biblical reasons for taking this route. “God designed there to be a much closer connection between sex and reproduction than our culture generally recognizes” (p. 35). Biblically speaking, sex has two purposes: “(1) communication at a deep level between husband and wife, and (2) reproduction to carry on the human race until God ends history at the second coming of Christ.” He stresses that Scripture puts much more emphasis on the importance of marriage and children than sex (p. 36). From Scripture, he demonstrates that children are a “heritage of the Lord” (Ps. 127 & 128), to be appreciated within

the biblical bounds of marriage and the disciplines of family life. Desiring to let the Lord be sovereign in their married life, he and Marcia agreed to let God guide them as more children were born to them.

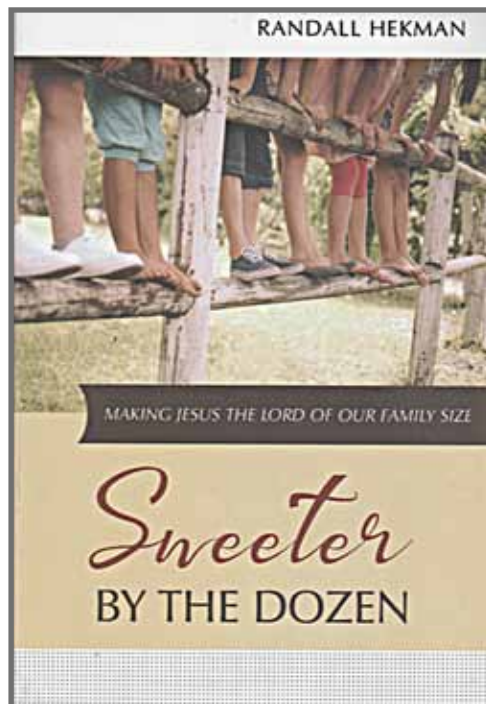
Having laid down some biblical principles, Part 3 is devoted to “Responding to Arguments,” which explains the reasons for

the course of action he and Marcia followed. It began with a case where he had to rule as a Juvenile Court Judge whether a 13-year old girl should have an abortion, which Planned Parenthood advised her to have “by telling her that her heart would stop if she tried to give birth” (p. 47). As Judge, he was sworn to protect born children from abuse and neglect. When he ruled against abortion in the case of the unborn child of this 13-year old, the media lambasted him for being biased and pandering to his political constituency (judges are elected by the people in Michigan). In the end, the 13-year old decided not to have an abortion and later thanked him for his ruling. His point is that Jesus Christ is the Lord of all areas of life, including the reproductive area, in spite of human arguments. In several chapters, he ad-

resses objections.

First, he tackles *The Financial Argument* - “I can’t afford another child.” He does not deny that children are expensive, but lists many Scripture promises, ones you may not have thought of, such as the multiplying of God’s people during Israel’s wilderness journey.

Next, he tackles *The Intelligence Argument* - “If I have a larger family, my children’s IQs will be lower.” Next is *The Career Argument* - “If I have children, their care will impede me from pursuing the career that gives me a great deal of satisfaction.” The mothers I know don’t (yet) fall for these arguments, but the author’s response is worthwhile reading. *The Physical Argument* is dealt with briefly and rather superficially, in my opinion. *The Unfashionable Argument* - “It is not popular to have more than two or three children; I don’t want to be unfashionable” and a related one, *The Selfish Argument* - couples find children a burden, are very worldly arguments, which Hekman easily lays to rest.



He also deals with *The Heartache Argument* where couples' fears about the future make them afraid to have many children. Then, there is *The Inability Argument* – "I can't handle the children I have now; I couldn't think of having any more" (p. 99), where the author shows sympathy and encouragement. Next is a lengthy chapter refuting *The Medical Argument* – why not use contraception? Another long chapter focuses on *The Irresponsible Argument* – "Isn't it irresponsible and even selfish to bring more children into what everyone knows is an increasingly overpopulated world?" Quoting multiple statistics and examples, Hekman argues that "We need not fear overpopulation. God will meet our needs as we obey and don't give up; with God watching over His creation, the universe is *not* a closed system" (p. 151).

In **Part Four**, the author concludes that Christian families are "Changing Our World One Family at a Time," arguing that godly families preach to the world and these families can make changes for the better. Don't we see examples in our own environment?

One last note: Few books have been written recently on the blessings and sweetness of large families. There are lessons to be learned here. We knew Randall Hekman as an ordinary Christian and a talented Juvenile Court Judge who dealt conscientiously and fairly with children and youth. He loved to legalize adoptions (we attended one). He suggests that he probably could have attained to a higher court position if he had lived his life differently. But now, married more than fifty years to Marcia, he has the satisfaction and joy of having raised children who, according to him, all hold a respected position and serve the Lord in various places in the United States. Even the one who struggled for a while with same sex attraction is now married with three children. "Sweeter by the Dozen" truly is a "success" story--by God's grace.

The back of the book has a picture of this beautiful family.



Contact your deacon or Peace Haven Director, (SEE BELOW)

FREE REFORMED ASSOCIATION

PEACE HAVEN, a ministry of Free Reformed deacons, offers you and your family help with disabilities:

- a listening ear
- meaningful day and evening programs
- help accessing church and government resources
- respite or vacation care
- residential care

Margaret Heemskerck, mheemskerck.peacehaven@gmail.com or 519.770.8816



"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved"

Romans 10:1


Christian Ministry to Israel has committed \$15,000 CDN annually to support the ministry of Rev. Zold to the 100,000+ Jews living in Budapest, Hungary.

We are committed to spreading the Gospel of CHRIST JESUS among the people of Israel and Jews worldwide. Help us to spread the Gospel in Budapest through your prayers and donations. Please donate by cheque or online at www.cmisrael.org



To donate by cheque, please mail your donation to: Christian Ministry to Israel, c/o John Wilbrink, 8 Weneil Drive, Freulton ON L8B 0Z6

Reg. Charity: 85123 0466 RR 0001



WORD & DEED

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Colossians 3:17

www.wordanddeed.org

PURITAN REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY UPDATE

Graduation & Commencement

MAY ONE, TWENTY-TWENTY

Graduations and Commencements have been part of my professional career since 1976. The 2020 PRTS graduation was by far the most unusual! It also came at the conclusion of an unusual semester, where classes had to move to distance learning and video conferencing due to Covid-19 restrictions. We are thankful that the courses could be completed through these means.

The Lord blessed seventeen students with their degree completions, but only eight could be present. Three of the ten faculty members were present, and only two of our staff attended to facilitate. God's providence and resulting state regulations were the limiters.

Three of this year's graduates are very familiar to many in the Free Reformed Churches.

The seventeen graduates represent thirteen denominations, seven countries, and four continents. Seven men received an MDiv, two brothers received an MA, and eight received a ThM.

The commencement speaker, Dr. David McWilliams from Lakeland Florida PCA, gave a pre-recorded message from Romans 10:14-17 praising God for the gift of the preaching ministry and giving an urgent call to preach God's Word. Dr. Joel Beeke, president of PRTS, gave the personal charge using 1 Corinthians 13's emphasis on the greatest gift a pastor can have: love.

May God bless each graduate as they commence their next steps toward serving Him in the ministry of the Word or teaching wherever He directs. May He also bless those who continue their studies, including our Free Reformed students, Chris Mourik, Geoff Otten, and Jeff Overduin. 🙏

Mr. Henk Kleyn serves as PRTS Vice-president for Operations and as elder of the Grand Rapids Free Reformed Church. The commencement address is available for listening on <https://www.sermonaudio.com/prts>.



Our own theological student, Benjamin Hicks, received his Master of Divinity degree. He and Rebekah with their four children will need to remain in Grand Rapids until after the September 2020 FRCNA Synod at which he is scheduled to have his candidacy exam. Student Ben VanLiere was able to graduate with his Master of Divinity degree last year.



Jacob Matze, who has brought the Word in several of our congregations, received a Master of Theology degree, after having completed his PRTS Master of Divinity degree earlier. He and Tamara are getting ready to return to the Netherlands to serve the Lord there with their four children as the Lord leads.



The third graduate known to many within the FRCNA is brother Richard Slingerland, who also provided pulpit supply in several of our congregations. He received his Master of Divinity and is in the Netherlands with his family, where he will pursue a path to ministry.

**GREAT
SELECTION OF
CHRISTIAN
BOOKS AT
LOW PRICES**

- Apologetics
- Audio Books
- Bible Study
 - Bible Commentary
 - Bible People
 - Bible Reference
 - Bible Studies
 - With & Without Discussion Questions
- Bibles
- Bunyan's Allegories
- Catechism & Confessions
- CDs of Sacred Music
- Children – Teacher's Resources
- Children's Activity Books
- Children's Bible Story Books
- Children's Devotionals
- Children's Fiction
- Children's History & Biography
- Christian Living
- Church Leadership & Preaching
- Counselling
- Counselling mini-books
- Devotionals
- Evangelism & Missions
- Greeting Cards
- Historical Fiction – for all ages
- History & Biography
- Journibles
- Men
- Music
- Puritan Series in paperback
- Relationships
- Sacraments
- Science
- Theological Novels
- Theology
- Theology Made Easy
- Women

**GIFT CERTIFICATES
AVAILABLE**

ReformedBookServices

PROMOTING GODLINESS, REVIVAL & REFORMATION

Our Chief of Days: The Principle, Purpose and Practice of the Lord's Day

By Jeremy Walker
This book on the Lord's Day is highly recommended as a brief, comprehensive, untechnical and clear survey for keeping this special day. The author carefully and sensitively expounds the abiding nature of Lord's Day, drawing from Scripture and history, in giving His church in all ages a prescribed rhythm of rest and work. The chapter on how Christians should practically keep the Lord's day is especially thoughtful, avoiding the danger of legalism. Softcover, 117 pages, EP Book **RBS Price \$8.50**



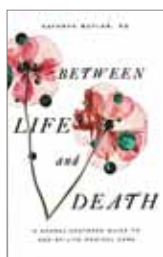
Sing a New Song: A Woman's Guide to the Psalms

By Lydia Brownback
Lydia Brownback, a Westminster Theological Seminary graduate and well-known author, offers a fresh look at the 150 psalms in the Bible, summarizing each psalm's key themes, revealing how each fits in to both the Psalter as a whole and the rest of Scripture, and suggesting practical applications. Designed for use in personal study or in small groups, this book will appeal especially to women. Softcover, 344 pages, Crossway **RBS Price \$22.50**



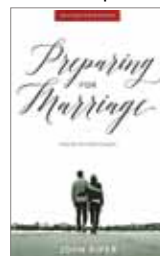
Between Life & Death: A Gospel-centered Guide to End-of-Life Medical Care

By Kathryn Butler
Modern medical advances save countless lives. But for all their merits, sophisticated technologies have created a daunting new challenge, namely a blurring of the expanse between life and death. The dying process is often hidden behind a complex web of medical terminology, statistics, and ethical decisions, making it difficult for patients and loved ones to know how to approach the end of life in a dignity-affirming, God-honouring, faith-filled way. This book offers helpful Christian guidance. Softcover, 223 pages, Crossway **RBS Price \$21.00**



Preparing for Marriage: Help for Christian Couples

This brief but comprehensive book is an updated edition by well-known author, John Piper who gives counsel on practical topics relating to engagement, wedding planning, finances, and sex. The author wants to help you faithfully walk the road to becoming husband and wife. You'll find his counsel practical, but his most importantly, you'll have a vision about what God is doing in every Christian marriage. Softcover, 86 pages, Desiring God **RBS Price \$12.50**



How Shall They Hear? Why Non-preachers Need to Know What Preaching Is

By Ryan M. McGraw
The author's aim is to reach non-preachers with a message about the importance of preaching, but in doing so he has also written an invaluable book for preachers. His desire is that the people of God should hear biblically faithful, doctrinally accurate Christ-centred preaching. This book is important because through preaching, Christ speaks to his church by his Word and Spirit today. All the chapters are short and many of them revolve around specific passages in the New Testament, to help hearers and preacher to hear Jesus calling them to His Father by His Word and Spirit. Softcover, 121 pages, EP Books **RBS Price \$11.00**



Narrow Gate, Narrow Way

By Paul Washer
Paul Washer is a gifted evangelist and this book is an expanded version of a message he gave that had an unusually profound effect upon countless souls. Taking Matthew 7:13-27 as his text, Washer reminds us of Jesus's



insistence that His way is narrow, and that its travellers will bear good fruit and rest on the solid foundation of God's Word. Neglecting these warnings from Christ have left many on the broad road to destruction. Softcover-mini book, 55 pages, Heritage Reformed Books **RBS Price \$6.00**

All That's Good: Recovering the Lost Art of Discernment

By Hannah Anderson
The lost art of discernment is more than simply avoiding bad things; discernment actually frees to navigate the world with confidence and joy by teaching you how to recognize and choose good things. When you learn discernment and develop a taste for all that's good, God meet us in remarkable new ways. Softcover, 215 pages, Moody Publishers **RBS Price \$16.25**



Need to get rid of your old books?

We will gladly take your used English Reformed books for our Used Book Shelf in our store. You can drop them off at the book store or contact cand-skeuning@bellnet.ca or Susan at 905.627.3910 for pickup.

IN CANADA: REFORMED BOOK SERVICES
230 Lynden Road, Unit 5A, Brantford, ON N3R 8A3
tel: 519.304.4709 • email: sales@reformedbookservices.ca
www.reformedbookservices.ca
Store Hours: Mon-Wed 10-5 | Thurs 10-9 | Fri 10-5 | Sat 10-3

USA CUSTOMERS: REFORMATION HERITAGE BOOKS
2965 Leonard St. N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49525
tel: 616.977.0889 • fax: 616.285.3246
email: orders@heritagebooks.org • www.heritagebooks.org



Free Reformed Historical Centre

“What do I do with these things?”

Contact the Free Reformed Historical Centre

The Centre’s aim is to gather and preserve materials relating to the Dutch roots and North American establishment, development, and ongoing life of our churches. Specific materials are classified as unrestricted access, restricted access (available only to approved persons), and/or time-specified access (available after a specified date).

The Historical Centre is looking for:

- Printed materials from the churches.
- Audio recordings of worship services and speeches.
- Personal materials (letters, diaries, sermon notes, essays, etc).
- Publications from our ‘mother’ churches.
- Pictures of people and events.
- Interviews with ‘founding’ members.

If you or your (grand)parents have any such materials, please contact:

Rev. D. Kranendonk (secretary)

Cell: 226-980-9607 • Email: kranendonk@frcna.org

PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM

ALL BLESSINGS FLOW;

PRAISE HIM, ALL CREATURES HERE BELOW;

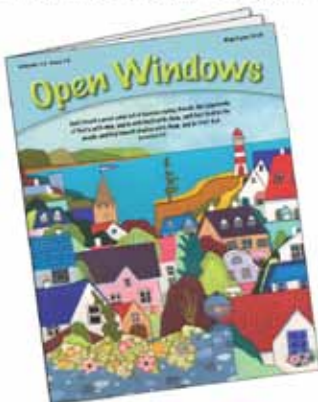
PRAISE HIM ABOVE, YE HEAVENLY HOST;

PRAISE FATHER, SON AND HOLY GHOST.

AMEN

Give the gift of reading with **Open Windows!**

Open children’s minds to history, vocations, music, the Bible, creation, art, and countries around the world. With stories, a meditation, puzzles, colouring contests, and book reviews, it’s a magazine for the home, school, libraries, and outreach. For ages 4-12.



\$21.00 annually, 6 issues per year

Print subscription form at
openwindows.frcna.org
or contact
administrator@frcna.org

