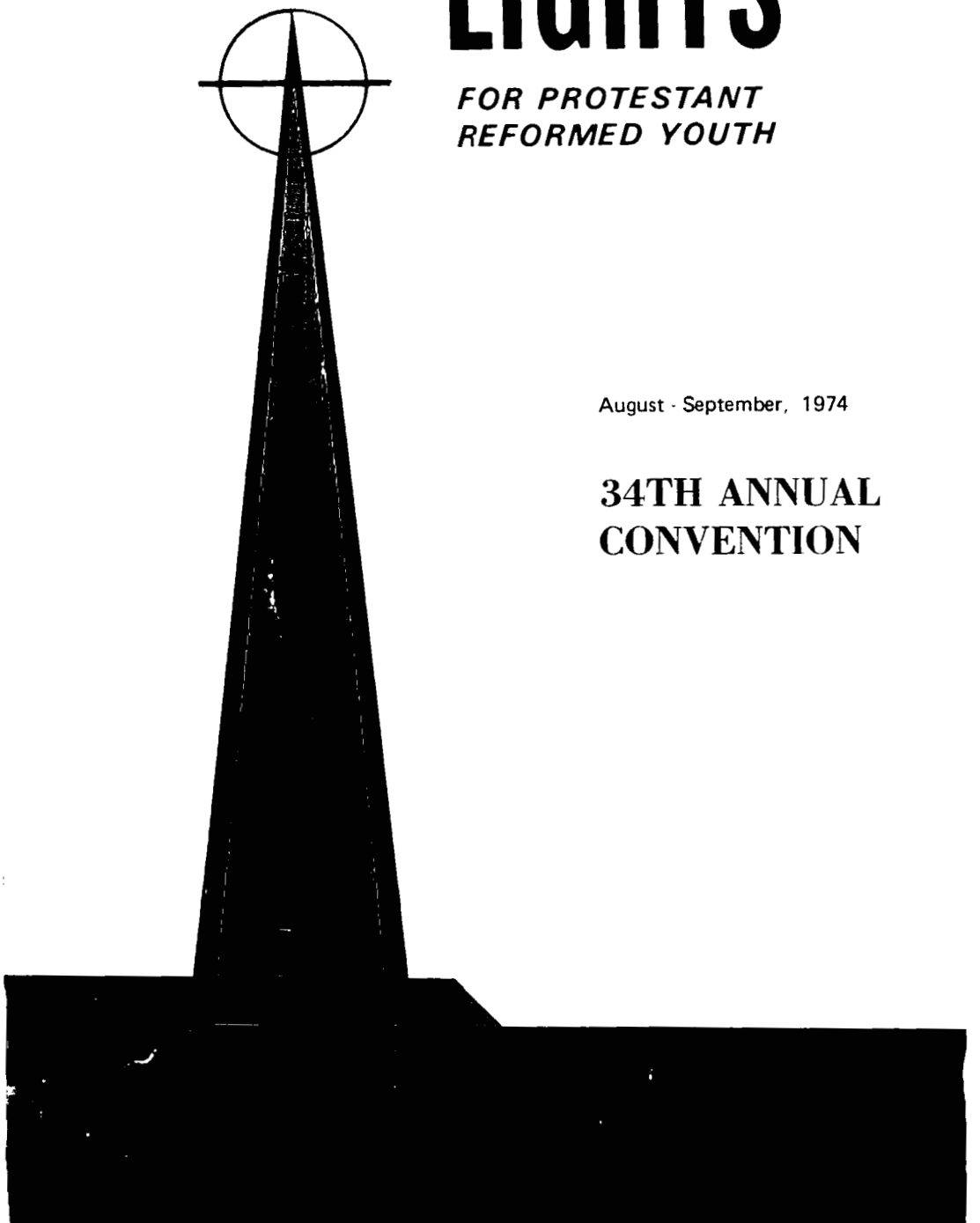
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH



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Editorial

The Voice Of The Lord

TOM DE VRIES

The voice of God was heard last night. Millions heard Him. He spoke powerfully and emphatically. Some who heard Him acknowledged that He was speaking and that He was God. Most ignored Him even though they were momentarily terror-stricken.

"The voice of the thunder was in the heavens, the lightening lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook." Psalm 77:18 "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful: the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." Psalm 29:3&4.

God, the Creator, speaks to us in all of Nature about us. God demands of all men of the earth that honor be paid to Him. Even the mightiest of this earth must realize their insignificance in the face of God's majesty. The most powerful of man's inventions, even to the most powerful atomic devices, stand as nothing compared to a thunderstorm or tornado.

God's people recognize the Shepherd when they hear His voice. They are comforted when they hear Him, even when He comes in the dynamic manner of a close-striking bolt of lightening. They have nothing to fear when He speaks; they are always content with God's revelation of Himself in Creation.

When His own see the sun rise in the morning they hear Him speak to them of His over-consistent love and of His infinity and unchangeableness. They hear God say that He will ever give them life, even after that sun has been destroyed. When they hear God speak in the storm they know He tells of His strength and might, so great that nothing can compare to it. His people know they are safe in His hands.

God also speaks in the whispering wind and murmuring brook, telling of His gentle love and kindly disposition toward His people. God's voice is always one of reassurance, no matter how He speaks.

The wicked also hear God's voice. They hear Him speak to them of their sure condemnation. They hate God's voice and wish to ignore it, but cannot. "Thou didst cause judgement to be heard from heaven; the earth feared and was still." Psalm 76:8.

The wicked also hear God speak of His power and majesty in the tornado or storm. They, however, react with fear and curse Him. It is not their desire to hear of their judgement or to know that they are not the ultimate masters of their fate.

They also hear God's voice in the falling rain. They are not blessed by the rain even though they may seem to be. They are again ready to curse at hearing God speak; the rain may have been untimely or of insufficient amounts.

The rising sun is also a reminder to the wicked. Each morning anew God speaks to them of His unchangeableness. To the wicked, however, this is no sound of reassurance. They rather hear God speak of His never-changing hatred of sin and the workers of iniquity.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19:1-3.

The Lord speaks. All hear Him.

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Freemasonry And/ Or The Church

REV. M. KAMPS

Preemasonry is better known as simply Masonry or more popularly still as the organization of the Masonic Lodge. A rather strange subject for the Beacon Lights, you are probably thinking to yourself. Maybe if I relate to you how my interest was developed your interest will be quickened also.

Recently, while performing my pastoral duties, I was brought into contact with a certain man who had a very unusual question, at least it seemed out of the ordinary at the time. It was this man's expressed desire to become a confessing member of a Reformed Church. But he also contemplated joining the Masonic lodge. Hence his question: Is membership in the Reformed church, or more particularly, is membership in the Church of Christ compatible with membership in the lodge? I told him what I understood to be the position of Reformed churches and in particular the position of our Protestant Reformed churches; membership in the lodge has always been condemned. The gentleman was not satisfied with my answer. He wanted to know **why** membership in the Masonic lodge was condemned. The best I could do in expressing why membership in the lodge was condemned was to speak in generalities for I had never studied what constituted the Masonic lodge, nor what was its basics and goals. Consequently I made a brief study of the subject and then promptly dropped the matter, thinking that the Masonic lodge, or Freemasonry, was something so far out that a further study was not warranted.

But a few weeks later I was again confronted with the problem of the compatibility of membership in the Church and the Masonic lodge. This time the confrontation came through the pages of **The Banner** of June 7, 1974 pages 6-7. I read the article with interest two or three times. Rev. George F. Vander Weit was discussing a problem connected with evangelism in his church. People were coming to his church, but not staying. He

found as the culprit which undid all his work in evangelism, the position of the C.R.C. that "no lodge member can join its membership." That position of the C.R.C. is the evil culprit which drives from the church and its fellowship many "committed Christians" in whom, obviously, the Holy Spirit is working. Rev. Vander Weit bemoans this position of the C.R.C. He thinks that his church should allow these Masonic Lodge members to be members of the church, even though, the religion of the lodge is, according to Rev. Vander Weit, admittedly wrong. Giving up membership in the Masonic lodge ought not be a condition to membership in the C.R.C., according to Rev. Vander Weit, but must be seen as a dimension of sanctification and should be sought by pastoral and educational approaches. His position is to accept Masonic lodge members into the fellowship of the C.R.C. and then to labor with these members for as long as five to ten years attempting to produce a sensitivity in these members, which will ultimately manifest itself by their act of separating themselves voluntarily from the Masonic lodge. This is my understanding of the brother's article.

What I had read so thoroughly shocked my spiritual sensitive system that I found myself making a new study of the Masonic lodge! My interest was quickened anew. Hence an article or two on this strange subject for the **Beacon Lights.** What is Freemasonry? Why has the P.R. Church condemned, and the C.R.C. for that matter, membership in the Masonic lodge. Let's take a look at Masonry and do so by, firstly, considering its organizational aspects, and, secondly, Freemasonry as a religion, and finally, give a brief evaluation of this organization.

The Organization

Freemasonry or the Masonic Order had its beginning in England. It originally was a society of cathedral builders in the 17th century. The stone masons and stone cutters constituted its membership. The Masonic lodge was officially established in the year 1717 in England. From England Freemasonry soon spread to continental Europe and by 1740 to North America. For over 250 years "men have knelt to swear the solemn oaths of the Masonic lodges. Freemasonry was organized in England but four out of five of the world's Freemasons now live in the United States. They and their brothers in other countries have made Freemasonry the largest international secret society." (Handbook of Secret Organizations, by W. J. Whalen page 46.) There are over 16,000 Masonic lodges in this country with a membership of over four and one-half million. How powerful the Masons are, is difficult to say, but "in any single year the majority of state governors, United States senators, and U.S. representatives are likely to be Freemasons." (Handbook, Whalen p. 53)

You probably know that there is something called a 32nd degree mason. It is the highest regular degree of Masonry though there is a 33rd honorary degree too. The three basic Masonic degrees are those of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. These three basic degrees constitute the Blue or Symbolic lodge. In this country after one has reached the 3rd degree of Master Mason, he can follow one or both of the two Masonic rites. "A Master Mason, may elect to climb one or both of the two Masonic ladders of the higher rites: the Scotish or the York. About...one out of four Master Masons have taken the Scotish route. This rite organized in the United States in 1801 consists of thirty-two degrees plus the honorary 33rd degree." (Handbook, Whalen p. 54) Concerning the York rite Whalen comments: "One in ten Masons...belong to the York rite, sometimes known as the American rite. This rite culminates in the Knights Templar, which is closed to Jews and other non-Christian masons." (**Handbook**, Whalen p. 55) If I am not mistaken the York rite consists of ten degrees in addition to the three basic degrees of Masonry. The principle officers of a Masonic lodge are the Master, whose word is law, the Senior Warden, and the Junior Warden. Other officers include the

secretary, treasurer, senior deacon, junior deacon, marshal, chaplain, stewards, and the tyler or doorkeeper. The Master or chaplain begins the lodge meeting by reading a portion of Scripture and with a word of prayer to the Supreme Being.

How does one become a member of the Masonic lodge? Well, he had better not be black in color, first of all, no negroes allowed. Nor should he be a cripple, have a withered hand, or be blind or whatever for the Masonic lodge will only accept persons of sound mind and body. The candidate must express some belief in a higher power than himself. "A belief in the existence of God is an essential point of Speculative Masonry—so essential. . . that no Atheist can be made a Mason." (**Encyclopedia of Freemasonry**, Mackey p. 315) If a candidate thus far meets the requirements he can be made a mason only if he gets the unanimous approval of the existing members of the lodge. One vote against a candidate is enough to preclude the possibility of induction into the Masonic Order. The candidate must also take an oath to keep inviolate the secrets of the order. The secrets include all the esoteric instruction given orally in the lodge, the events of the lodge meeting including its extensive, mysterious, ritual and the lodge's various Passwords and secret hand grips that serve to identify one Mason to another. In addition the mason must keep secret any knowledge he may have of **illegal** activity of another mason. The lodge is a secret organization. The secrets of which are to be hidden from the eyes and ears of the profane non-mason. The oath of the first degree, Entered Apprentice, is:

> "To all of this and these I solemnly and sincerely promise and swear without equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion in me whatever, bending myself under no less penalty than having my throat cut from end to end, my tongue torn out by its roots, and my body buried in the rough sands of the sea a cable tow length from shore, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in 24 hours, should I knowingly or willingly violate this my solemn obligation as an apprentice. So help me God and enable me to keep stedfast in the due performance of the same." (Handbook, Whalen p. 57)

As the Mason passes from one degree to another he must make a similar oath each time. There is connected with this induction into the Masonic lodge also a mysterious, degrading, humiliating initiation. I do not intend to describe it in detail for you, but you may check some of the literature available if you desire. Among other things the initiation consists of the following: the candidate to membership in the lodge is stripped of his street clothes and given a special garment by the lodge, he is led blindfolded into a darkened room, he is led about by a rope tied to his neck. All of which is to depict the candidates helplessness as one who is ignorant and groping about in darkness and looking for the "light" of Freemasonry. After his initiation and oath the blindfold is taken off and suddenly he sees the "light". Sometimes the initiation to the various degrees consists of mock beatings which result in the "death" of the victim and later he is raised from the dead by the hand of the Master of the lodge. From death to life. The dead candidate to Masonry is brought to life as a Mason.

How does the lodge sustain itself re-membership from year to year. Supposedly the lodge does not solicit new members or publicly canvass an area for new members. But the lodge does have its supporting society. The Order of the De Moloy serves as a recruiting ground for the Masonic lodges. The De Moloy enrolls boys between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one. The Masonic lodge excludes women from its membership and consequently their wives and daughters over twenty-one are members of the Order of the Eastern Star, which has as its motto: "We have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him." Girls under twenty-one are organized as Job's Daughters, these Masonic daughters take their name from Job 42:15.

This concludes my description of Free-

masonry as an organization. There is much more that could be related, but I think the above is sufficient for our purposes. Next time we will consider Freemasonry as a religion and evaluate it.

Maybe I should leave you to ponder a definition of Freemasonry given by one of its distinguished proponents:

"Masonry is the activity of closely united men who employing symbolical forms borrowed principally from the mason's trade and from architecture, work for the welfare of mankind, striving morally to enable themselves and others, and thereby to bring about a universal league of mankind, which they aspire to exhibit even now on a small scale." (**The Builders**, Newton, page 241.)

The following poem had its birth in a sermon based on I Peter 5:5-7 at our Hope, Walker Church.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

PRIDE OR HUMILITY?

Pride?
  Self-esteem.
  Others to demean.
This doth characterize the natural heart.
But that: not from Creation's start.

Humility?
  Submission.
  Meekness.
Is foreign to man's heart so bold,
Yet, so beautiful to behold.

You may sigh.
  "Wherein then doth humility lie?"
Only by Grace and that alone,
Which of himself no man can own.
It's God's work on the heart of stone.

God's people: benefactors of that Grace I see,
Yet pride controls their life; not humility.
This seems like inconsistancy.
Is sin to blame,
That wretched old man?

"Yet," says pride, "the good I seek.
It's him who doth of evil wreak."

"No," says humility, "it's me.
God's Grace is not that weak you see.
I can't excuse myself that way.
His Grace; sufficient for every day,
To overpower that man of sin,
To whom I am so close akin."

"Close?" you say, "to him of sin,
When such fine words escape your pen?"

"Close," I say, "for wherein doth the motive be?
But in pride: not humility."

Once again we, the Beacon Lights Staff, take this opportunity to thank the following churches and individuals for their support.

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The
Thirty-Fourth
Annual Convention
of the
Protestant
Reformed
Young People

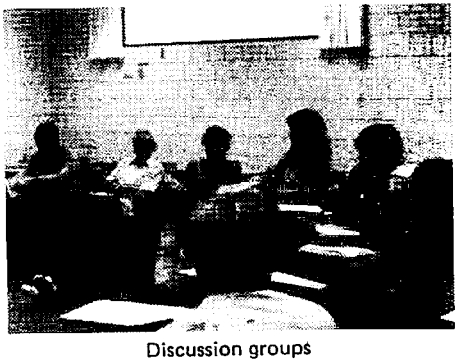
August 12-15

"Serve the Lord
With Gladness"
—Ps. 100:2

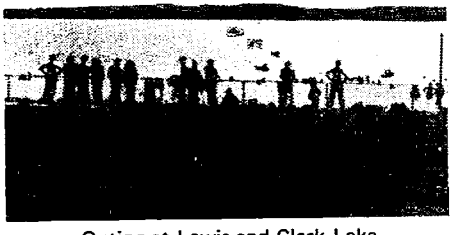
I. Making a Joyful Noise
II. Serving the Lord
III. Coming Before His Presence

Bus ride

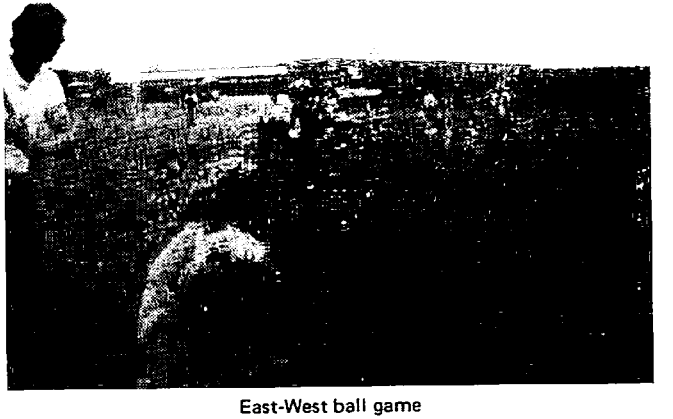
Commons with dorm in background



Discussion groups



Outing at Lewis and Clark Lake



East-West ball game

Post Convention Review

TOM VAN OVERLOOP

The buses from Grand Rapids arrived at Dordt College at three o'clock Monday afternoon. Registration and the assigning of dorms took place. During the remainder of the day we had a sports mixer which included swimming, volleyball, basketball, bowling, and pool. That night the majority of the conventioners sacked out early, wearied from their long travels. But, there was also a select few who made sure the chaperones were kept busy maintaining peace in the dorms after curfew.

Tuesday morning came too fast for most. The convention picture was taken after breakfast. Then the delegates attended the business meeting. Discussion groups took up the rest of the morning. We had a lively discussion on "Youth in Church, Home, and School". That afternoon, swimming at Sandy Hollow was canceled on account of the weather so everyone enjoyed an afternoon of free time. That night Rev. Heys gave a speech on "Making a Joyful Noise". Afterward reinforcements for the chaperones arrived on the scene and everything stayed under control.

Early Wed. morning Rev. Van Baren spoke on "Serving the Lord". At 9:30 we left on buses for Lewis and Clark Lake on the Missouri River. Lunch consisted of a sack lunch furnished by the college. That afternoon some were swimming, some were sunbathing, and some just watched the sunbathers. Others toured the Gavin Dam. The buses left at 4:00 for Doon Park where we ate a delicious chicken supper. What energy was left was spent on the hayride. Soon straw covered everyone from head to toe. That night everyone was so tired even the chaperones could go to bed early.

Thursday morning another business meeting was held to elect new officers to the federation board. Discussion groups on music, dancing, and the film arts followed. Thursday afternoon East met West in the traditional softball game. Afterward the largest matchmaking affair for the banquet in the history of conventions was successful. The banquet also proved to be equally as successful. The menu included Shrimp, Chicken -Fried, Steak, and Ham. The speech was by Prof. Decker on "Coming Before His Presence".

After breakfast Friday morning the buses left. Everyone sadly left knowing they wouldn't see their new friends again for a long time.

Finally I would like to say that the convention was a big success. The meetings and discussions were attended very well and everyone had a decent time.

Young People, the 34th annual convention is now a memory. The summer of 1974 is rushing to an end. What you have done in this past summer is history. I ask, was it a summer to be proud of? Did you make a joyful noise this summer? Have you served the Lord with gladness? Did you come into his presence with thanksgiving?

The past cannot be changed. What you have done stands. What kind of memories do you have? Are they memories of the worldly things that you did? Could people identify you as a Christian? Or, through your dress and your daily walk, were you trying to identify with the world? The most important question is, "How did God see you this past summer?" You know that you can't fool Him. He sees all.

Young People, as you enter into another school and society season, what kind of memories will you be making? What will your record be?

Read the conventions speeches that follow; take them to heart. Learn from them. And, in every new day ahead, serve the Lord with gladness!

Ed.

Making A Joyful Noise Unto The World

Covenant Young People of our Protestant Reformed Churches:

REV. JOHN A. HEYS

It always amazes me, and gives me a certain sense of spiritual joy when I watch you young people prepare for your conventions. Especially is this true when I watch you, and find out what theme you have picked for your convention. Thus far the thirty four conventions have picked themes that are taken literally out of Scripture, or are phrases solidly based on the Word of God. You are to be commended for this. And I want to tell you that we, the older generations of your parents' age and grandparents' age, rejoice to see that your conventions revolve around and are centered in the Word of God. This gives us hope and joy; and in it we see the faithfulness of our covenant God.

But do you know what I would like to see? Whether this belongs to the domain of the Federation Board or to the Beacon Lights' Staff, I do not know. But I would appreciate very much seeing a page in the Beacon Lights that contained three columns. The left hand one would list the year of the convention. The middle one would tell us what society or societies sponsored the convention. The right column would be the important one and would list all the themes used by our young people thus far in these thirty four conventions. I am sure you would find a wealth of truth expressed there in that column, and a rich statement of what God says to us in His Word. If there is no such list, perhaps each society can look back in its minutes and supply the Beacon Lights with the information; or old Beacon Lights copies will serve. For some of the congregations that sponsored conventions are no longer with us.

As far as this year's theme is concerned, the host societies have chosen a theme that is joyful and yet serious, and contains a very necessary exhortation to us. It is taken from what is reverently called, "Old One Hundred", and deals with the first three verses of Psalm 100. And although I appreciate the position of being the first speaker, since those who speak next will not be able to "steal my fire" and say what I intended to say before I could say it, this fills me also with some apprehension and uneasiness because I do not want to "steal their fire" and say what they intended to say and what belongs really to their speeches. I am, therefore, going to try very hard not to speak of anything more than is assigned to me, namely, the truth in the first verse of Psalm 100, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands." I will avoid speaking of serving Him with gladness, and of coming before His presence with singing. If I do stray into the territory of the other speakers, I hope that they will forgive me, and understand that I do not do so deliberately. I will speak to you then on the subject, "Making a Joyful Noise unto the Lord," and I will first ask you, "Do you?"

I. I trust that you will not take it ill of me when I say that youth as a rule makes plenty of noise, and likes to make plenty of noise. I know that we used to have a young fellow living across the street from us who had a motorcycle; and knew all the others in the city who had motorcycles. There they would all be, congregated across from our porch, racing their motors

without mufflers, tearing down the road a half block and come back roaring again. The more noise they could make, the more fun they had. And young fellows with cars likewise find great delight in squealing their tires as they start out from nothing flat to sixty miles an hour in as few seconds as possible. Does that sound strange or familiar to some of you? And you young ladies, have you not experienced this very thing on the back of a motorcycle or in the front seat with such a driver who squeals his tires and leaves a lot of rubber on the road?

And just to be honest with you, I will admit that sometimes I still get a thrill out of overpowering noise. I still get a thrill out of the crezendo of a jet as it takes off into the blue yonder. This last Spring when we were in Jamaica we lived in apartments near the end of the runway, or maybe I should say the beginning of the runway of the Montego Bay airport. And we used to listen for that one particular plane, an English plane of BOAC called the super VC10. The roar of its four rear-mounted engines was deafening and reverberated against the coastal hills and mountains. Yes, I am no longer a youth, but I can get a thrill out of noise.

And I am not forgetting you young ladies. You will agree with me that at basketball games and baseball or softball games there is much loud noise of screaming in delight at a spectacular play. What a noise there is when in the confines of a basketball gymnasium, your team defeats a chief rival, or let me say, wins a championship game! Noise? A Deafening Roar!

Then, too, although I did not ride over with you on the bus, I can imagine—because I have been on such bus rides before—what noise there can at times be. The screaming of girls being teased by the boys, and the boys making a loud noise of laughter because the girls respond to the teasing. At times, no doubt, there was shouting because of some object or sight along the way. Yes, healthy youth is given to making a lot of noise. And for youth it is so hard to believe those words of Solomon that the days are coming when they shall say that they have no pleasure in them, just aches and pains all day, and during the night as well.

And a great deal of this noise is joyful noise as well. When youth makes noise it usually is, because they are joyful, happy and are enjoying life to the full.

BUT is all this a joyful noise **unto the Lord?**

Sometimes, perhaps often that noise or loud sound is **about** Him. Remember when you sang in the choir, sang songs of praise to God, and the director worked on you and got you to give him every ounce of strength of lungs and voice at the climax of that song of praise to God? At our sing-spirations the organists "pull out all the stops", that is, use every pipe on the organ, to get out of it all it can give. The pianist literally pounds and bangs on the ivory keys in competition with the organ and the audience. The trumpeter gets red in the face as he gives all that he has to add to the sound. And the audience responding to the director sings at the top of its voice to fill the church with a loud noise, yea a joyful noise. All this is making a joyful noise **about** the Lord. But is it to the Lord? The question is whether this loud and joyful sound that issues from your mouths is any different from the sound which the unbelievers make when they sing what are called songs of praise to God. Of course there is a difference between our sinspirations and the rock and roll of the world. Of course our programs wherein God is extolled for His grace and glory, for the salvation He has prepared for us in His Son and for His majesty and sovereignty differ vastly from rock concerts. But the question is whether when you and the unbelievers sing the songs of God's praise, there is this difference that this joyful sound comes **out of your heart** as well as out of your mouth. The unbelievers often gather in large groups and sing the Messiah, singing literally the Word of God, and that Word of God as it pertains to our salvation and God's glory therein. All this is singing and making a joyful noise **about** God; but it is

by no means a joyful noise made unto the Lord. It is not directed to Him. It does not come out of a heart that knows the joy of that which is sung.

How is it with you? Young people. Are you filled with the joy of salvation? Do you rejoice because God is so glorious and sovereign? And is that why you sing with a loud sound? By the way, the text can be translated, "Shout unto the Lord," and does not necessarily mean a joyful noise. The word appears in the Old Testament with the Translation of "shout" more often than "make a joyful noise." But in the context of serving Him with gladness and coming before His presence with singing, it certainly has that idea here.

I would submit to you that what David means here is to give enthusiastic praise to God whether in song, or in confession that is not song. Literally we can shout out the praises of our God, for He is glorious beyond compare. But in a sense the word is used figuratively and means with enthusiasm. That is what we must have to shout, to make a loud and a joyful noise.

Now, do you?

How much joy is there in your heart for the truth of your salvation? How enthusiastic are you now in the days of your youth about the covenant blessings that God promises His people? Do you feel like you want to shout with joy that you are the sheep of His pasture, as David says in verse three? Does that truth touch you? Does it move you to an enthusiastic song of praise that is directed to Him?

Are you very enthusiastic about learning more and more about this God and the salvation He has prepared for His people? Does your society life and study of His Word show a heart that is ready to shout, to cry out with joy because of the truths that are found in Scripture? This boundless strength and vitality that you have for material exercises, does it make your enthusiasm and joy for the spiritual look sick? That enthusiasm is what David is talking about here in Psalm 100.

The idea is not that you may not have joy in the material, must always be shouting God's praises and be bubbling over with joy to confess Him before men every minute of your lives—although this would be wonderful and will be our lot in the new Jerusalem—but whether as far as the spiritual matters are concerned, as far as the things of our salvation are concerned, you know true joy, are glad because of what God has done for you and in you by the cross and Spirit of His Son so that you want to shout about it, and want to direct a song of praise to Him?

II. Must You?

But perhaps my question as to whether you do make a joyful noise unto the Lord causes a counter question to arise in your minds. Perhaps you want to ask me, "Must we?" Is this required of us in the days of our youth? O, I do not mean that you have a question as to whether it is your calling to serve the Lord in the days of your youth. Another speaker will deal with that matter at your convention. And I am sure that you believe that you must in the days of your youth serve Him, and keep His commandments. But you may wonder whether this is the time then you are called to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Is David not speaking here to older people? Is he really speaking to covenant youth and exhorting them to shout the praises of God?

I am in no way insinuating that you think that God's law is not yet for you. I am sure that you believe that there are no age limits when that law goes into effect in our lives. You know that one of the commandments speaks directly to children. We are under the demand of the law from the moment of our birth and until the day of our death.

But I can see where you might think that this making a joyful noise unto the Lord is for an older generation. Perhaps you are thinking that after making confession of faith this exhortation comes to you. That it is an exhortation to confessing members in the church of Christ. Or, perhaps, you may be thinking that after marriage, after you take on the serious business of living as husband and wife, and pretty soon as father and mother, that then these kind of exhorta-

tions in Scripture come to you.

It may be that you are thinking of the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes 11:9, "Rejoice. O young man, in the days of thy youth: and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes." Perhaps you are reminded of what Solomon says in the next chapter to youth when he speaks of those days that are coming wherein you will have to say that you have no pleasure in them. Solomon reminds you that vibrant life, days when you can enjoy life are not going to last. It would seem as though he is telling you to enjoy life while you can.

And surely we do not like the picture of children of God to be that of sadsacks, dried up sour pusses. Our churches have taken no stand that we are to dress in specified black clothing, go into monastaries or nunneries to get away from the world and from sin and to be dedicated to God. From the pulpits we have not been taught that we must have our noses in the Bible in order to be pilgrims and strangers here below. We do not believe that sin is in the thing itself. Our slogan has been World Fight but never World Flight. How then does this apply to youth to make a joyful sound unto the Lord?

Well, Scripture will give you the answer to all this. And two verses out of the Bible will be sufficient. Just go back to that text which I quoted in part a little while ago. Solomon does tell you to rejoice in the days of your youth, to let your hearts cheer you, and to walk in the ways of your eyes. BUT, and that is a big BUT, he also adds. "But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment!"

That changes things quite a bit, does it not? God tells you through Solomon that all your works from birth onward, through those days when life seems so sweet to you, and the world is full of that which makes you want to shout and sing at the top of your voice because of the enjoyment you get out of life, are being judged by Him.

Yes, you are to enjoy life when God gives it to you. Every creature that He gives you to enjoy, you may receive. But with enthusiasm, with a joyful noise, with a shout—not a halfhearted whisper or mumbled prayer—you are to thank God for all that which He gives you to enjoy in this life. He wants you as well as adults to recognize Him as the giver of every good and perfect gift. He wants your praise as well as He wants the praise of adults and of the angels. Look at "Old One Hundred" closely. Look carefully at verse three. "Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that made us and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture."

You, young people are made by God. What is more you are the sheep of His pasture, which sets you aside from the wicked world in which you live. You must shout His praises. There is no other god that deserves your praise and thanks. And being His sheep through sovereign election and by the cross of Christ and by His Spirit, you have a special calling to shout, rather than be silent, to make a joyful noise as His elect children, rather than fail to thank and praise Him.

The content of the joyful noise is given you in the fourth verse, "Enter into His gates with THANKSGIVING, and into His courts with PRAISE, and BLESS His name." In the days of your youth you are called upon to do this as fully as this is the calling of adults. Yes, you MUST make a joyful noise unto the Lord in the days of your youth. Your shout must not be one of cursing and swearing, of blasphemy and accusation against the living God. But you have a calling to praise and thank God with enthusiasm NOW. Today! While you are young and while He gives you this physical strength and power to do so. The days will come when only feebly and with cracked voice you can praise Him. The days may soon come when on a bed of sickness you can only silently praise and thank Him. But now while life is strong, while you are bubbling over with health and strength you must make a loud noise to God, you must enthusiastically praise and thank Him for all the material gifts, and above all for the blessings of salvation.

You have reason to shout and with

enthusiasm praise Him in that He has given you a name and a place in churches that have the purest manifestation of the truth, that stand in the front line of the battle against Arminianism, Pelagianism and Modernism in our land. THAT is something to shout about. THAT should draw out of you an enthusiastic response of praise and thanksgiving. You have reason to shout with enthusiasm that He has blotted out your sins as well as the sins of your parents'. You have the forgiveness of sins, the promise of the resurrection of the body and of life everlasting. Make, then, a joyful noise to God for these everlasting rich treasures which no man can take from you.

Paul strikes this note also when in Philippians 4:4 he writes, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice." And this verse comes to you as well as it does to your father and mother, uncles and aunts, the elders and deacons in your church. That word alway, or always, includes you in the days of your youth. And notice that Paul tells us to rejoice **in the Lord.** That is the only way that you can rejoice always. Outside of Him there is nothing wherein to rejoice. Take Christ and His cross away, and all you have left is hell! Can you rejoice about that? Take Christ, the Mediator away, and we all are under the terrible, unchangeable and eternal wrath of God. Who, knowing that can sing? Who aware of this can shout for joy? And because you are in Him by sovereign election, have been justified by His blood, and because He is coming back also for you, you have reason for shouting, and you must make a joyful noise unto God in praise and thanksgiving.

Now this does not mean that in the life of the child of God there is no room for tears. Jesus wept. And you and I better weep over our sins. Our whole life, every moment of it will not be spent in literally shouting out God's praise and in thanking Him for the blessings of salvation. We are going to have days, even though you do not have them at the moment, when you do not feel physically like shouting and making a joyful sound. You, young people, may soon be faced with some dreadful persecutions. God's counsel is being fulfilled very quickly in these days. We are rushing to the end, and therefore rushing to the days of the Antichrist. Then you will have days when the flesh is sorely tried and the joy of physical life seems gone.

And yet, in the midst of all this the soul can and does make a joyful noise when we with the eye of faith look at what is laid away for us and believe with the psalmist that we shall awake with God's likeness and forever be satisfied. That is why Peter writes, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." I Peter 1:6.

Yes, you young people are elect children of God already. You do not become such. It all is predetermined by God before the foundation of the world. And you must as such elect children shout the praises of the God Who chose you. And if you only appreciate the wonder and the blessedness of that truth, you will not find voice and power enough to shout for the joy of it. Your hearts will burst with joy, and your mouths shall utter it forth.

III. Can You?

I can still hear another counterquestion. Granted now that it is our calling, can we? Have we had enough spiritual experiences to be able to shout about the God of our salvation and His glory? You look at your parents and the older members in your congregation, and you say, "These people have had so many more experiences than we have. They have been here longer than we, and they have gone through trials and trying times. They have had anxieties and cares, and even fears. They are in a position to shout the praise of God and to thank Him for what He has done for them. But we? We have not had many spiritual experiences. We do not know the wonder of salvation the way they do. We can shout about material things, but the things spiritual after all are a bit new yet to us, even to those of us who have made confession of faith."

Now this is a good question, as well as

the question as to whether you must make that joyful noise. I am not going to rebuke you, if you have these thoughts in your minds. I do not think that you are trying by these questions to excuse yourselves and get from under your obligation. No, we ought to face matters and think them through. You have a right to an answer to such a question as, "Can we in the tender days of our youth be enthusiastic about the things of God's kingdom and of our salvation." You have that right provided it is not asked in a spirit of rebellion against this exhortation in God's Word.

But my answer is an emphatic, YES!

You have the same salvation that your parents have. You have the same Christ as Saviour that Methusaleh had when he was nine hundred sixty nine years old. You have therefore the same reasons for joy that they have. And though you will grow in experience and learn more and more to appreciate that salvation which is in Christ, you HAVE it NOW! You, young people, and do not ever forget this, have everything that your parents, your elders and deacons and your minister has. We may have special gifts of teaching and ruling and even of singing and speaking; but do not forget that you have all the salvation that your parents have. Did Jesus not rebuke His disciples when they wanted to drive away the mothers who were bringing little babes to Him that He might bless them with the benefits of His covenant and kingdom? Did Jesus not say that "of such is the kingdom of heaven? That means that they share in the blessings of the kingdom as well as the adults. And you are not little babes in arms, you are young adults, developing adults, and the things of God's kingdom are yours now. You do not need to wait until a certain age when they become yours. You have reason then for making a joyful noise unto the Lord.You have just as much reason as the aged children of God in rest homes, who have one foot in the grave, and have spent more than the fourscore years of the strong in this vail of tears. Christ is yours as well as He is the aged saint's.

And not only can you make a joyful noise unto God because you have as much reason as the very old and feeble saints, but you can because you have the same Spirit of Christ working in you that they have. We believe that God usually causes us to be born again early in our infancy, if not even before we are born physically. We believe that the Spirit of Christ comes into His elect children early in their childhood so that they can receive the truth they are taught and gradually come to the consciousness of their place in His kingdom. And that Spirit gives you the power early in life already to be interested in the things spiritual, to become enthusiastic about what God has done for you and to come to Him with praise and thanksgiving.

I want to remind you of two incidents recorded in Scripture that always have made me marvel at the grace of God and the power of His Holy Spirit. I want, first of all, to remind you of Moses who was taught by his mother the truth concerning Christ as He could be known in the Old Testament times. How long he received this instruction the Bible does not tell us. But it does tell us that the Spirit used it in the tender ages of his childhood so that forty years later, it was still powerfully there; and because of it he chose to cast his lot with the people of God, turn his back on all the worldly things he would have had, choosing rather to suffer with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

The same Spirit, Who was in Moses to write in his heart the truth he was taught by his mother, lives in your hearts as covenant youth. And He Who gave Moses that grace to make such a decision, after so brief a training, dwells in you. Is it not amazing? Is it not a powerful testimony of the grace of God that what Moses was taught as such a little boy stayed with him, that the Spirit kept it there, kept Moses believing it, so that forty years later it was still so strongly there that he made that decision to cast his lot with the suffering Israelites? THAT Spirit you have in you from the moment you were

born again, and THAT Spirit enables you young people to make a joyful noise unto the Lord in praise and thanksgiving. After all, do not compare yourselves with your parents and minister and elders and deacons. Compare yourselves with Moses. How much more instruction have you not received? you have been taught in your parent's home all your lives, not a few brief tender years of childhood. You have had catechism from your sixth year onward, gone to Christian schools and church all these years, belong to a Young People's Society. You have the New Testament Scriptures which are far richer than what the saints had in the Old Testament. Can you sing? Can you make a joyful noise unto the Lord in the days of your youth? You certainly can.

I said that I wanted to remind you of two incidents recorded in Scripture. Jump with me over a long period of years and look at four young men about your age, Daniel, Mishael, Hananiah and Azariah. They were captives in a foreign land. They were called upon to sin against their God. And they did not mumble a few incoherent words of complaint and dissatisfaction. Loud and clear they came through with a refusal to eat the meat offered up to them, and later on to bow before the image of the king. They could testify of their God in some very difficult moments, in time of real danger for the flesh. This they did by that Spirit of Christ Who dwelt in them. And you can as well as they, for you have that same Spirit in you. What does John say to you? No, what does God say to you through John? This, and it applies also to young women, of course, "I have written unto you young men because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." I John 2:14.

There you have it!

Make then joyful, loud sounds of praise to God here at your convention. Praise and thank Him with enthusiasm for all that He has done for you materially and spiritually. And then go home, not forgetting this exhortation, but as you grow and develop spiritually, walk according to this exhortation more perfectly, more richly and with more enthusiasm as you grow in grace and in knowledge.

"Serving The Lord"

The subject, "Serving the Lord", is one which is in a sense very easily understood. It is a subject, however, which is also vitally intertwined with the other two speeches. The fact of **joy**, emphasized by the first speaker, and the need of **worship**, to be emphasized by the third speaker, are directly related with service to Jehovah.

The difficulty, I believe, with my subject is not the understanding of it, but the need to walk according to its demands. This is always the difficulty for children of God in the midst of this earth. They have a high calling—but one which is impossible for the flesh. Only by grace does the child of God begin to serve his God according to the demands of the Word of God.

It is proper, then, that we mutually encourage each other to serve the Lord.

REV. G. VAN BAREN

There are increasingly temptations which confront the child of God. The world presents that which we find appealing to the flesh. It comes with its entertainments

in movie, through the printed page, in song. This appears alluring. Satan comes to seek our service. And there is that sinful flesh which we retain as long as we live in this earth. The temptations are so many. But the Word of God directs and encourages us in a proper and godly walk. And now also, we gather to be encouraged in our service before Jehovah.

In considering this subject, I would point out to you first its wonderful idea; secondly, the basis of service; finally, the necessity of such service.

We are to "serve" the Lord. What, really, does that mean? The term "service" is understood usually to be a work on behalf of or for another. However, we often consider "service" to be a matter of hiring out one's time or talents to another for a specified amount of hours and for a specified wage. Sadly, this conception is often also applied to the service to Jehovah. One begins to think that he serves God in that he allots a number of hours on Sunday for worship, some time for study of catechism, a bit of reading of Scripture and prayer—and the hours of service are ended. Often, too, there is the idea that now God must surely reward such "service" with some just wage—such as eternal life.

Such concept of service is, obviously, wrong. It is true that one must, in serving Jehovah, labor to the glory of His Name. But this is not a matter of offering a specific number of hours to Him in exchange for some sort of reward.

The word for "serving" could be more properly understood as the Apostle Paul often used it. In Rom. 1:1, for instance, he writes, "Paul, a servant (properly: slave) of Jesus Christ...." To serve the Lord can be compared with slavery. A slave is one who is obliged to do the bidding of his master. He serves by virtue of the fact that the master has purchased him. The slave has no choice. All of his time, all of his efforts, belong to his master. Such is the position of the regenerated, called child of God. He belongs, as our Heidelberg Catechism emphasizes, in body and soul and in life and death to his faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He serves not for reward—but because he belongs to his Savior. He serves not part-time, but day and night. Such is a true servant of Jehovah.

But what sort of service is required of children of God—and especially of young people? Let us not be misled by the false enthusiasms and deceiving projects of many. There is the evil error of our day of arminianism. Young people, especially, are urged to go out to save souls. The more souls these save, the more esteemed these are. Some have their books in which they total the number of souls saved each day or week or year. That sort of effort is directed in the wrong way. One must faithfully witness in this world concerning his Lord Jesus Christ. But beware that evil bent of arminianism.

Others, increasingly so, insist that the calling of the church is social improvement. These want the church to be active. It must remove social injustices; racial inequities; poverty; war. Often forgetting the cross of Christ, or referring to Christ as a perfect Example, these will assume their calling to be to improve this world apart from the wonder of regeneration. But this too represents effort contrary to that suggested in Scripture. Paul was not concerned about that sort of thing. He lived in an age of gross injustices. But what did he say to the slaves? Free yourselves? Rebel? No. He commanded slaves of human masters to be obedient and faithful as to the Lord. What did he say to Christian masters? Free your slaves? You sin in being a master? No. He commanded masters to be good masters as under the Lord. No. Paul was not concerned with social improvement. He did insist that Christians are not to be participants with this wicked world in the evils they perpetrate.

But what must energetic, covenant young people do? How can they serve best? They can not yet serve as ministers, elders, deacons. What then? What can they do?

The last speaker will present the calling to worship Jehovah. I will not infringe

upon his domain. Only I point out that of first importance is our calling to serve God by worshipping His Name in His house of prayer. We are to read faithfully His Word. We are to be often on our knees in prayer to Him. Don't minimize that important service. Our God is highly pleased when His servants worship Him thus.

But there are other important activities for covenant youth. One is to be concerned not merely with self, but with the whole of the body of Jesus Christ. Young people should well understand that too. That body has many members—some old and lonely. Young people too could visit such, encourage them, read to them comforting words from Scripture. Or, one can show his concern towards his peers—young people his own age. How often the zeal of youth is expressed in the desire to do some sort of "mission work", even in some far-off city—while ignoring one's noble calling right at home! How often one's neighbor, one's buddy, can do or say such things which are obviously wrong. We know these are wrong. But we keep our mouth shut. We don't dare to offend. We don't dare to be classified as some sort of religious nut. What must we do? Let us be active in rebuke and encouragement of fellow Christian young people. Thus does the body of Christ prosper.

Or again: there is the matter of our giving to the cause of God's kingdom. Many of the young people today are able to earn considerable wages. But often these are retained exclusively for self. Parents are already contributing—why should we? But serving young people ought not to speak that way. Of what God entrusted to our care, so we should learn early in life, we are to serve Him in contributing faithfully to the cause of His kingdom.

There is also the question of our walk. We ask: what can we do in the service of our Lord? Yet often we forget that our daily conversation and walk represents service in a very real way. We forget that others observe us—and attribute our walk to the whole of the body. We can be so careless with our speech at times. We can be seen seeking the evil entertainment of this world. We can be heard singing the songs—not of Zion—but of this earth. (And, incidently, if I have one major criticism of our last convention, it would be the lack of singing there.) One individual takes it upon himself to pull off some prank. The result of all this is that those about us point the finger, often with a degree of justification, and say, "Just look what the Protestant Reformed young people do!" Or: "Look what those 'Christians' do!" Misdeeds; sinful walk—all these are attributed by man not merely to the individual committing them, but to the whole body. What are young people to do in service to Jehovah? Let them watch their words and deeds lest the wicked find occasion to rebuke and condemn!

But positively, may our conversation and walk reflect that we belong to Jesus. Let others hear in our speech that we are spiritually minded. May our actions reflect that we are children of the light! May it be said of us, as it was of the apostles, that men can see that we have been with Jesus.

But why ought we so to serve our God? The Psalmist emphasizes this especially in verse 3. There he points out three things. We serve, first, because "the Lord He is God." He is Sovereign of heaven and earth. There is none equal to Him. He demands all service. That ought to be reason enough for our serving Him.

But more: "it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves!" He formed us. We had nothing to say in that. He fashioned us in our mother's womb. He caused that those He had eternally determined to gather should be born. Ought not the creature then serve Him? For He that made us, made us as moral rational creatures bearing His image. That ought to be reason enough for our serving Him.

But still more: "we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture." Adam fell into sin—and all his posterity with him. These were entirely undeserving of God's blessing. And they were completely unable to serve Him, though God's re-

quirements remained unchanged. But God provided the way of deliverance. He sent His Son into our flesh. He redeemed His people through the blood of the Lamb. There was salvation accomplished in harmony with His justice. Thus are we the "sheep of His pasture" and "His people". Therefore, especially, are we to serve Him. He has made us willing and able to do this in Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the final analysis, we are to remember that our service to Jehovah is based upon Christ's service to God. He was THE Servant of Jehovah. Isaiah repeatedly declares this. As Servant. Christ humbled Himself even unto death and hell. He was willing to sacrifice His all in order that God's justice might be satisfied fully. That sort of service is such that it can not be compared to anything which mere man could ever do. Because He was Servant, therefore are His people slaves of Jehovah.

This work of our Lord also serves as our example. He is an Example not in that liberal, modernistic sense. Yet surely the child of God beholds Christ as the perfect Servant of Jehovah—a model for our service. If our Lord washed His disciples feet, ought we to be proud and haughty toward each other? If our Lord offered Himself on the cross for poor and miserable sinners as we are, ought not we to carry out our labors faithfully to the glory of God's Name?

Service, also by young people, is essential. Do not, however, get wrong ideas concerning service. First, such service is not to earn or merit before God. Our labors will not gain heaven for us—as many have taught in the past. We are not doing something that will make our God greater. Certainly not that.

On the other hand, we must beware lest we think that service to Jehovah is objectionable. Some think that this service is not "fun". These have, of course, their own standards of "fun". "Fun" is pleasurable. "Fun" satisfies the senses of touch, taste, hearing, etc. "Fun" must be that which is appealing to the majority of youth. "Fun" must not be regulated by rules of parents, teachers, or even of Scripture itself. What does not meet these standards, is not fun.

But service to God does not conform to that standard. Such service often does not allow that which pleases our flesh. True service directs attention to God—not man. This service surely does provoke mockery. There will be mockery of the world generally. These will insist that we are foolish; morbid; lacking desire for pleasures. And we don't like such opposition. Sad to say, oftentimes our peers, fellow young people, mock with a proper walk. These can make life "hard" for the faithful youth. These can make fun of a godly walk. These scorn our attempts to be faithful. And it's hard to be a proper servant in the face of such mockery.

Yet service is the necessary fruit of regeneration. We are born again by the Spirit of the Son working in our hearts. Service is not merely for elders or old people. This fruit is and must be seen in you. We believe that God calls His people in the line of continued generations. He works in the hearts of covenant seed in their youth. He gives His Spirit to guide and direct them in the fear of His Name. Yes, there continues to be a struggle. And such struggle is particularly hard for you. Yet the fruit of new life must be seen. There is your calling to walk faithfully in this worldly pilgrimage to glory.

And that is "fun" or "gladness". Understand: children of God use heavenly and Scriptural standards to determine what makes glad. In heaven, so we confess, it will be our chief joy to praise God forevermore. Then, why not now? Our standard for "gladness" in heaven, and now, is: What pleases God? It must be our pleasure and happiness to do that. And in this way we also continue to enjoy the favor and blessings of God.

Serve God, young people, with gladness. That's your privilege—and ought to be your sincere desire.

Coming Before His Presence

BY PROF. ROBERT D. DECKER

Perhaps the greatest hoax perpetrated by the devil is that the Christian life is only grief and sadness. The devil wants us to believe that there is no joy, no real gladness for Christians—especially for young Christians. To be a Christian means, the great Deceiver would have us think, to walk around with a long face; it's no fun, it's just a drag. To be a Christian is not to be able to do this or that; it's negative, full of prohibition. While on the other hand; pleasure, happiness, and good times are to be found outside of the Christian faith and in the world, so the devil would have us think. Judging by worldly standards and considering by worldly definitions we might be inclined to agree. The life of a Christian is a battle, a fierce battle against sin and his own sinful nature. The path of the Christian is a narrow one which few find and which is found only by grace. The lot of the Christian is suffering and in his future (which is not far off) there is a great tribulation! Still more, the Lord's Word even call Christians to be sorrowful. They must have that Godly sorrow over sin. And, there are of course, the pleasures of sin. There are a good many activities in which the world rejoices and in which we as Christians may not indulge. To be a disciple of Jesus, according to His own Word, means: self-denial and cross bearing. The Scripture says: it is given unto us on the behalf of Christ not only to believe on His Name but also to suffer together with Him! Anyone, therefore, who thinks the Christian life is easy, that it contains no sorrow is simply deceiving himself.

But to say that there is no joy in the Christian life and that all happiness is to be found in the world is the lie of Satan! In fact, there is no happiness in the world outside of Jesus Christ. That is an absolute truth. The only joy there is, is in Christ and in His service. The reason for this is, SIN. Sin is the cause of nothing but grief because its wages is death and there is no joy in death. For the Christian sin's guilt has been removed and its power has been broken by the Lord Jesus Christ. The result is that for the Christian death has no more sting and the grave has no victory. The child of God has joy which cannot be diminished by any circumstance of life much less destroyed. He has as we sometimes sing, joys which earth cannot afford. Yes, the Christian has his sorrows. But always these are overshadowed and overcome by the joy of salvation. As paradoxical as it may sound the Christian's joy begins in sorrow and in the measure that he is truly sorrowful the Christian experiences the everlasting joy of salvation. He sorrows over his sin and his sinful nature. This, the Bible calls, the Godly sorrow of repentance which ends in salvation never to be repented of, while the sorrow of the world works death.

All of this has been beautifully set forth by the two previous speakers. The question we are to answer now is: "How can we obtain this gladness? And how can we be nurtured in it?" We are to answer these questions from the point of view of the last part of verse 2 of Psalm 100: "come before his presence with singing." The text literally reads: "enter or come in before His face with a shouting for joy." It is true that we live all of life before the face of God. But we come before His face especially in worship. It is also true that only in the true worship of God do we

obtain real gladness. I shall speak to you, therefore, on the subject "Coming Before His Presence". I should like you to consider with me two things: 1. The idea of true worship, and 2. Worship as the power of joy in our lives.

Worship may be defined as follows. Worship is the child of God praising his Lord in the fellowship of the body of Christ, the Church. Now, there are several important elements involved in this idea of worship. We cannot be exhaustive either in our definition or in our discussion of the idea of worship. In the seminary an entire semester is spent on this subject in a course called Liturgics. We want to focus our attention on the essence or core of all true worship of the Lord and that essence is: praising God! This is certainly the Bible. Psalm 100 speaks of making a joyful noise unto the Lord and of serving the Lord with gladness and singing. The poet calls us to acknowledge God as Lord and our Creator not only, but also as our. Savior which means we are to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. We are to bless His Name for He is good. His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures. Worship, therefore, is praising God according to this Psalm. We find this same emphasis repeatedly throughout the Psalms and in the Old Testament Scriptures generally. Israel was called to acknowledge Jehovah's goodness and to praise Him for His mighty acts and His great salvation. Thus their whole life centered in the tabernacle and later the temple where God dwelt in covenant fellowship with His people. The same emphasis is found in the New Testament. Acts 2:46, 47 describes the worship and life of the saints as a joyful praising of God. Col. 3:16 exhorts us to let the Word of God dwell in us richly thus to praise God with Psalms and hymns, with singing and making melody in our hearts. The book of Revelation gives us the vision of the glory of the new creation in chapters 7, 21, and 22. The essence of that glory is that the saints perfectly praise God without the burden of sin forever and ever.

True worship therefore, is praising God. That true worship consists in an acknowledgement of our sinfulness and worthlessness before the Lord and, therefore, our complete dependence upon Him. We sing of this too when we sing, "All that I am I owe to Thee, Thy wisdom Lord hath fashioned me, I give my Maker thankful praise, Whose wondrous works my soul amaze." Worship is the extoling of God's great goodness to us in Jesus Christ. We confess that He saved us from all our sin and death. We thank Him for blessing us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is what we are to do in worship: praise and thank the Lord. In worship we reflect God's saving grace in us by manifesting His praises.

This fundamental truth determines the order of worship in our churches too. In this order of worship we acknowledge our dependence upon God by confessing that our help is in the Name of Jehovah and praying for the grace, mercy and peace of the Triune God of our salvation. We acknowledge our sin and seek to be guided in the way of thankfulness by giving attention to the law of our God. We confess our faith in the God of our salvation; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We pray for the forgiveness of our sins and for guidance and strength in the battle of faith. Also in our order of worship we praise the Lord by the bringing of our thankful offerings, in prayer, and by singing and organ. And, we do all of this in the fellowship of the saints in Christ Jesus. But the chief element in worship is the preaching of the Word! By this means as supplemented by the administration of the sacraments we received the grace of salvation and are enabled to live sanctified lives of obedience by which God is praised.

Therefore worship itself is a joyful experience! In worship, as the theme text of this Convention says: "We Come In Before His Presence or Before the Face of Jehovah With a Shouting For Joy". In

other words in all of life but especially in worship we enjoy the fellowship of the God of our salvation. We commune with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, God talks with us and we talk with Him. He tells us of His great love toward us for Jesus' sake, He comforts and teaches us, He encourages us in our pilgrimage. And we in turn respond in thanksgiving and praise to Him the God of our salvation.

This is the true joy of the Christian. This means that if worship for you is not a joyful experience something is very wrong in your life. Do you love to go to church? Do you look forward to the Lord's Day with eager anticipation? Or do you go out of habit? Is it true that you really do not get too excited about it and wish that you could do other things on Sunday? Are the Sunday worship services the highlight of your week? And when you are in the house of God, do you experience the joy of God's presence or are you left cold? Perhaps you find it difficult to concentrate on the preaching of God's Word and the various elements of worship. Maybe you are just not turned on by it all and maybe too, the preaching turns you off! Is the result of all this that you do not find the worship of God to be a glad and joyful experience? I say again if all this be true of you something is very wrong. It is simple Bible truth that the joy of the Christian is to be in God's fellowship. That's going to be our eternal joy in glory. The only barrier to that joy is sin. If worship, therefore, is not a joyful experience for you the Word of God to you is, "Repent!" Worship is praising God and therefore a joyful experience. This brings us to our second point. Worship is the power of joy in our lives.

The question is, "How do we obtain this gladness?" The answer is first of all, by the faithful worship of Jehovah. This is not difficult to understand. We have seen that true joy comes in the fellowship of God and that there is no happiness outside of Jesus Christ because everything outside of Jesus Christ is sin and death. Therefore to be truly joyful in all of life we must live in obedience to the will of God which means we must make war against our sins and sinful natures and strive after the holiness of God. But this we cannot do of ourselves. We are saved by grace through faith and that not of ourselves it is the gift of God. The means which God has provided for the obtaining of this saving grace and its fruit, faith, is the preaching of the Word. As we said, this is the chief element of true worship. The Bible makes this unmistakably clear. I Corinthians 1 teaches that preaching is Christ crucified, both the power and wisdom of God. By the power of preaching God saves believers and by that same power He destroys and makes foolish the wisdom of this world. Romans 10 teaches us that we need to call upon the Name of the Lord to be saved. We need faith (to believe) in order to call upon the Name of the Lord. But we cannot believe in the Lord, Paul writes, unless we hear Him and we cannot hear Him without a preacher who is sent. The apostle concludes by saying, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

This is the only way to obtain this gladness. We must come under the preaching of the Word. Think of what a wonderful blessing that really is! Through a sinful, human preacher Christ is pleased to speak to us! We really hear His voice! In the church where the Word is preached, Jesus calls us laboring and heavy laden sinners to Himself where we find rest unto our souls. He teaches us to know God as the God of our salvation, He admonishes us on account of our sins. Jesus works repentance in us so that we turn from those sins and strive after holiness. He assures us of the cleaning power of His shed blood and of our victory in Him over death! Christ comforts us in every sorrow and leads us to everlasting life and glory where our joy shall be full! What a blessing! Very bluntly and simply, to be happy in the Lord and to experience His joy we've got to come to church! That is where God in Christ is and in His presence there is fullness of joy!

How can we be nurtured in this joy having attained it by means of the preaching of the Word in worship? The answer is, by prayer. Our Heidelberg Catechism teaches us that God gives His grace and Holy Spirit only to those who with sincere desire continually ask them of Him and are thankful for them. Prayer is our link to the Father in Heaven. Let me ask you, are you unhappy? Let me ask you another question, do you pray? As a pastor I cared for a good many unhappy Christians, young Christians too. Apart from the specific sin in which each was involved and which were the causes of the lack of joy in their lives, there was one general characteristic common to many, if not nearly all of these unhappy Christians. They weren't praying! It is also true that when they began praying by God's grace their problems began to be solved. Now, we ought to understand this. This doesn't mean that if you have a problem and simply pray about it once or twice or even a few times somehow, all of a sudden, your problem is going to be solved and you will be joyful again. We are to live a life of prayer. How often do you pray? Do you pray with your family? Once, twice, perhaps three times per day? Do you pray with the congregation on Sunday? But what about your private praying? How often do you enter your closet alone with God? And how much time do you actually spend in prayer? Is it a few minutes per day, probably at best? Jesus found it necessary to pray all night on several occasions during His earthly ministry. If Jesus, the Son of God in our flesh, found that to be necessary, shouldn't we? The Scripture says, "Pray without ceasing." And the Bible also says we are to be careful for nothing (i.e. we must not worry about anything) but in everything by prayer and supplication make our request known to God. That is the way to be nurtured in the joy of salvation. Young people you must pray. Tell the Lord very frankly and very openly about your needs, cares, your problems and worries. Be assured, His ear is open to our cry.

Secondly, we nurture this joy in our lives by searching the Scriptures. Again, the idea is not that we read the Bible occasionally or even regularly in the rather formal occasions of family devotions and worship in church. The idea is that we live close to the Word of God. We ought to get on a regular schedule and follow a pattern of regular Bible reading. We ought to read a few chapters per day and take notes of what we read. God's Word has the answer to every grief or cause for sadness imaginable in this life. The Bible speaks to every need and every circumstance of life. We can be so foolish sometimes. We can get ourselves so upset and bothered and be so terribly troubled and so unhappy and yet fail to use the means which God has provided. And sometimes Christians will go all over to find the answer. They will go to doctors and psychiatrists and mental hospitals and social workers and all the while never open their Bibles and never really pray about whatever may be troubling them.

This then is the way to be truly joyful. Joy is in God's pesence and service. Everything outside of God and Jesus Christ is only grief. In the fellowship of God we have the only true and lasting joy. Do not believe the devil's lie. There is joy in God, the only joy there is. Use the means which God has provided and come before His presence in worship with a shouting for joy. Hear Christ through the preaching of His Word. Search the Scriptures and pray without ceasing. And remember, because the Lord wants you to be full of joy and does not want you to be sad, He says in His Word: "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say unto you, rejoice!"

The following articles are recaps of some of the discussions that took place at the convention. There were two times set aside for discussion groups. The young people were divided into groups of about 20. The Beacon Lights asked these young men to write on what discussion took place in the groups that they attended.

DANCING

BY RICK NOORMAN

One of the discussion groups at the recent convention dealt with the arts of music, dancing, and drama. I was asked by the Beacon Lights to write on our discussion of dancing. To begin I would like to share with you the questions that were given to us to stimulate discussion.

Dancing: Can we praise God through dance today as Israel did? Why is it so wrong today? What makes it wrong, the atmosphere of the dance halls? What if you take dance out of the dance halls? Can dance be viewed as a gymnastic activity? Is there a difference in square dancing, or waltzes, or twists?

We can find many examples of the children of Israel using dance as a means of praising God. The women of Israel danced to the Lord when the hosts of Pharoh were overcome by the waters of the Red Sea. (Ex. 15:20) David danced "with all his might" when the ark was brought to Jerusalem from the house of Obededom. (II Sam. 6:14)

We also find abuses of dancing in the Old Testament. "Moses anger waxed hot" when he returned from Mt. Sinai and found the children of Israel dancing around the golden calf.

I think today the abuses of dancing far outweigh the true dances of praise. Dancing has degenerated as a form of praise to the Creator of all things to a means of satisfying the lusts of our human flesh.

The atmosphere does not make dancing wrong. It is not any better dancing at home than in a bar if it is not done in praise to God. If it is the motive for dancing that is important I don't think it makes a difference in the type of dance either. However a modern rock 'n roll dance can be more suggestive than a waltz and a square dance with a caller, which seems like it could be fun for a bunch of young people to do.

Ecclesiastes 3:4 proclaims there is "a time to mourn and a time to dance". So if you feel it is time to dance, do with Psalm 149:1-3. "Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in dance: let them sing praise unto him with timbrel and harp." And if you praise the Lord with dance do so as David did; with all your might.

MUSIC

DARYL KUIPER

At the second discussion group of this year's convention, the topic "Serving the Lord with Gladness in the Contemporary Life" was discussed. During our discussion we addressed ourselves to the topic of Music. In the following paragraphs I would like to try to recap our conversation.

Almost immediately we turned to Psalm 150 which speaks of all the instruments which were used by Israel to praise God. When the topic of "stringed" instruments was brought up in verse 4 of that chapter, we began a very interesting discussion of the guitar. Many of us asked, "Can we use the guitar in our worship services or in singspirations?" We finally decided it would be very difficult because of the way in which the world has misused it. Again and again it was brought up that we can praise God with all the instruments He has created, so why not the guitar? After a sincere and interesting discussion, we decided, if it would not prove to be a stumbling block to the listeners and that the music would remain conservative, it would be a new and beautiful way for us to praise our Maker.

Another of the topics we discussed was the new tune of the Lord's Prayer. Almost immediately various opinions presented the thought that it's fast beat and "Jesus Movement" characteristics labeled it as unacceptable. From there we got into a lively discussion of what was wrong with the music, the tune or the words?

All in all, I thought it was a super discussion group and to list all the topics we encountered seems impossible. We spent two very enjoyable hours around God's Word, not only as the future

Church, but more importantly as His children trying to find a more perfect way to praise Him.

DRAMA AND THE CHRISTIAN

BY SUE TERPSTRA

By definition, drama is "a composition in verse or prose intended to portray life or character or to tell a story through action and dialogue." (Webster's 7th Collegiate) In order to be a part of a dramatic performance, therefore, one must portray the life or character of someone else, or tell a story by speaking or acting as another character.

Almost every Christian is exposed to drama in one form or another. Television is full of examples of drama, and one needs only to listen to advertisements on the radio to catch dramatic presentations designed to put you in a certain position in need of a certain product. Maybe you remember sitting on your father's lap when a child and having him imitate the boisterous mocking voice of the giant Goliath, and the confident youthful voice of David. Maybe you have taken upon yourself a certain character while reading a book to yourself, and have actually felt the emotions that character experienced throughout the story.

All of the above are possible examples of the experiences we may have, as Christians with drama. As you can see, it becomes difficult to draw the line between what is drama, and what is not drama. So it is difficult to answer the question "Is all drama wrong?"

Rather, it seems we must face the question of the Christian and drama from antoher perspective. In order to answer such a question, it is necessary for the Child of God to ask, "Is it possible for me to glorify God through the use of drama?"

It is easy to eliminate many of the dramatic presentations found in the theaters of today. Violence, the exploit of the sacred institution of marriage, disobedience, and a host of crimes have no place in the lives of the Children of God. A more difficult test comes with the so-called "good" television shows, (could you find an example yet) and the "innocent" children's cartoons. Yet, when these, even the seemingly "best" of them are placed next to the standard which we must use, we find that they too fall far short of glorifying the name of God.

Often when young people are involved in the discussion of drama, the talk seems to be steered in the direction of literature. Questions such as these are often asked: "If drama as far as we can see it is wrong-what about our own seemingly minor dramatical presentations?" "Is it right to act the part of a story book character, or a Bible character while reading a book to a younger brother or sister?" "May we become so involved in the plots of the stories we read that we laugh, or cry, or become fearful as though we ourselves were a part of that plot?"

It seems that we are often afraid to condemn things that we have taken for granted for so long. Maybe it's time some of the above questions were answered, using our standard, "Does it glorify God?"

One possible way of looking at this problem would be to divide our literature into two parts—Christian literature and secular literature. Maybe it is not so difficult after all to condemn **Little Red Riding Hood** and the **Three Bears.** Is it possible to present these stories to a covenant child in such a way that he is aware of the fact that he too must glorify God? It would seem quite difficult to tie these two ideas together. But then, is it possible to read to a child the story of David and Goliath from a Bible story book, or the story of another God-fearing Child and at the same time make him conciously aware of the fact that it is God who must be glorified for this wonderful care and protection of His children? Definitely yes!

And maybe it is time that we as young people and adults examine the books we read. It seems that we take for granted the fact that books that do not contain filthy language and wicked deeds are good books. Think of how many times you have become so involved in a novel that never once mentioned the name of God, that you were actually driven to tears or anger, or frustration, and then remember why the

world can write with such vivid words of this sadness, fear, and frustration. They have no God. Maybe we should become more familiar with **true** Christian literature-writing that seeks to turn our conscious and unconscious thoughts to thoughts of God.

The devil is aware of the fact that the Children of God who refuse to enter a movie theatre and tune in on all the drama television has to offer must be persuaded by a far more subtle form of drama. Maybe because we are so afraid to condemn the literature that does not turn our thoughts to God, even through it is seemingly "clean and harmless", we have given the devil an inlet to our hearts by means of our own dramatic imaginations.

In his convention speach Rev. Heys expressed the desire to see a list of all the conventions that have been held. The following is the list compiled from past Beacon Lights.

YEAR	HOST SOCIETY	THEME
1939	South Holland	"Attitudes"
1940	Fuller Ave.	"Thoroughly Equipped"
1941	Oaklawn	
1942	None	
1943	None	
1944	Fuller Ave.	"Christian Liberty"
1945	South Holland	"Steadfastness"
1946	Hudsonville	"The Strength and Beauty of Youth"
1947	Fuller Ave.	"Fellowship in Christ"
1948	Holland	"Faith of Our Fathers"
1949	Pella & Oskaloosa	"Redeeming the Time"
1950	Second	"The Power of Godliness"
1951	Kalamazoo	"The Last Hour"
1952	Hull	"Trilogy—Faith, Hope, & Love"
1953	First	"The Armour of God"
1954	South Holland	"The Antithesis"
1955	Hudsonville	"The Gospel of the Promise"
1956	Doon & Hull	"Exalt the Lord"
1957	Fourth	"Our Calling to Obedience"
1958	Hope & Creston	"Hold That Fast Which Thou Hast"
1959	Oaklawn	"Christ, Our Life"
1960	First	"Faithful Today"
1961	Loveland	"The Beauties of Holiness"
1962	Hudsonville	"Friendship"
1963	Edgerton	"More Than Conquerors"
1964	Hope	"Be Ye Holy"
1965	South Holland	"Preserving Our Heritage"
1966	Southeast	"Faith"
1967	Hull & Doon	"Soli Deo Gloria"
1968	First	"How Great Thou Art"
1969	Redlands	"The Greatest of These"
1970	Hudsonville	"Strangers in a Strange Land"
1971	South Holland	"Disciples of Christ"
1972	Loveland	"Come Lord Jesus"
1973	Hope	"Soldiers of Christ"
1974	Doon, Hull & Edgerton	"Serve the Lord With Gladness"

Speaking of the themes, Rev. Heys says, "I am sure you would find a wealth of truth expressed there in that column, and a rich statement of what God says to us in His Word."

NEWS from, for, and about our churches

JEANNE KARSEMEYER

From our Randolph Church

Mr. and Mrs. Jake Soodsma rejoice in the birth of a dauther, Heidi Renae.

Public confession of faith was made by Marlene Fisher on June 30.

Joyce Fisher and Albert Fischer were united in marriage on Friday, July 26, in our new church.

The Young People's Society traveled to South Holland on July 19 for a combined society meeting and afterwards both societies went swimming.

From our Southeast Church

Membership papers of Alice Marie Van Baren were received from our South Holland Church.

The choir held an outing on Friday night, June 21, at North Shore Park.

An informal organ recital was given on June 27 to give the congregation an opportunity to hear the new organ. Mr. Don Westfield of the Allen Organ Company performed on the organ in the church auditorium.

Membership papers of Dr. and Mrs. James Eldersveld, and two baptized children, Jonathan Lee and Emily Anne were received.

Also membership papers of Mrs. John Flikkema, nee Ruthanne Englesma, were received from our Hope Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Mike Englesma rejoice in the birth of a daughter, born August 12.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hoekstra were blessed with a baby girl, Jennifer Rose.

From our Hull Church

Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Jansma were blessed with the birth of a son, Kelly Dennis.

Mr. Chuck Hoekstra and Miss Arlys Vander Esch were united in holy matrimony on May 15 in the Lebanon Christian Reformed Church.

The baptism certificate of Eugene De Boer was received from our Southeast Church.

The Mr. and Mrs. Society Summer Picnic was held on June 17 at Souix Center Park.

Mr. Robert Brands and Miss Marlys Jansma were joined in marriage on June 21 in our church.

Membership papers of Mrs. Karen Flier were sent to her home at her request. She intends to affilliate with the First Reformed Church of Rock Rapids.

Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Bleyenberg were blessed with a daughter, Dawn Joy, born June 23.

A Fourth of July inter-church picnic was held at Hull Park. Some of the activities were a ball-game and a program at which Candidate Jim Slopsema spoke.

Public confession of faith was made by Melinda Kooima on Sunday, July 7.

Baptism papers of Mr. Robert Brands were received from the First Christian Reformed Church of Rock Valley.

Mr. Alvin Bylsma and Miss Brenda Van Maanen were joined in marriage on July 24 in our church.

Mr. Eugene DeBoer and Miss Ruth Anne Maring were united in holy matrimony on July 26 in our Hope Church in Grand Rapids.

Mr. Don Ver Meer and Miss Marilyn Brunsting spoke their vows of marriage in our church on Friday, August 9.

On August 11 a pre-convention hymn sing was held, and the 34th P.R.Y.P. convention, sponsored by Hull & Doon & Edgerton Societies, took place that week at Dordt College.

Membership papers of Mrs. Charles Hoekstra were received from the Lebanon Christian Reformed Church.

Also, membership papers of Mrs. Gerald Brummel were received and accepted from the First Reformed Church of Souix Center.

From our South Holland Church

Mr. Donald Bruinsma and Miss Jann Poortenga were united in the bond of marriage on Friday, June 21 in our church.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Zandstra rejoice in the gift of a daughter, Brenda Lea, born June 19.

Mr. and Mrs. James Hanemaayer were blessed with a daughter Mary Jane on June 20.

Mr. Daniel Boone and Miss Jennie Hoving were united in holy matrimony on Friday, June 28 in our Hope, Walker Church.

The annual church picnic was held on July 4 at the school. After the picnic, which was a hog roast, there were ball games, a tug of war, and other races and games. Following the supper, a water baloon catching contest and singing finished the day.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth De Jong rejoice in the birth of a son, Edward Joel, born July 6.

Mr. Edward Vander Muelen and Miss Kathleen Regnerus spoke their marriage vows on Friday, July 12, in our church.

Steve Van Baren made public profession of his faith during the evening service of July 14.

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. James Blankespoor were received from our Doon Church.

The papers of Mrs. Daniel Boone (nee, Jennie Hoving) were transferred to our Southwest Church at her request.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Pfau received a daughter from the Lord.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Postma were blessed with a baby boy.

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Zandstra and two baptized children were sent to our Randolph Church.

Edward Vander Meulen has been received as a member in full communion from the Christian Reformed Church of Oak Lawn.

Mr. William Regnerus and Miss Elaine Kamp were joined in the bond of marriage on August 29 in Oak Lawn Christian Reformed Church.

New address of serviceman Robert Hoving is: HM3, Field Medical Service School, Camp Lejuene, North Carolina 28542.

From our Hudsonville Church

Mr. and Mrs. John Bouma were blessed with the birth of a daughter.

The Young People's Society held a car wash and baked goods sale on Saturday, May 11.

Mr. Gary Bykerk and Miss Linda Terpstra were married in our Hope Church on May 17.

Mr. Gary Bouwkamp and Miss Rachel Lubbers exchanged marriage vows on May 31 in the Beaverdam Christian Reformed Church.

Membership papers of Mrs. Harry Zwak have been accepted from the Highland Christian Reformed Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dykstra were blessed with a son, James Richard.

From our First Church

Mr. and Mrs. Arie Den Hartog rejoice that the Lord gave them a daughter, Sara Marie, on May 7.

Junior Young People's Society sponsored a car wash on May 25 at Adams St. School.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Oosterhouse were blessed with a daughter, Terri Rose.

The annual church picnic (an ox-roast) was held on Saturday, June 8 at Caledonia Park.

A pot-luck supper was sponsored by the Senior Y.P.S. on May 30 in the church. Proceeds went for the convention.

Mr. and Mrs. D. Gunnink give thanks to God for a daughter, Tracy Lynn, born on May 26.

Membership papers of Mr. Raymond Talsma have been received from the First Reformed Church of Grandville.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack De Vries rejoice in the birth of a baby girl, Shawna Leigh, on June 24.

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bylsma were blessed with a son, Daniel Scott, on July 8.

From our Hope, Walker Church

Membership papers of Rev. and Mrs. R. C. Harbach and their baptized daughter, Janice Ruth, were received from our Kalamazoo congregation.

Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Kalsbeek are grateful to God for a son, John Henry, born May 23.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Langerak were blessed with the birth of a son, Joel Edward, on June 4.

On Friday, June 21, the marriage of Robert Kuiper and Renae Batchelder was solemnized in Hope Church.

The annual church picnic was held on Wednesday, June 26 at Douglas-Walker Park.

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hanko and seven baptized children have been transferred to our Faith Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Clare Kuiper received from the Lord a son, Marc David, born July 2.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hoven are the grateful parents of a daughter, born July 3.

On Tuesday, July 23 Mr. and Mrs. Stan Dykstra were blessed with the birth of a boy, Eric David.

Mr. and Mrs. Rus Dykstra rejoice in the birth of a baby girl, Heather Joy on July 23.

Mr. Joel Zandstra and Miss Marcia Ophoff were united in matrimony in First Church on August 2.

The wedding of Gerald Dykstra and Theresa Hoving took place on Friday evening, August 2, in our church.

Mr. John Schipper and Miss Lorraine Bomers were joined in marriage on August 9 in our church.

Mr. and Mrs. James Langerak rejoice in the birth of a boy, James Alan, on August 9.

Upon their request the membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Kuiper and four baptized children were sent to our Loveland Church.

Membership papers of Mr. Phil Harbach have been received from our Kalamazoo Church.

Mr. and Mrs. James Schimmel have received from the Lord a baby daughter, Sarah Lynn, born August 28.

From our Holland Church

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Drnek were blessed with the birth of a son.

Membership papers of Mr. Bernard Ten Broeke were received and accepted from the Borculo Christian Reformed Church.

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Mellema were received from the Fourteenth St. Christian Reformed Church.

Mr. Ronald Cammenga and Miss Rhonda De Jong were united in the bonds of holy matrimony in our First Church on July 19.

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Berends and three baptized sons, Roger, Jr., Stephan Edward and Daniel Marvin were received from the Nordeloos Christian Reformed Church.

At his request, membership papers of Mr. Ron Cammenga were transferred to our Southwest church.

From our Faith Church

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. R. Van Til and three baptized children have been received.

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. C. Kamps were received and accepted.

Mr. and Mrs. William Lafferty were blessed with a baby son, Michael Alan, on August 9.

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