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FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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SIN AWARENESS

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IN THIS ISSUE

EDITORIAL
Existence - Gerald Kuiper 1
FEATURE
Sin Awareness - Phil Harbach 2
Is The Psalter Outdated? - Gertrude Hoeksema 5
FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY
"Morning and Evening Worship Services on Sunday" - Rev. G. Lubbers 8
George M. Ophoff (4) - Prof. H. Hanko 10
CRITIQUE
The Translators Of The Authorized Version - Duane Alsum 13
TRUTH VS. ERROR
Something Good Will Happen To You Today - Rev. R. C. Harbach 15
SEMINARIANS 18
The Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies 19

Editorial

EXISTENCE

by Gerald Kulper

At the time of the writing of this article we are in the middle of what is called the "Christmas Season". Newscasters are heard proclaiming holiday truces in various trouble spots of the world, and bemoaning that this spirit of peace and joy cannot be with us all through the year. The Salvation Army bells are ringing, beckoning the 11½ month "Scrooges" to share now in the Christmas spirit. And recently I heard a minister of the Word bemoan the fact that now we have to return to our "drab existence" seeing that Christmas is past.

Christmas now is past. Do **you** have a drab existence now, young people? Have you lost the "spirit of Christmas"? As students, are you suffering through the new term with your only hope the coming of the spring vacation? Those of you with other occupations, have you lost your holiday cheerfulness? What happened to your willingness to help others and to speak to your aged acquaintances? Don't you wish the kindness and consideration associated with Christmas time was yet with you? What about your existence? Is it aimless? Do you experience a lack of direction and an absence of purpose in your life now that Christmas is past?

For you, Protestant Reformed youth, and for me, the answer to all these questions better be different from the answer of many of those around us. How in the world can we who by faith see Christ as our Saviour go about aimlessly without hope or purpose in this world? Even more, how can we who confess Christ as **our Lord** go glumly about that calling which God has given us to do?

We are told in the Scripture what the calling of each of us is in this respect. We are to return, as did the shepherds, **glorifying** and **praising** God. Our existence then will not be dull and drab, but will be a happy, busy one. The Holy Spirit through Paul tells us in I Corinthians 6: 20, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's". Through the glorious work of Christ we have in principle eternal life. This Christ Himself tells us in John 17:3; "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent". Each one of us must live in the constant knowledge that we have been delivered from the deepest depths of sin and misery, even though daily we flee to the Cross asking anew for forgiveness. Listen to Ephesians 5: 8-10; "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of the light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord". And finally we are instructed in Romans 14: 7,8: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's".

How then will we glorify and praise God in our lives? As students we will cheerfully and diligently do the work required, not only the first week but all through the year, giving all glory to God the Creator of all things. As Young People Society members we will gather faithfully each week instructing and being instructed in our mutual study of God's holy Word. As singers we will glorify God through song all year long in the church

and in the home. When we go, praising God as did the shepherds, our choral societies and radio choirs will not suffer from half-hearted or lagging memberships, for God will be praised. In our work, we will for Christ's sake do diligently the tasks assigned to us. As Christian stewards we will give liberally of our time and money all year long. Let us then "in all our ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct our paths". Then we can say with the Psalmist, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord".

READ the following article
UNDERSTAND what it says
CONFESS your sins
LEAD a sanctified life
BE AWARE of sin and
FLEE from it

Feature

SIN AWARENESS

by Phil Harbach

Phil is a member of our Hope Church

What does it mean to be aware of sin? To be "aware" means to be vigilant in observing, or alert in drawing inferences from what one sees, hears or learns (Webster). Those who are aware of sin, therefore, are able to detect sin in what they see, hear or learn. Scripture beautifully describes them in Hebrews 4:15 as "those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." They use their senses, exercise their senses spiritually to judge and examine all things (I Cor. 2:15), including their own thoughts and feelings. Paul prayed that the Philippians might abound more and more in knowledge and discernment (Phil. 1:9 ASV). Webster defines discernment as "keenness of insight, stressing accuracy especially in reading character or motives." Applied here, that means spiritual wisdom, accurately measuring up to God's standard.

How do we become able to discern between good and evil? How does one exercise his senses? David says, "Thy word have I hidden in my heart that I might not sin against Thee" (Ps. 119:11). We must "hide" God's Word in our hearts, that is, memorize, study and meditate on it, so that our spiritual eyes will be keen to perceive sin as sin, and we will have strength to abstain from it. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth" (II Tim. 2:15). A well organized, consistent, diligent study and searching of the Scriptures will sharpen that keenness of insight, that sensitivity to sin, and will also develop personal discipline.

Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation (Matt. 26:41). Our Lord found His disciples sleeping in the garden. Will He find you spiritually asleep, your mind dulled by the seeking of the treasures and pleasures the world has to offer? Are you "conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2)? Be not conformed, but transformed by the renewing of your

mind. Watch and pray!

Discerning sin is not simply an intellectual verdict on all we do, see, or hear, but it is a spiritual war. And no one goes to war unarmed. "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" and "to withstand in the evil day." Just think of that mighty armor: truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit - God's Word (Eph. 6). And of course, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

What are some practical ways we can be aware of sin in our own personal lives? Specifically in the area of fun and entertainment, do you glorify God, by faith, in all you do? Are you very discriminating in your choice of what the world offers or do you forget God and accept everything blindly? Remember, that if any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Take, for example, music. Are you aware of the ideas and philosophies advocated in the music you enjoy most? It is our calling to measure everything from hymns to rock according to the standard of Scripture. Be on the lookout for Arminian hymns that exalt the "free" will of man. Be aware of certain flippant, irreverant, "Christian" folk songs so popular with the campus groups and in modernist circles. In this category would fall some of the lyrics from "Godspell." Many "Godspell" lyrics are taken directly from Matthew's Gospel and put to a very captivating beat, while other songs are so flippant as to approach blasphemy. The whole production portrays the Lord as a sweet, milk-sop clown accompanied by his flower-children disciples. On that basis it should be rejected for the damnable blasphemy that it is. I doubt that many Protestant Reformed youth fall for the likes of "Godspell," but many outside our circles (possibly some of your friends) utterly fail to perceive the evil in "Godspell."

What about the everyday pop music on your radio, the records you play? Do you just mindlessly sing along with the tune regardless of what's being said? This was apparently the case on the bus to the Iowa convention, and it happens all the time. The music of Elton John is enchanting to many, even in the church. Let's examine the words. A top hit you all know, "Bennie and the Jets," was sung in a way to make some of the words a little indistinct. Everyone loves the tune and beat, but how many know what's actually being said about the "weird and wonderful," "spaced out" rock group, Bennie and the Jets?

"Hey kids, plug into the faithless
Maybe they're blinded,
But Bennie makes them ageless.
We shall survive, let us take ourselves along,
Where we fight our parents out in the streets
To find out who's right and who's wrong."

Covenant youth who are aware of sin must reject this as a violation of the fifth commandment and an attack on the Covenant. Elton John's entire "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road" album is full of songs of death, violence, adultery, alcoholism, and songs explicitly glamorizing prostitution and lesbianism. His latest, "Island Girl," is an obvious eulogy to a black prostitute. How many of you will mindlessly let that play on your car radio?

Rumors are going around modern religious circles that singer Paul Simon is a Christian. Jesus said ye shall know them by their fruits. What are the fruits in this case? A brief check of the lyrics written on the back of Simon's latest album will reveal the world's adulterous view of love and profane use of God's name. Are these fruits of a Christian writer? Do you allow these things to enter and take possession of your mind?

Many parents condemn pop music as a whole, often because it is totally foreign to them. This often encourages young people to rebelliously defend it all the

more. Beloved parents, take the time to examine the records your teenager brings home. Lyrics are often on the inside of the jacket. Look closely and, if possible, listen carefully so that you may help your son or daughter develop an awareness of sin.

Discernment of sin must also be applied to all dating activities. Of course, you may be physically attracted to your date (or prospective date), and that's not wrong in itself. But do not let physical charm or even a "nice personality" blind your spiritual eyes so that there is no longer a spiritual attraction between the two of you. Remember, to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Rom. 8:6). Recognize and immediately reject feelings of lust, using prayer as a powerful source of strength against temptation.

Do not let your date draw you away from the preaching and teaching you know to be the truth. He or she may be a born-again Christian, but to sacrifice the truth for the sake of that person's companionship is, in fact, basing that relationship on a foundation which is not spiritual, nor of Christ, but carnal.

Young people who are careful and discerning will make sure that all dating activities glorify God and edify one another as responsible members in the church of God. Can you do this "rocking and rolling" to the band at the local night spot? Be aware of the fact that enough alcohol soon destroys one's sin awareness, and that the music and dancing are intended to glorify fleshly lusts. In the light of this, and as children of God seeking to spiritually edify one another on your dates, you should never want to take part in any activity that places both of you under temptation.

Of all modern entertainment, television and movies have the greatest power to destroy our sensitivity to sin. We are so tickled by a hilarious comedy, or enthralled by a suspense thriller, that our spiritual eyes are again blinded to the multitude of sometimes subtle and sometimes blatant sin and error. Maybe one detects sin in what watches but allows it to pass. This only hardens his heart so that soon it is no longer sin. Murder, theft, adultery, homosexuality, blasphemy and all other vile wickedness are presented as commonplace. Do Christian youth accept these as commonplace? Must not our awareness to sin be horrified at these? Are not we called upon to abstain from all **appearance** of evil? (I Thess. 5:22). The Bible also depicts many forms of wickedness, but surely portrays severe condemnation and judgment against it, and creates in God's people a hatred towards sin. Stories built on themes of adultery, violence and perversion do not create a hatred against sin, but at best a hardening to sin, and at worst a glamorizing and applauding of sin.

Don't think that simply because it is rated "PG" that it is harmless, or that it loses its corrupting power simply because you are watching it in the privacy of your own home. Any entertainment that deadens your awareness to sin by exalting evil glorifies the kingdom of Satan and should be avoided by all Christians. It is your duty as members of Christ's Body, as responsible members of your local church, and as witnesses of God's righteousness to do this not because you have to, but because you want to.

Eschewing evil implies the positive activity of seeking the righteousness of God. "Be ye holy; for I am holy." We are to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). How are we to do this? Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, and He shall abide with you forever" (John 14:15-16). The Holy Spirit sheds God's love in our hearts (Rom. 5:5) and enables us by His effectual grace to live a life of holiness (Gal. 5:22). God speaks to us in Proverbs 3, which says, "Trust in the Lord

with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." In other words, if you do everything by faith in Him, He will guide you safely and surely in the course of your life. What a promise!

In conclusion, on the positive side of being aware of sin, is Paul's exhortation in Philippians 4:8, "Whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Feature

IS THE *PSALTER* OUTDATED?

by Gertrude Hoeksema

Mrs. Hoeksema is a member of our Southwest Church.

God's people are a **singing** people. Both in the Old and New Testaments, the Lord tells us that His people sang of their joys and sorrows, of their struggles and victories. We, God's people in the Reformed tradition, sing from the time we are tiny tots until we stoop with old age. Together we sing at home, all through our school lives, at meetings, programs, celebrations, and singspirations. I have even attended funerals where we sang a solemn song or two.

What do we sing? The psalms, of course. God's people have always done that. We know that the psalms will never be outdated, because they are the voice of the Lord speaking to us, and they vividly express our every experience. We can, I am sure, express, through psalm singing, any thought that is in our hearts, from sadness, penitence, and grief to wonder, thanks, and joy. We have but to read the psalms to know that they are just as truly ours as they were David's and Asaph's.

But our **Psalter** is only a versification of these psalms, with melodies and harmonies added. Because the work of composing songs based on the psalms for liturgical use in our worship service is noninspired, bound by language and culture, some logical questions might be: can the **Psalter** be revised; should it be improved; may it be enlarged; or would it be better to replace it? In the light of the search for change in the present day liturgical world, we may want to give our own **Psalter** a critical look to find out whether we should be doing something about it. We do not want change for the sake of change, or for that nebulous quality called "relevance;" rather, we want to do our best as a covenant, psalm singing people. This, I think, the staff had in mind when they asked me to write this article.

First, then, we will take a look at the melodies in our **Psalter**. The Reformed singer of average ability and musical background either "likes" or "dislikes" a tune. Often he is vague as to why a certain song is his favorite. It just is. Similarly, he cannot tell you why he wishes his pastor would not choose number 42 so often. Something about that tune... However, his neighbor really enjoys that melody, and sings it lustily. So we see that if our criterion were merely subjective likes or dislikes of melodies and harmonies, we would need as many revisions and improvements as there are people who sing them.

In order to have songs that the congregation of Jesus Christ, made up of people of average musical ability will enjoy singing, and through which they can express their collective prayer or praise to God, there must be objective standards. At the risk of coining a new word, I would call the first one "singability." The melodies and harmonies should be rather simple, flow in a musically smooth fashion, without strange intervals or difficult timing. Another standard may be called fitness: the words and the melody must fit and complement one another. A third standard could be called "worshipfulness," the quality that characterizes a song, be it ever so joyful, as fit for the worship of our Almighty God - solemn without being staid, happy without being frivolous.

That is quite an order for our **Psalter**. Does it meet these standards? And, again, if we would go with this question to our **Psalter** singing people, we would probably get mostly **no** for an answer; and there would be as many ideas for improvement as there are people. Obviously, this would not be the proper way to come to the answer.

Instead, we should take a brief look at the history of psalm singing since the Reformation. Shortly after the Reformation in Geneva, John Calvin and his congregation were already singing versifications of psalms, set to some familiar melodies of the day. In 1542, Calvin looked for the best talents he could get: the poet Marot worked on the versifications of many psalms; the composers Bourgoeis and Goudimel worked on melodies and harmonies. The result was the **Genevan Psalter**, used for two hundred fifty years (with some changes in each country) in the Reformation churches of Europe. Many of these songs measured up to the standards we mentioned earlier in this article.

Then came the great tide of immigration to America. Our forefathers - mostly from the Netherlands - were faced, as they adapted to a new language, with the problems of singing psalms in a new language. They found it hard to translate the words into English and yet fit the tunes of their Dutch musical heritage, many of them **Genevan Psalter** tunes. It was easier to use the English tunes and lyrics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from composers such as Isaac Watts. And they took the easy way. The result is that our English-speaking fathers dropped most of the old music and adopted music mainly from one era of time, the Victorian period.

We may want to criticize them for this. We may accuse them of not being far-sighted. We may object that the early music of the church is not sung by us in our services. We may find some of the music in our **Psalter** (much of it written in threes) to be light and almost "waltzy." There may be reason for some of our criticism, too. I, for one, dislike the light, waltzing melody for the solemn words, "Dust to dust the mortal dies," of **Psalter** # 136.

We may want to compare the music of other Reformed psalm singing churches. This past summer my husband and I had the delightful experience of worshipping with people of mostly Scotch and English backgrounds. We sang, with them, from the **Scottish Psalter**, whose tunes date back to an earlier period of church history, and which includes several **Genevan Psalter** songs; and we found the songs appealing, singable, and worshipful. We found poor melodies, too, rather hard to sing and not very appropriate for the words.

Other **Psalters**, too, have been published lately, none above some kind of criticism. But our problem remains. Is our **Psalter** outdated? Should we try for something else?

Before we start looking for a committee, let us look at our local congregations. Three or four generations rise to sing

together the familiar melodies that have been taught from father to son: the quavering voice of great-grandfather blends with the proud voice of the three-year-old who has just learned "In Sweet Communion," **Psalter** tune 203. We are **used** to our **Psalter**. It is a part of us and of our singing heritage, something that grows with us, melodies and versifications which we carry in our hearts day and night. Is it wise to tamper with this? Or would you young people be quick to answer: if our **Psalter could** be improved, let us get on with it and take the best of all Reformed church music and put together one beautiful, improved **Psalter.**

Let us consider the implications and alternatives.

First, we Protestant Reformed people, also Protestant Reformed young people, are denomination-conscious and denomination-loyal. We must also keep our priorities straight. Are there not far more pressing matters in our churches right now which need our attention and the work of capable, dedicated men and women: covenant education, the work of the ministry, the work of writing down and distributing our distinctive views, mission endeavors and church extension work to which the Lord has opened the doors so wide, and work in our various congregational and denominational organizations?

Second, although we are not opposed to change and progress - in fact, we **must** progress - we must be very sure that change will be progress, and progress in the right direction. We should consider well the danger of tampering with the musical heritage of the church as we represent it in the Protestant Reformed denomination. Much of the distinctive appeal of our denomination is our strict adherence to our heritage, also our psalm singing heritage. For ourselves, it would be wrong to upset our congregations with unwelcome musical change.

Third, if we would decide to remain conservative and add only solid, Reformed church music as a replacement for some of the unsuitable music of our **Psalter**, who determines how slight or how broad the revision shall be? How do we determine what is the most suitable music for a given lyric - most suitable to worshippers in the Protestant Reformed denomination, worshippers with an American culture and a rather stiff, conservative, Dutch background?

Fourth, this would have to be done synodically. Synod would have to appoint a capable committee who would be willing to work hard for a long time. Without demeaning the qualifications of the members of our churches (for we have many able people) do we have people that measure up to the following qualifications: a good background in music theory and history; a thorough understanding of the tone of our denominational worship in song; an ear tuned to the desires of our congregations; a good measure of practical common sense; a stamina for a long, hard task; and, practically, the geographical nearness in our large country to work together?

In conclusion, one thing more. Changes and revisions must be made when the time is right. When it that? When the people, the psalm singers, see the need, and start to ask the leaders to help them. A change imposed from the top down is seldom well-received. Is there need for a change? Have we heard a clamor for it? Is the **Psalter** outdated? Not yet, I think.

Covenant Christian High School is in need of an administrator for the 1976-1977 school year. Send qualifications and application to:
Mr. Gordon Van Overloop
3711 Hillcrest
Hudsonville, Michigan 49426

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

BY REV. G. LUBBERS

"MORNING AND EVENING WORSHIP SERVICES ON SUNDAY"

"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

Psalm 141:2

Now really you have never given this much thought, I am certain. You really are taking it for granted that there should be two services on Sunday in the midst of the congregation. As a little child your parents trained you to go to church **twice** on Sunday. It was not only a morning but also an evening (Vesper) service. And, now, you are a bit disturbed. Someone has confronted you rather disturbingly and challengingly with the question: where do you read in the Bible that we must attend church **twice** on Sunday?

And you do not have a ready answer. The challenger rather boastfully concludes that your loss for a quick and ready answer proves that your position is rather based on human tradition than on a directive from God Himself. By the way this challenger does not care too deeply about that Vesper service. He is an avowed advocate of "once is sufficient" for the New Testament saint.

We ought to talk a little bit about this "custom" of ours to attend church twice on Sunday. Is there nothing in the Bible to indicate that God would also have an "evening" service? Surely, our Reformed fathers who came from Europe and England would not base their church attendance upon human tradition, and nothing more, would they? Yes, I remember the time when we had our first English speaking service, the elderly people insisted on having their two services in the Holland language. In fact, First Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, for many years held four services, two in the Holland language, and two in the English language! Yes, that was before your time,

youthful reader.

Now I must make a little confession. I must tell you that it was only recently that I started to give this matter some very serious thought. And upon a little study I came to the rather solid conclusion that those fathers of ours did have their house pretty much in order when they kept a minimum of two services per Sunday. It has been my experience as Missionary of our churches, that, in those churches where only a morning service is kept, there was a laxity in life and morals, a "do-as-we-please" attitude. It was church in the morning and off for the stock-car races in the afternoon, if not in the bowling-team tournament in the morning service. This was not the exception: it was symptomic. The preaching here had lost its power.

A little survey of the teaching of the Bible will show that there is, at least, some rhyme and reason for a morning and an evening service on the Lord's Day. It ought to be evident to anyone who takes **any** day seriously, that it has a "morning" and an "evening" by God's creative design. Days don't have simply a "start" and a "quitting time." They have morning (dawn), and they have an increated gloaming. The morning and the evening each have their own speech in which they praise their Creator (Gen. 1:3-5). Do we not read of the "outgoings" of the morning and the evening in Psalm 65:8? And does God not make these both to **sing** and **rejoice**? Shall we not with keen spiritual sensitiveness tune out heart strings to the morning and to the evening each day, to hope for God's mercies in the morning and to tell of His faithfulness each night? (Psalm 92:2). Whereas the natural is first, and then the spiritual, shall we not set our life aright, having it firmly anchored in the very meaning of the day, with its majestic speech and rejoicings before the Lord?

Now if this is true of any day of the week in which we offer our prayers to the Lord, morning and evening, shall this not doubly be the case with us on the Lord's Day? Is this day not a **solemn** feast day? For us this is the day in which we remember that the Lord Jesus has conquered sin and death for us. It is the symbol of the "day of salvation" of which the prophet spoke, and which is ours in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the first day of the week. Really, it is the "eighth day," which proclaims that old things are passed away, and that all things are made new. It is the day of the perfect spiritual circumcision in Christ (Gal. 5:6). This spiritual circumcision is "faith energized by love." It is the being circumcised with the circumcision of Christ without hands (Col. 2:11). Here we do not "keep days" in order to be justified before God. However, we do keep the Sabbath Rest having been justified by faith, and, therefore, we put off the body of sin and rest and keep our "solemn" feast day.

And here the "morning" and the "evening" of the created day offers us its services and gives eloquent design to the pattern of our worship services, morning and evening! We cease from our "servile" labors. We are not slaves of sin and death, but we are free-born sons. We have been brought forth from death and the grave, and we have been liberated from "in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread," principly. And, on the Sabbath of the Lord, we jubilate in the fact that we are sons of adoption. And we allow the outgoings of the "morning" and of the "evening" to rejoice. And we sing, "the heavens shall join in glad accord." Really, we do not quite know how to do this "totally" as a mere agregate of minutes and activities. But we do this in holy consecration of heart. And ere the joyful reverations of the morning's "outgoings" have ceased in our sanctified hearts, we again yearn for the "outgoings" of the

evening. We would tell the Lord of His faithfulness. And as the sun goes down and the western sky is aglow, painted by the great Artist, we sing, "day is dying in the west." Then we lift up our hands unto the Lord "as the evening sacrifice."

And thus we keep the "truth and substance" as they remain with us in Christ Jesus concerning the ceremonial law. Thus we retain "the body" in Christ and cling to our Head Christ (Col. 2:1-19). For the Old Testament had these set times. And after Pentecost we find Peter and John wending their way to the temple at the time of the evening worship, at the ninth hour (Acts 3:1). One receives the impression that the outpouring of the Spirit was at the time of worship in the morning, at the "third hour" (Acts 2:15). David introduced the singers among the Levites in the temple (I Chr. 9:33; 23:30). These were to stand in the house of the Lord "every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise, at even."

The thought occurs to me that the burden of proof now lies with those who disclaim the privilege and sacred duty to come to the house of the Lord "morning and evening" on the LORD'S DAY. The believer, who avers that once is enough, must at least allow that that once is by God's command of the Gospel. Certainly, even once, on the Sabbath is not by human decision, but by divine ordinance. It calls for sanctified obedience of the free man in the Lord, who would walk in liberty and not in license - lest the "oncer" becomes a person who falls away from the living God (Hebrews 10:25-29). He then will need to say: I have no delight in the worship of the Lord. The Lord is not mocked!

Yes, we will continue to see the outgoings of the morning and of the evening rejoice, and sing,

George M. Ophoff (4)

by Prof. H. Hanko

In our last article we were discussing the grandfather of Rev. Ophoff, Prof. G. Hemkes. I have in my possession a story which was written by Rev. Hemkes at the time when he was a minister at De Leek and which was written while he was editor of the **Yearbook** published by the Reformed (Gereformeerde) church in the Netherlands. The story which he tells of himself took place while he was a student at the theological seminary in Kampen. It is almost too long to quote in its entirety in this article, but exerpts of it give some idea of the kind of man Gerrit Hemkes was. The exerpts follow.

> It was in the unforgettable winter of 1865 that Gerrit Hemkes spent his Christmas vacation in the old town of Franeker, Friesland, among his relatives and friends. . . .
>
> Several days before his departure he thought of his trip back to Kampen with very little enthusiasm. He was not very fond of sitting in a stagecoach all the way from Franeker to Zwolle and then taking the train to Kampen. . . . When someone told his that the Zuider Zee. . . was frozen over and safe to skate on, he became joyfully interested in a trip on skates back to school.
>
> The question now was how to obtain permission from his aged parents, who were still living at this time, to make this somewhat haz-

ardous trip. He could see possibilities with his father who was a man of courage. On the other hand, to get the approval of his mother, who was always very careful for the safety of her children, was a problem. Nevertheless, he was able . . . to convince his mother that it was much better to go to Kampen on skates than by stagecoach.

(Because of other problems) it so happened that instead of leaving at 5 o'clock he did not go until 9. He went with his brother and his brother's wife.

They skated on the canals which led them toward the Zuider Zee. It was indeed a very delightful and beautiful winter day and the sun shown clearly over snowy landscapes. The ice was smooth and in good shape and they had no trouble with the wind. They glided along in single file with good speed and enjoyed themselves as they went. After having been on the ice for a little less than an hour the brother's wife began to have trouble with her skates. They were not tied tightly enough, so they stopped to remedy the situation. They resumed skating, but soon there was more difficulty with the same skates. It became apparent that ankles were the problem and progress was slow. By the time they arrived at Lemmer it was 2 o'clock in the afternoon. They stayed there for a short time and then after bidding farewell to one another, the brother and his wife went northward and student Hemkes headed south toward Kunre where he would begin to skate on the Zuider Zee.

(The trip) was not without danger, especially when he had to jump over small streams of water about a yard wide which had not been frozen over. However, he continued to make progress. Toward 4 o'clock he rode past the town of Vollenhoven. At this place he had to go through a great number of skaters in order to continue on his way. He figured that from there to Kampen would take him about 2½ or three hours. This he could have done if everything had worked out well....

As he skated thoughts went through his mind as how things might be in Franeker and in Kampen; also to which of his studies he would have to give the most time in order to pass his examinations. All of a sudden he became very much upset by a gathering fog which made it almost impossible for him to see. He could not find any scratches on the ice to indicate that others had been there before. He got down on his knees but was unsuccessful in feeling scratches where some might have passed by. Now he became filled with anxiety.... It was a terrible thing to be all alone on this wide expanse if ice. He resumed skating for a few moments and then again he got down on his knees and poured out his prayer in childlike fashion to his God. In all earnestness and trust he knew that the Lord is just as much present on a wide expanse of ice as in his comfortable family circle.... We can believe him when he said that in such dire circumstances one feels himself entirely dependent on the Lord. Knowing this, gave him comfort and trust because he knew he was not alone. The Lord was with him.

After a half or three quarters of an hour...he wondered what the solution to his problem might be. He continued to pray for deliverance

when suddenly he thought he heard something. What was it? He listened sharply and heard people calling to each other. Now he also began to shout with all his might. The people noticed that a lost person was shouting and they shouted to him, "Come this way." He skated in the direction of their voices. A feeling of indescribable joy welled up in him that he was being delivered from such a dreadful situation....

"Where in the world do you come from, friend" asked the fishermen of Vollenhoven. "I come from Franeker and from Vollenhoven and wanted to go to Kampen." he replied. "Well then, you were a tremendously long distance out of the way," they said, after the manner of fisherman. "Ten minutes ago we would not have given you a penney for your life. Did you not see the holes in the ice where the fishermen caught their fish?" He said, "No" "When we heard your cries we called back to you to be very careful. You had more help than your own. If you had gone a short distance toward the west from where you were you would have found yourself in the open sea."

After giving each fisherman a reward and thanking them heartily for having, through God's direction, helped the lost skater to find his way and to be rescued, he asked, "How far am I now from Vollenhoven?" "You can make it in half an hour," he answered. Hemkes noticed a young man standing there on skates and asked him if he would show him the way to Vollenhoven for two quarters. "Gladly," said the young man. "I had to go there anyway." They arrived in Vollenhoven shortly before 6 o'clock. He went to an inn, smoked a cigar and had coffee and a sandwich. At 8 o'clock he asked for a bed and went to rest....

The next morning as he travelled the rest of the distance to Kampen, he was able to see how great the danger was from which he had been delivered. He thanked God from the bottom of his heart and said, "It is wonderful in my eyes!"

FUTURE PROTESTANT REFORMED TEACHERS AND MINISTERS

The Scholarship Fund Committee is again offering scholarships this year. An essay of 300 words written on the topic "Attending a secular or 'christian college': Is this responsibility different for aspiring ministers and teachers than for those seeking other callings" is required along with a record of high school and/or college grades, and a recommendation from your consistory. The scholarships are applicable to tuition only. If you are interested in an application contact:

Karla Kalsbeek
4132 Hall Sreet S.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504
Phone: 453-9716

Applications must be in by May 1, 1976.

THE TRANSLATORS OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION

by Duane Alsum

In the opening pages of some copies of the King James Version of the Bible, one will find a section labled, (The Translators to The Reader). Within this rather lengthy article Dr. Miles Smith writes, "There were many chosen that were greater in other men's eyes than in their own, and that sought the truth rather than their own praise."

Clearly the translators of this version understood the fact that more is required of a translator than a certain knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages. They understood the need for capturing in their translation a Bible which would be correct, point by point, with that of the original. The plain command of God being to these men, that those who have his Word should speak it faithfully and "diminish not a word."

The great reformer, Martin Luther, recognized the danger of allowing everyone to translate the Word of God. He said, "Translating is not an art that everyone can practice. It requires a right, pious, faithful, diligent, God-fearing, experienced, practiced heart." (P. 331, **Here I Stand**, Abington Press.) While it is a necessary requirement that translators of the Scriptures be sincere men of God, it also takes men of exceptional linguistic ability. The combined characteristics are necessary! One may be given by his God, a right and true heart, and yet if his knowledge of the past and present languages is insufficient, he will fail to render to the translation the correct meaning of the original.

At a court conference in 1604, Dr. John Reynolds, a Puritan leader, made the suggestion that a new version of the English Bible be produced to replace the different versions in common use. His suggestion was at first opposed and then adopted by the members of the conference, and won the hearty approval of King James I.

Fifty four men, including "High Churchmen" and Puritans, the greatest language scholars of the age, were chosen to form six committees to complete the task. Of the fifty four chosen some died or withdrew before the translating began. The final list is composed of forty seven men. Each of the six committees was given a portion of the Scriptures to translate. Every man in each committee was required to translate in its entirety the portion assigned to his group prior to meeting with the entire group to compare the results and agree upon the final form.

Arriving at the final form, a complete draft of the translated portion was sent to each of the five other committees for their comments and consent. And yet, another committee of selected men from each of the groups went over the entire work again. At last, two from this committee

were selected to go over the work once again and were given the responsibility for the final checking.

The above process of translating is in itself a safeguard against poor workmanship. In addition, we can also see that those advocates of the modern versions, who assume that they possess scholarship superior to that of the translators of our King James Version, err in this assumption, which is not supported by the facts.

Space does not allow me to list each of the forty-seven men and their accomplishments, but a sampling* of them may serve to illustrate the quality of scholarship the translators of the Authorized Version Possessed. Men whom God raised up and brought together to give us the Bible we read each day.

Dr. Lancelot Andrews distinguished himself as a diligent and excellent preacher, and became Chaplain to Queen Elizabeth I. "His knowledge in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, besides fifteen modern languages, was so advanced that he may be ranked as one of the rarest linguists in Christiandom."

Dr. John Reynolds represented the Puritans at the Hampton Court Conference, where he made the suggestion that the Bible be translated anew. One man living at the time relates that Reynold's "memory and reading were near to a miracle."

Dr. Adrian Saravia, in the controversies of the period, was often referred to as "that learned foreigner." He was of Spanish descent and resided in Holland. He was able to assist in the translation with his firsthand knowledge of the work of Spanish as well as Dutch scholars.

Dr. John Layfield, a Greek lecturer, was specially trained in architecture, and his judgment was relied on in regard to passages describing the Tabernacle and the Temple.

Dr. Richard Kilby is the author of a work on Exodus prepared from Hebrew commentators. An interesting story is related concerning this man. Dr. Kilby and a friend from the college where he was professor in Hebrew, visited a neighboring church one Sunday evening. The young minister spent a large amount of the time, alloted for his sermon, explaining where the translators had failed to give the most correct reading to several words in the then recent translation. Invited together to a meal with the young preacher after the service, Dr. Kilby took this opportunity to explain to the young preacher that he could have used his time more wisely. The learned Doctor explained how the translators had given serious consideration to the points the young man brought up in his sermon, but another thirteen weightier reasons had been found to support the translation to which the young man had so seriously objected. (A case of a little learning being a dangerous thing.)

William Bedwell was recognized as the "Father of Arabic studies in England."

Dr. Miles Smith authored the long Translators' Preface - "The Translator to the Reader," which can still be found in some Bibles. It is said of this man that, "He had Hebrew at his fingertips, and he was so conversant with Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, that he made them as familiar to himself as his own native language." Dr. Smith is one of the two men that stayed with the task of translating until its completion.

Edward Liveley enjoyed the reputation of an acquaintance with the Oriental languages unequalled in that day.

John Boys began to read Hebrew at the age of five. He was admitted to St. John's College at the age of fourteen, where he distinguished himself by his knowledge of the Greek language. It

*Sampling taken from an article entitled "The Learned Men" - published by the Trinitarian Bible Society.

was a language that he often studies in the library from 4 A.M. to 8 P.M.

The list of men could be continued, with their lists of achievements equalling or bettering those already presented. But we can rest most assured that the translators of our Authorized Version were qualified men.

It is not reasonable on our part to imagine that the translators were infallible, or that their work was perfect in every detail, but neither is it reasonable to lightly discard this version in favor of others that would claim greater scholarship. Of the many attempts to replace the Authorized Version by a translation in more modern English, none has excelled this volume which has held its place in the English speaking world for more than 350 years.

Because of possible misunderstandings because of errors in the article, **ANOTHER ANTICHRIST**, by Miss Lubbers in the December, 1975 issue, we print the following corrections:

P. 15, 1st column, first paragraph (complete) the following sentence:

A study of **divine principle**, which appeared in 1957, reveals that the ideas of Moomism are a strange **syncretism** (not secretism) in which the dualism of Taoism, numerology, and metaphors from Moon's engineering are fused together.

P. 16, 1st column, first complete paragraph:

"This, Moon would have us believe. Jesus Christ forsakes every Church which does not teach the truth or walk purely."
(period after believe)

Truth vs. Error

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

Something Good Will Happen To You Today

Among all the others, there are two favorite pictures in my study. One is of a seashore scene where lavish waves crash their crescendo over the rocky jetty. The mighty surge of aqua brine ebbs and flows incessantly in majestic restlessness. Standing on a wet, foam-spattered rock is a young man dressed in casual city summer wear. His hands are hooked lazily into his waist, body bent backward facing the sun, carefree face uplifted, almost to the zenith, with eyes closed and a rapturous, beaming smile. I know how he feels. That's why I have the picture. The

place is glorious. It has an exhilarating atmosphere all its own, one you can **smell** miles before you reach it! When you get there, the pounding of the surf drowns out the city din and all your troubles. You almost feel as though you were on the New Earth under the New Heaven. You feel like shouting, Amen! Selah! Hallelujah! Maybe you do. You will in the kingdom of glory. Why not now? The caption to the picture? Would you believe, "Rejoice greatly, O My people! Shout with joy! For look--your King is coming! He is the Righteous One, the Victor! Yet He is lowly, riding on a donkey's colt!" (Zech. 9:9). Does the thought that your King is coming send you into a paroxysm of ecstatic joy? If not, something is wrong. Maybe your joys are too earth-bound.

The other picture takes you to the thick rough of a golf course. There deeply imbedded in the low crotch of a gnarled shrub is the neat, white, elastic, tantalizing but exasperating sphere of the species **gutta-percha**. Down on one knee a perturbed right-hand golfer aims a reversed nine iron with left-hand stance and he frowningly and hopefully begins his down swing at an almost impossible "lie". The title to the picture? Would you believe, "In Everything Give Thanks!"? The idea is uniquely Christian. Only the Christian gives thanks for the hard things as well as for the delightful things, "giving thanks **always** for **all** things" (Eph. 5:20; I Th. 5:18). This second picture has a man in quite a fix. How'd he get into it? Something like this: he hit a beautiful shot straight down the middle of the fairway, which, slicing into the rough, dived into a bush. His partner (so I imagine it) cheers him with, "Listen to Oral Roberts, now--'Something **good** is going to happen to you today!' " "Yeah," he sourly replies, "I won't break a leg, or maybe I'll find a plastic tee." If there's a Christian in the foursome, he might say, "You know, Oral's wit is a pretty safe prognostication for the Christian! because something good **always** happens to **him**! You know what one of the greatest statements in the Bible is? 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.' Romans Eight Twenty-eight!"

Something good is **going** to happen to me today? Something good **is** happening to me right now! The Bible gives you a little fill-in-the-blanks test at Isaiah 3:10. "Say ye to the righteous that_____ _____ well with him." There you may insert, "it always **was**," "it always **is**" and "it always **shall be**," (one on top of the other). It's not just that it shall be well with the righteous. it **is** well with him. Something good is always happening to him. For the wicked, it is always ill with him, even when he thinks things couldn't be better, nor the grass greener on his side of the fence. For like Jezebel, the Lord will throw him out like fertilizer on the grass of the field. Yet for the righteous, trials and tribulations are like dung on the grass, stinking and staining it for a while, but producing fresher and greener lawn. The stings of the flesh of Paul and Silas only occasioned greater joy to their souls as they sang at midnight. They rejoiced that they went out of prison when they went into prison. For there they never before had such liberty in prayer and praise to God. They believed the Lord would either avert all evil or turn it to their profit. It is well with the righteous even when it is ill with him, for the Lord makes not only all good things to work together for his good, but all evil things. Jacob complained, Me ye have bereaved; Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and now ye will take Benjamin away: all these thing are against me! But Jacob was wrong. Nothing was against him, but all things were conspiring for his good. Joseph didn't know it, but he was on an Egyptian course. At the first hole he went down in one. He was taken out to be sold as a slave to the Ishmaelites. They brought him to Egypt and sold him for a

slave again. While a slave there he was tempted to adultery. Rejecting the temptation he was falsely accused and put a long time in prison. All this seemed against him. Who would think all this would turn to his profit and to Israel's good? Who would expect he'd spring from prison to palace? from Hebrew slave to prime minister of Egypt? So the Christian gains by his losses. At least in the long run he does. All together his losses and crosses promote his eternal welfare. They are all a means to preserve him till he gets to heaven. The Lord turns our water into wine, our stones into bread, our miseries into blessings.

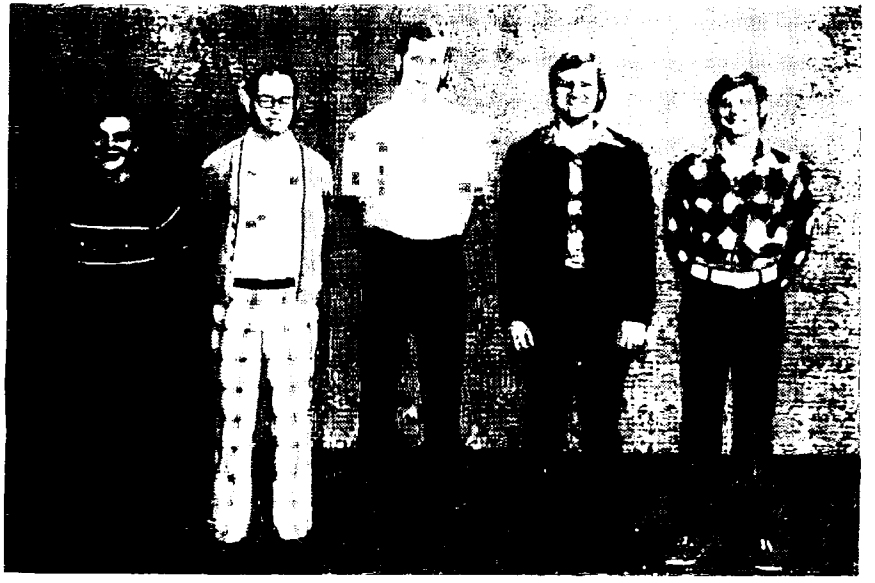
Something good is going to happen to you today. You are going to put on, hitch up and submit your neck to the yoke. You are going to bear the yoke of correction, the yoke of afflictions, the yoke of God's commandments. This is good? Oh, yes, "it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth" (Lam. 3:27), especially is it good to bear the yoke of Christ. It is good to do this "in the days of thy youth". There is a close connection between confession of faith in Christ and submission to His discipline, and the bearing of reproach and persecution for the same. It is good to suffer these in youth. It will prevent many sins and evils you may be tempted to get into.

King Jehoram did not believe that all evil things work together for good to them that love God, and when evil came, he said, Look, this evil is from the Lord! Why should I wait for the Lord any longer? (2 K. 6:33). He thought in such bad times it was useless to trust in the Lord because, as he reasoned, worse can not be, and better never will be. But the converse of Rom. 8:28 is also true--all things work together for evil to them that hate God. God makes Saul a king, Judas an apostle and Balaam a prophet, but though the honors were good in themselves, they led to the ruin of these men. Haman's position, Ahithophel's counsel and Herod's applause turned out to their fatal hurt. But you don't always see how God's word and His providence avoid contradiction? Don't interpret His Word by His providence, but His providence by His Word. Psalm 73 will teach you that much.

What is acceptable to **faith** is not so to the **flesh**. Then you will not be able to convince the natural man of this great truth we are considering. He cannot see it. The worldly man cannot see how loss of possessions or poverty is good; the enterprising man that it is good to be despised and ridiculed; the lustful man that prayer and fasting is better than hedonistic pleasures (Matt. 4:1-11), or that sickness is something better than health. Moses had a difficult enough time teaching all this to Israel. How could he make Pharaoh understand it? "Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me?" The mind of the flesh is not subject to the law of God and neither can be. So do not expect the world to believe any of this. This faith is distinctively Christian. The Christian knows this from the word of God. If it were not for His Word, he, too, would think that all too many things work for his evil rather than for his good.

But then we do know this, don't we? We **know** that all things work together for good. Faith is a certain knowledge, and we know this in the knowledge and certainty of faith. To a certain extent, we also know it by our own experience, and, surely, by the experience of all the saints. We know more than that all things **have** worked together, and so may again, or that they **shall** work together. We know all things **work** together for good. They work together **now**, they are **always** working together for good, whether we can always see it and understand it or not. They work **together**, forming a complex mosaic of providence and grace, the perfect beauty of which we will fully appreciate some day. Meanwhile, today something good will happen to you!

SEMINARIANS



These young men shown here are in their fourth and last year of pre-seminary education.

First of all, going from left to right, we see Carl Haak, age 21. He was born and raised in South Holland, Illinois, and is a member of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church. He attended the Protestant Reformed School in South Holland for his grade school education, then attended Illiana Christian High School in Lansing, Illinois, during his high school years.

During the past summer, Carl has attended Thorton Junior College in Illinois, along with working on a farm, and now attends Calvin College and Grand Valley State College in Grand Rapids on the side for a few extra courses needed.

Second, is Steven Houck, age 27, a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, along with his wife, Carolyn and daughters Elizabeth and Sarah. Steve and his family have been members at Hope since August 1974, coming from a Christian Reformed Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Steve's previous education began at Grace Bible Institute in Omaha, Nebraska. After four years, he transferred to Belleve College also in Omaha, for two more years, where he received his Bachelors Degree in Philosophy. In Nebraska, he was associated with the Breean Fundamentalists.

Steve then moved to the Christian Reformed Church in Minneapolis, where he worked in a Print Shop for two years. It was here he read the Reformed Dogmatics Book and so began writing letters to Professor Hanko and Henry VanderWall asking for more literature.

After about a year of this contact, Steve and his family moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and he began taking classes at the Seminary.

Third, is Ronald Hanko, age 21, son of Professor Herman Hanko. Being a minister's son, Ron has been to several churches in the country. His grade school education began in Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School in Grand Rapids, where his father was minister at Hope Protestant Reformed Church. Then

when his father accepted a call to our Doon, Iowa congregation, Ron went to our Doon Protestant Reformed School. After a few years Professor Hanko was called to be professor in our Theological School, and Ron went to Adams Street Protestant Reformed School, then moved back to Hope Protestant Reformed School again. He graduated from Covenant Christian High School in Grand Rapids.

For extra credits, Ron has also attended Calvin, Grand Rapids Junior College, and Grand Valley State Colleges.

Ron and his wife Nancy are now living in Grandville, Michigan, and are both members of Hope Protestant Reformed Church.

Fourth, is David Zandstra, age 21, also from our South Holland, Illinois congregation. Dave was baptized in South Holland, went to Oak Lawn Church for a few years, then back to South Holland.

Dave comes from a family of six brothers and four sisters, whose home residence is in Lansing, Illinois, and who belong to South Holland Church.

Dave attended the Protestant Reformed grade school in South Holland and graduated from Illiana Christian High School in Lansing, Illinois.

Dave has and is taking outside classes at Thorton Junior College, Calvin, and Grand Valley State Colleges.

Last, but not least, is Ronald Cammenga, age 21. Ron and his wife Rhonda, are members of our Southwest Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Ron had previously been a member of our Holland, Michigan congregation.

Ron went to Holland Christian grade school for seven years, then went to Hope Protestant Reformed School and graduated from high school at Covenant Christian High School.

Ron has also taken outside classes beside his pre-seminary courses, at Grand Rapids Junior College, Calvin, and Grand Valley State Colleges, and like the rest of these men have only a few months left before graduation will be here.

The Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies

With this issue *Beacon Lights* starts a series of articles about all the Young People's Societies. The societies were asked to write a short article about themselves and their activities. We hope to have all the society reports in this and in the next two issues.

LOVELAND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

Too often we, as young people of the Covenant, forget what meeting together every Sunday really is. It is more than being bodily present for attendance's sake. More important, our true motive must take root within the heart. We must desire to study God's Word and as a result we will grow spiritually.

It is a natural thing for us to casually mention or refer to our Society meetings, but with as many Societies as our denomination contains, no doubt there are numerous ways in which each Society is conducted. This is how we do it in Loveland:

We meet in the basement of the church around long tables, much like a catechism class. At the start of Society we sing a Psalter number. Our Society season is from September to May, when we

recess for the summer.

Reverend George Lanting is our president and Bible leader, and he opens each meeting with prayer. Mr. Ivan Griess, who leads our meetings in the absence of Rev. Lanting, is vice-president. Their help and guidance is very beneficial to us. Sharon Nelson is secretary, Tim Griess is treasurer, and Phil Lanting is general adjunct.

For our program this year we have been studying the book of Hebrews. At present we are discussing the Old Testament Levitical Priesthood versus the priesthood of Melchisedec, a type of our High Priest, Jesus Christ. Each week the members alphabetically take turns introducing a few verses of the chapter being studied, to give a general idea of the passage's meaning.

Minutes from the previous meeting are read by the secretary between the Program and the After Recess Program. During this time a collection is also taken. This money is used to pay for outings, such as renting of gyms, etc.

For an After Recess Program we take turns presenting and discussing various questions and subjects. The list includes such topics as: Dancing, Movies, The Christian Woman's Place in the Home, Transcendental Meditation, Christian Liberty, Contentment in the Lord, Various Kinds of Music, Smoking, and Obeying Father and Mother. Three weeks were spent discussing Total Depravity - one of the five Points of Calvinism, an aspect of doctrine that we have been taught ever since we were small catechumens. Yet there was a misunderstanding among us regarding our old man, dead in sin, versus our life in Jesus Christ, of which we have only a small beginning in this life. It was extremely profitable for us to discuss this. It was stressed that we must never take the fundamentals of our religion for granted. They make the foundation upon which we increase in our diligence in searching of the Scriptures and living our lives completely for the Lord. Matthew 7:24-25 is a beautiful expression of this: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." The rock is Christ, our hope, a solid foundation.

There are several committees, each having a specific function: The Singspiration Committee at present is planning a singspiration to be held sometime in February; the duty of the Fund Raising Committee is to schedule various projects to raise money for the 1976 Convention; and the Delinquent Committee fortunately has not had to do a thing yet this year!

The most active committee is the Outing Committee. We had our first hayride this year and it was a great success. One of the men of the congregation donated a wagon, tractor, and the "required" straw bales. That is one outing that will definitely be planned again.

In November the Young People's Society went out for supper to a steak house (Sirloin Stockade for those of you who are familiar with them!) and treated the President, Vice-President, and their wives to a free meal.

For about the last four years, we have had a progressive dinner at Christmas. That is when you go to a different house for every course of the meal. Appetizers, salads, main meal, and dessert and games were the courses this year. Games include a grab bag, which, incidentally, is a "must" for any progressive dinner! The presents are inexpensive gag gifts... stuffed animals, candy, "Make Your Own Balloon Kits," whistles, rubber pants three sizes too small for the individual, and the "traditional" pacifier.

It is not rare to have "on-the-spot" outings. This was especially true during

Christmas. We decide to go bowling, rollerskating, etc. and we just go. Rollerskating is quite popular. Every few months the Young People's Society sponsors a rollerskating party and the entire congregation is invited. We had a rollerskating outing December 8, 1975, and another is scheduled for February 9.

In this day and age of the foolishness of the youth of the world, it is good for Christian young people to stay together. Through Society we have communion with one another and learn how blessed we really are. It is a means given of God by which we receive strength and upbuilding. The Lord dwells with us and we experience His nearness.

"...But if we walk in the light,
we have fellowship one with
another..."

I John 1:7a

Fellowship...truly a gift of God.

HULL YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

Presently, the Hull Young People's Society has nineteen members with others (who are not yet members) attending quite frequently. Our president is Rev. J. Kortering and our vice-president is Mr. Gerben L. De Jong.

We are studying the book of Genesis. Members, assigned by the secretary in alphabetical order, carry on the Bible discussions. The Bible passage is first read by those attending and then the assigned member asks questions, explains ideas and important points, and discusses the passage.

The last Sunday of each month is set aside for a special topic discussion. These are led by two members who can choose a topic from a prepared list or choose an idea for themselves. The special topics for this year so far have been: Women Officebearers in the Church, Letting our Lights Shine, The Living Bible, and Our Duty as Covenant Youth.

As for activities, we've kept ourselves busy preparing for them and carrying our plans out. On November 2, 1975, we sponsored a Reformation Singspiration and invited the Doon and Edgerton Congregations. Rev. Slopsema spoke for the evening.

The boys of our society have been playing basketball with the men of the Mr. and Mrs. Society at night in a rented gym.

On October 28, 1975, our society held a hayride and invited the Thursday evening catechism classes. Afterwards we had a bonfire and roasted hot dogs and drank hot chocolate.

We set December 22, 1975, as our Christmas Party date. Again the Thursday evening catechism classes were invited. First we went carolling to some members of our congregation. When we came back to church, we played games, ate lunch, and had a grab bag gift exchange.

On February 22, 1976, we plan D.V., to have a roller skating party in Rock Rapids, Iowa, and we are inviting the Doon and Edgerton societies and evening catechism classes.

Plans are D.V., to hold a Soup and Pie Supper/Family Night to earn money for the 1976 convention. The congregation is invited for supper and then we all go up to the gym and play basketball, volleyball, etc. Afterwards, we have a small lunch of coffee, drink, cookies, bars, and so on.

So far, this is what is in the planning. We don't really know of any other activities yet. Maybe some more money raising projects for the '76 convention will be held.

We had a Christmas break the 28th of December and we usually take a summer break also.

SOUTH HOLLAND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

The Young People's Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church is lead by Reverend Engelsma and

has 33 members. The society meets on Sunday afternoons from 1:45 till 3:00. Mr. Bert Wories is the vice-president; Anita, secretary; Bill De Jong, treasurer; and Cheryl Van Baren, the vice-all.

This season, our Bible discussions are taken from Hebrews, through which we learn much about the New Testament realization of the Old Testament ceremonial laws and promises. The after-recess program, presented each week by a member of the society, covers a chapter in the book, **The Church In History** by B. K. Kuiper. The book tells of the history of the church from the apostolic age to the present. This makes both an interesting and imformative after-recess program through which we learn of the persecutions of the Christians, how many of the present-day beliefs came to be and of the Reformation and different sects in religion.

During the course of a year, we have activities such as hay rides, ice-skating parties, and gym nights. Each year we have a Christmas party and carol at the Holland Home and for the elderly and widows in the congregation. At the close of a season, we have a Young People's dinner at which we treat the President, Vice-President, and their wives to a meal.

To collect money for the convention last year, we hosted a car wash and wax, a bake sale, a spaghetti supper, and collected patrons.

All in all, the Young People's Society in our church is a good means for Christian fellowship.

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