

BEACON LIGHTS

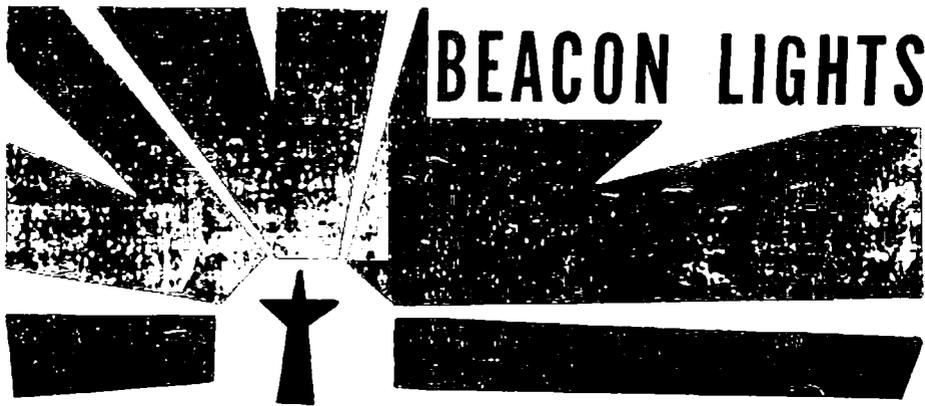
*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*



MAY, 1976

GRADUATION

JOHN ZANDSTRA, JR.
492 GLENWOOD-LANSING ROAD
GLENWOOD, ILLINOIS 60425



BEACON LIGHTS

VOLUME XXXV

MAY, 1976

NUMBER 3

Published monthly (except June-July and August-September are combined) by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies

If any of the material of BEACON LIGHTS is reprinted by another periodical, we will appreciate your giving the source.

The articles of BEACON LIGHTS do not necessarily indicate the viewpoint of the Editorial Staff. Every author is solely responsible for the contents of his own article.

Contributions of general interest are very welcome.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Jon Bol - President; Rick Noorman - Vice-President; Lavonne Kamps - Secretary; Cindy Buiter - Assistant Secretary; Bob Looyenga - Treasurer; Neal Hanko - Assistant Treasurer; Pat Rau - Librarian; Cal Kalsbeek - Youth Coordinator

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF

Jim Van Overloop - Editor-in-Chief; John M. Faber, Harry Langerak, Gerald Kuiper - Associate Editors; Tom Van Overloop - Finance Manager; Vickie Brower, Phyllis Bylsma, Grace Faber, Vicky Klamer, Dave Kregel, Sandra Lubbers

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Duane Alsum, Jon Bol, Jan Hanko, Rev. R. Harbach, Rev. M. Kamps, Agatha Lubbers, Rev. G. Lubbers

All material for publication should be addressed to JIM VAN OVERLOOP
7561 Sunset, Jenison, Mich. 49428
News Editor: KARLA KALSBECK
4132 Hall St., S.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49504
Michigan subscribers please forward subscription dues to GRACE FABER
4190 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49508
Subscribers outside of Michigan please forward subscription dues to
PHYLLIS BYLSMA
516 Burke, N.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506

Forms 3579 should be returned to
BEACON LIGHTS

7561 Sunset, Jenison, Mich. 49428

Second Class Postage paid at
Jenison, Michigan

Subscription price \$3.00

IN THIS ISSUE.

EDITORIAL	
For The Graduates - Gerald Kuiper.....	1
FEATURE	
Graduation - Ken Hanko.....	2
An Unlietening Night - Pete Hoekstra.....	3
Is Vacation From Society Necessary? - Janice Harbach.....	4
TRUTH VS. ERROR	
The Hoiy War - Rev. R. C. Harbach.....	6
George M. Ophoff (7) - Prof. H. Hanko.....	8
The Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.....	11
SEMINARIANS.....	12
FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY:	
Now Is Christ Risen - Rev. M. Kamps.....	14
News From, For and About our Churches - Karla Kalsbeek.....	17
CONVENTION—NOTE.....	18

FOR THE GRADUATES

by Gerald Kuiper

Graduation! What an exciting thought! Immediately we are aware that another important milestone in our growth has arrived. When I think back to my three graduations I remember mostly the mixed feelings of pride and accomplishment on the one hand, but also the feelings of regret that many of the activities and relationships I had grown to know and enjoy would be no more. You who graduate probably will experience some of these same feelings.

But there is much more to the significance of graduation than just these subjective thoughts. I hope that you graduates can see more in this than I did when I was your age. Oh yes, part of the significance is that the authorities in the school declare that you have successfully completed a prescribed course of study. This is reason for pride. Some of you had to work very hard to accomplish it. But of tremendous importance, too—and this is stressed especially in our own schools — is the fact that you as graduates have been instructed up to this point in the "Fear of the Lord". From you, therefore, a measure of wisdom is expected. That Fear of the Lord in which you have been instructed is the foundation and the beginning of true Wisdom.

Read Proverbs 4 in this respect to find out the aim of all education. We are to "Get wisdom, get understanding..." and "...forget it not" (verse 5). We are instructed to love wisdom and not forsake it, in verse 6. In verse 7 Solomon says, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." We are to have a "love affair" with Wisdom — a **lasting** one. We

are not to let Wisdom go or forsake her. With Wisdom as our constant companion we are to walk, and thereby receive on our head an "ornament of grace" and a "crown of glory" (verse 9). We are instructed to keep her, for she is our life (verse 13).

To walk in the Fear of the Lord is to follow a particular path. Whether we continue our education, or take up a different calling in this life, we are to follow that way only with Wisdom. We are not to seek other lovers and companions. Listen to the Holy Spirit in verses 14 and 15: "Enter not into the paths of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." We have here the explicit warning that we are to walk in the right path, in the path lit up, according to Solomon, by a shining light that shines unto the perfect day. This is in direct contrast to groping in the dark ways without our companion, Wisdom. Solomon here is very sharp concerning this antithesis, as are many other places in Scripture regarding this same contrast. What a difficult calling! How can we ever heed it?

Beloved young people, thank God that Solomon answers this for us, too. He instructs us in verse 23 that we are to be **diligent** in this calling. Diligence isn't something that we leave behind in the classroom or on the shelf somewhere. It is work, **hard** work. Read with me verses 23 - 27 and you will find the following. We are to speak the truth; we are to look straight ahead and not be turned aside by the "Sirens" of our present day. Perhaps we who are weak will have to put wax in our

ears and be tied to the mast like Ulysses was, but we are not to turn aside to a way of destruction. We are to ponder our path, and we are to let our way be established, turning not to the right or to the left.

I have confidence, graduates, that you and I, too, can do this with God's help. We know better; we have all been taught. But again, what a difficult task! We are, for example, to sell used cars or real estate and speak the truth always. If that is to be your vocation and you never thought that those jobs and truth went together, they had better now. Some of us, perhaps, will continue our education in a secular institution or one controlled by apostates. Protestant Reformed youth, turn not to the right or to the left, but walk in Wisdom and in the Fear of the Lord. Or

perhaps, some of us may have the privilege of teaching children in the home or in the school. Let's teach those children the right way to go. Let us pray that we may not be unfaithful to Wisdom, and by our errant and wicked way lead others to darkness. These are just a few of the implications we can take from this wonderful instruction in Proverbs 4.

In closing I say, "Congratulations, Graduates!" You have earned your diploma. But don't forget that you have been given this strength from God, and from Him alone. Look to Him now and in the future for strength and guidance in your calling. Then, and only then, will you be blessed. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths.

Feature

GRADUATION

by Ken Hanko

Ken is a member of our Hope, Walker, Church.

The purpose of the child of God in all that he does is to show his gratitude to God for the marvelous things God has done for him.

Now, as graduation approaches, we seniors look back on twelve or thirteen years of schooling and see that God has indeed been good to us.

He has given us Christian parents. And He has given them the desire to give us an education, an education aimed at bringing us up in the fear of God. Our parents have contributed and still do contribute, much of their time, money, and effort to providing us with schools. They have seen to it that through these schools we are given an education, the goal of which is to prepare us to take our

places within the church and the world.

God has also given us teachers who are dedicated to the goal of training us to love God. They have taught us well and faithfully throughout our school years. They have been patient and preserving even when we have been rebellious. They have given us an education which is unequaled in any other school. They have well prepared us to take up the positions God has chosen for us within the church and the world.

These are but a few of the wonderful blessings God has bestowed on us. Yet many times we have taken these blessings for granted, as if we deserved them. We have even rebelled against them, saying that we hate school, that we do not want to learn, that we will not do a particular assignment because we do not feel like it, or that the education we are receiving is

seemed to know what to say and when to say it. Hypo had brought him back home to safety.

Another flash of light broke Hypo's train of thought. His memory flashed back to the shine of his car's headlights as they had shown on the mailbox in front of the Vert homestead. Con had served him well. He now had his cover. Con had been with him, Con was home early, Con was a good soldier, despite the wound he brought upon himself tonight, and Con's mother would relay good tidings to his own mother. All would be well; now back to the party.

In a remote area of the building, two pranksters silently made their way to the control room. They would only play a harmless prank. They wished only to put a few friends from the "angel factory" in total darkness on this important night.

"As you commence your next mile in life, remember the three types of lights. 1. **Beacon** lights of various brightnesses shining to reveal the darkness. 2. **Blinking** lights which are good for nothing. 3. **Burned out** lights which have served their purpose. Which type are you? Thank-you."

(Applause)

New speaker: "Now we proudly present to you our graduates: James Paul Allbright, Lydia Ruth Beamer, Hypo Crite..." The auditorium was suddenly rocked with an explosion and plunged into total darkness.

The next day a puzzled janitor found a fourth type of light. In the control room were two **Broken** worthless bulbs.

P.S. On the third seat from the end was a third broken bulb.

Feature

IS VACATION FROM SOCIETY NECESSARY?

by Janice Harbach

Non-young people, read this article. This certainly can also be applied to Mr. and Mrs., Mens, Ladies Societies, Bible Classes and Discussion Groups. The summer should never be a vacation from studying God's Word. Let us be careful that our fleshly lusts and pleasures don't shove out Bible study. Ed.

Janice is a member of our Hope, Walker, Church. She gave this article as an after-recess paper in April, 1975 for Hope Sr. Young People's Society.

Why is it that our Young People's Societies discontinue during the summer months? One reason given was: "We've always done it that way, and all the other societies in the church have, too." I think this is a worthless tradition and should be

thrown out because if tradition says to quit studying the Bible for any period of time, then it is wrong. Is the Bible less important for us in the summer? Another reason given is, "Young People's is boring enough as it is; give us a break!" If Young People's is distasteful, it's not because there's something wrong with the Word of God, but there's something wrong with us, or our attitude toward Scripture. I'll admit that YP's has

sometimes been dull, but then let's improve it, not look eagerly for a chance to get away from it.

Young People's can become wearisome to an individual when he doesn't participate in the discussion, but just sits back and lets others do the talking. And, of course, YP's is always a pain to those who come **only** because their parents make them. Our reason for attending YP's should be because we **want** to and because we love God's Word and love to discuss it with fellow saints. If this is why we come, then we won't quit meeting during the summer months.

It's quite inconsistent to meet for only seven months of the year and then stop for no reason at all. When my Christian friends outside of the Protestant Reformed Churches ask me why my youth group dies out in the summer, I can find no sufficient or even reasonable answer to give them. There are plenty of churches that continue all their activities all year round — they put us to shame. If we have the best manifestation of the Truth, why don't we get excited about it? Since Arminians believe the lie and are enthusiastic about **that**, why aren't we excited about the Truth — excited enough to dig into it all year through? Bible study isn't something we should get sick of, nor is it something from which we need a vacation.

The psalmist said in Psalm 119:97, "Oh, how love I Thy Law! It is my meditation all the day." He doesn't say, "It is my meditation all the day, except for some time off in the summer." Notice the exclamation mark — this is no indifferent or mediocre attitude. If we really love God's Word, we won't take a vacation from it. Everyone is familiar with II Timothy 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God...." Are we showing ourselves less approved to God when we cut down on our Bible study?

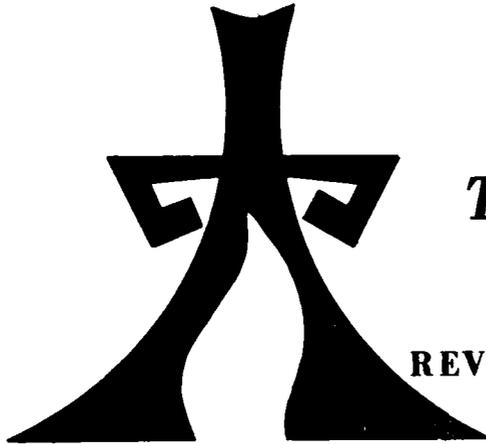
Well, you say, these verses only apply to personal Bible study and meditation, not to group study. Consider Psalm 133:1, "Behold, how good and how

pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Since it's good and pleasant, let's do it more often! Sure, personal Bible study is important, very important, but we must not neglect Christian fellowship which is also so essential to our spiritual welfare. After all, this is the purpose of Young People's Society. Every Sunday we confess that part of the Apostles' Creed which says, "I believe in the communion of saints." While we confess this in our hearts, let's confess it in our actions too, by encouraging it and looking for every opportunity to experience it. And if we don't find that sweet communion in YP's, then let's pray for it and work toward it.

Most of our church members take a few weeks of vacation from work during the summer, but in a large society, this would not severely decrease attendance. (For example, our particular society has about 40 members — willing and unwilling — and if 20 go away with their families, there are still plenty left to carry on a decent discussion.) Sure, the leader needs a break (especially if he is a pastor), but why can't a temporary substitute be found? Or even a society member could be qualified to lead the discussion.

Young People's Society is often formal and official with roll calls, dues, minutes, etc., and possibly it would be better to have an informal meeting for the summer. Maybe what we really need is a break from the formality itself. A group Bible study which is made up of people who come on a **strictly voluntary** basis will be more enjoyable and beneficial than the "regular season" meetings, I am sure.

If we still have the God-given freedom to meet publicly where and when we want for searching the Scriptures together, let's take advantage of it! How I wish all of us would get excited over delving into God's Word with our Christian brothers and sisters! May God so fill us with His Spirit to give us year-round enthusiasm in this day of apostate apathy!



Truth vs. Error

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

THE HOLY WAR

THE TOWN OF MANSOUL

Jesus was not yet come into the town. —John

There was this town of Mansoul. It was situated between the two worlds, between heaven and hell. Its founder and Builder was Shaddai. The name Shaddai means "to be strong and powerful," and the Greek translation of the Hebrew name is "the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8). Shaddai made Mansoul the crown of His universe, to have dominion over all. In the center of the town there was for glory, a palace; for strength, a castle; for beauty, a paradise, and so large as to have room for eternity (Eccl. 3:11, marg.). The city was so strong that the walls could never be broken down unless the citizens themselves gave consent. Nothing but sin, by an act of their own free will, could have hurt them. The poet expressed it:

Best are all things as the will
Of God ordained them; His creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that He created, much less, man,
Or ought that might his happy state secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the Will, for what obeys
Reason, is free, and Reason He made right,
But bid her well beware, and still erect,

Lest by some fair appearing good surpris'd
She dictate false, and misinform the Will
To do what God expressly forbid.

Five gates were in the walls of this town. They were Ear-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate, Nose-gate and Feel-gate. These gates could never be forced or opened except by the will of those within, and they were all good and true men. But there was a mighty black prince from another realm, who plotted to secure the downfall of Mansoul, and make all those in it his slaves. His name is Diabolos. Originally, it was not so; for to begin with, he had been a servant of King Shaddai, in the highest of His principalities and the best of His dominions. But once upon a time he went wrong. He got to raging in his heart for a higher state, to be as Shaddai, lord over all. King Shaddai had this lordship reserved for His Son, Prince Emmanuel, and had already bestowed it on Him. It was then the treasonous design of Diabolos to destroy the King's Son and with his dark cohorts to take His inheritance for themselves.

Now, in Shaddai's dominion there was no Eye-gate, since He and His Son

were all and always eye, beholding in full vision every sector of His realm. Shaddai, catching Diabolos's rebellion at its inception and initial execution, convicted the giant and his rabble of horrid conspiracy, cast them out of office and court, and condemned them to eternal judgment. How Diabolos and his rebel crew raged! Not only in pride, but also in malice, they continued a constant smoldering revolution against the King and His Prince. In their infernal minds, they deemed it better to rule in hell than to serve in heaven. So these hellish hordes poured up out of their holes and dens with a horrible roar of Luciferian madness as they sped in attack towards the Town of Mansoul. They had been there when Shaddai had built and beautified Mansoul for Himself. Of their number was one Alecto, of the three furies, who had instead of hair, a huge, tangled, gnarled and electrified spaghetti bowl of snakes. (These furies punished those who escaped public justice.) He proposed that they conceal themselves and their now monstrous guise behind their chief, who could appear as an angel of light. This way they would assault Mansoul with lies, flatteries, pretended things that would never be, and promises that could never be found. Mansoul would be allured to make themselves willing to open their gates and even desire them to come in.

It was also decided to shoot, outright, some chief ruler of the townsman. The man they had consigned to destruction was Capt. Resistance, the man in the town most feared by the giant Diabolos. The one appointed to do the murder was Tisiphone, a fury with a whip of scorpions. This brimstone band marched invisibly on Mansoul, all except one, who did so not in his own depraved and beggarly likeness, but under the shape and in the body of the most subtle of the beasts of the field, the harmless, innocent and beautiful serpent. Within shooting range of Mansoul's Ear-gate, they emplaced their ambushade,

zeroing in on Capt. Resistance. The giant then approached the gate and called for a hearing. He took with him Ill-pause, his clever orator in delicate matters. It was an Ill-pause which had tripped up Eve in the garden, David on his roof, Solomon at his shrines and Peter at the enemy's fireplace.

At the giant's trumpet blast, certain looked over the wall of Mansoul to see what was the matter. They were Lord Innocent, Lord Will-be-will, the Lord Mayor, Mr. Recorder (Conscience) and Capt. Resistance. It was Lord Will-be-will who demanded that the giant identify himself and state the purpose of his disturbance. Then Diabolos, delivering an oration in lamblike simplicity, purveyed his subtle lies with false reasoning and holding a false liberty, which, he said, was better than being shut up as they were in a dark and stinking cave. This is what Paradise is hinted to be in comparison to the golden world offered by the one in the serpent. Actually, a fool's paradise was offered to Mansoul. At this point, while Diabolos was speaking, the assassin got the cross-hairs on Capt. Resistance, shot him through the head, and down dead he fell over the wall, to the amazement of all Mansoul. Then, with the only fighting man in the town dead, and there being no more courage to resist, the giant's orator, Ill-pause, delivered a speech to those on the wall. He spoke of his master's love for the town. He pointed to the forbidden tree and, making a low bow to his master, advised looking at it and its promising fruit, and partaking of it to attain divine wisdom.

At this point, Lord Innocency sank right down where he stood and died. How this happened is not exactly known. He may have been shot, as was Capt. Resistance, or perhaps some qualm suddenly shook him mortally to the roots of his being, or, even more likely, perhaps he was fatally asphyxiated by the rotten, stinking halitosis of the treacherous

villain, ill-pause. Now, with these two great men dead, the beauty and glory of Mansoul were destroyed. There was no more spirit in the whole town. They all fell down and surrendered to become slaves to the black prince. They ate of the tree, became immediately insanelly drunk, forgot Shaddai and His law and opened the gates of Mansoul to every diabolonian there ever was. The same poet has Eve consider thus the Serpent's lure:

Here grows the cure of all, this Fruit Divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach and feed at once both body and mind?
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit she plucked, did eat;
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe,
That all was lost.

Diabolos and his minions hated Mansoul because they hate knowledge, righteousness and holiness. They are haters of God because they hate his image. Upright Mansoul was an eyesore to them. But before Diabolos was done with Mansoul he made it an eyesore to God. The enemy cut off its hair, bound it in chains of darkness, bored out its eyes

and made it a hack-horse in the house of Dagon. Now the Mansoulians are in midnight darkness with not a glimmering of holy light in them. They were made a little lower than the angels but fell lower than the brute beasts. They became the compound of the evil qualities of the worst creatures. In them is the rapacity of the lion, the stubbornness of the mule and slyness of the fox. They are doggish and swinish, while filled with the poison of asps. They are a generation of vipers. They are so miserably corrupted that in every one of them is a bucket of snakes, making them utterly incapable of doing any good and prone to all wickedness. Not the least good is in them, nothing acceptable to Shaddai. Whatever changes may be found in them are only from evil to evil. One Mansoulman, feeling the weight and horror of that bucket, cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But most feel not the sinking weight. They are dead. Death bears full sway. It is different with one in a life and death struggle. That one has hope in the regeneration of a new life.

George M. Ophoff (7)

by Prof. H. Hanko

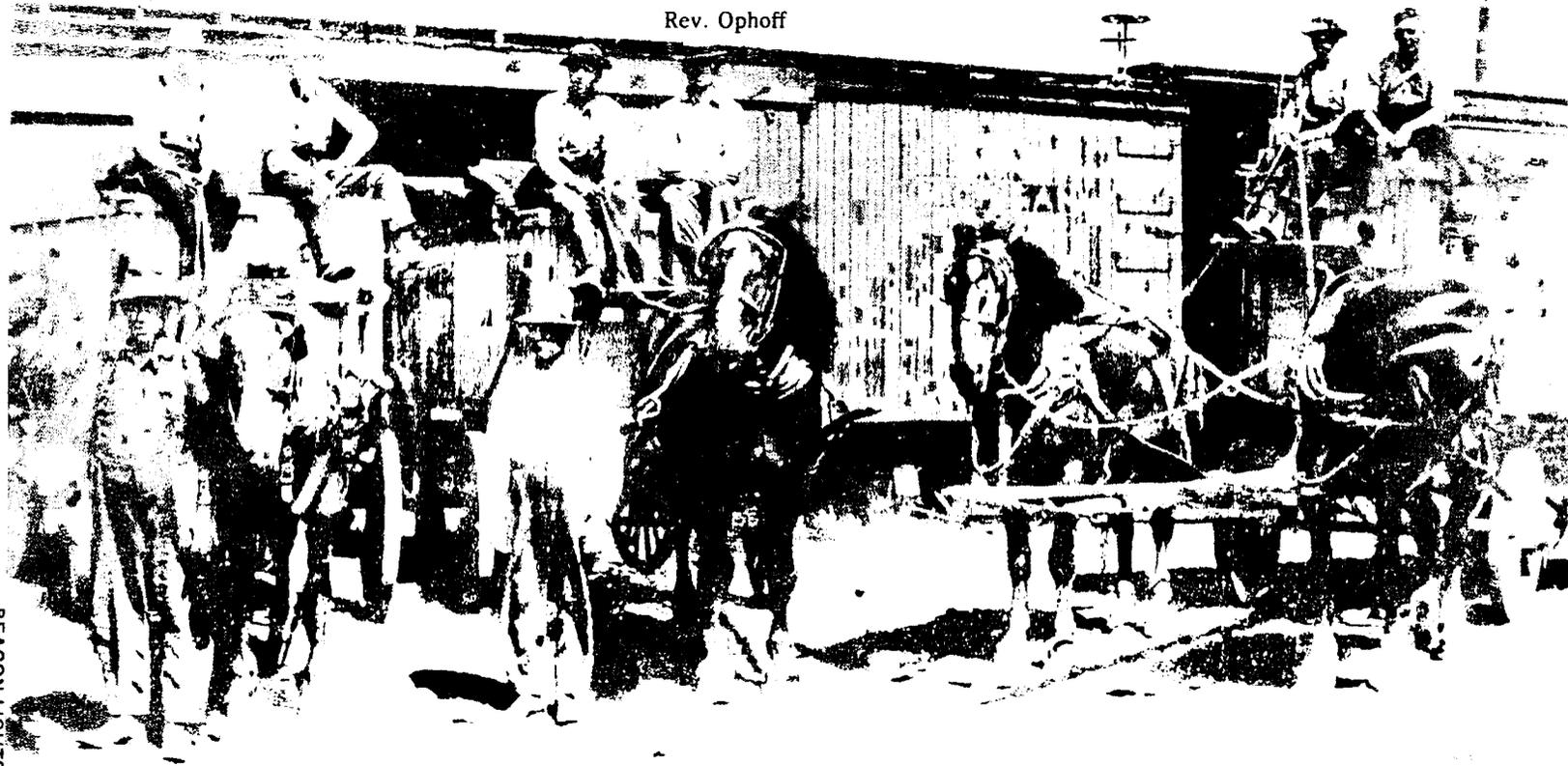
HIS EARLY YEARS

At the time George graduated from grade school, there was as yet no Christian high school. Calvin College, located on the corner of Franklin and Madison, incorporated various high school subjects into its curriculum. Although Calvin College was primarily dedicated to the instruction of future teachers and ministers, anyone who wanted a Christian high school education had to go to this school. Nevertheless, in those days even high school was chiefly for those who sought a career in the teaching or preaching profession. It was

with his mind set upon being a minister that George enrolled in the school on Madison and Franklin. From this school he graduated in 1909 at the age of 18.

His schooling was interrupted after high school, probably because of lack of finances in the family. A similar interruption took place between George's college and seminary education. It seems as if these years were spent working for Consumer's Ice Company. We are including a picture taken at that time, which will give our readers some idea of the work in which George was engaged.

Rev. Ophoff



BEACON LIGHTS/9

Consumer Ice Company - where Rev. Ophoff worked

This work occupied George's time from 1909 to 1911, a period of two years. In 1911 his schooling was resumed and he spent the normal four years in Calvin College still determined upon his calling as a minister.

After graduating from Calvin, George's studies were once again interrupted; and once again he worked for Consumer's Ice Company. During this interval, which lasted about two years, an event took place which was to have a profound effect upon his life.

The old Professor Hemkes, the story of whose life we narrated in an earlier article, lived alone on the corner of Henry and Bates Street on the southeast end of town, near Bates Street Christian Reformed Church. Prof. Hemkes had served with distinction as professor in Calvin Seminary and had retired. In 1916, when George was 25 years old, Prof. Hemkes broke his hip in a fall. This is always a serious thing with older people, but in those days it was even more serious, for modern advances in bone surgery were unknown. Prof. Hemkes never walked again.

Someone had to take care of him. The lot fell upon George. There were probably two reasons for this. One reason was that he was the oldest in the family, and the care of the invalid grandfather fell upon him. Another reason was that in the quietness of his grandfather's home he could find the peace and serenity for study which had escaped him in the busy hustle and bustle of his own family life. George left home to live on Henry and Bates with his grandfather, and he did not return again to the home of his parents.

The influence of Prof. Hemkes was great. Not only could George's grandfather give him the encouragement that he needed to pursue his studies for the ministry, but Prof. Hemkes could also give him the knowledge of the Reformed faith and the traditions of the churches of the **Afsheidsing** which were dear to his heart.



Prof. Hemkes' house

Although George worked for a couple of years yet, resumed his studies, and worked about the house of his grandfather, there were many hours of quietness in which the two could discuss the faith which they loved. These were good years in which George was strengthened and broadened in the knowledge of the truth of the Scripture.

In 1918, at the age of 27, George entered Calvin Seminary. There are, it seems, especially two events which took place during these years which are important enough to be related.

The first event was the death of George's father. Frederick Ophoff worked at the Rex Reed Furniture Factory in downtown Grand Rapids. In 1919, shortly after George began his studies in the seminary, an explosion tore apart the factory where George's father worked. The explosion took place in a part of the shop sufficiently distant from the place where Frederick Ophoff worked so that he could escape from the inferno unharmed.



Rev. Ophoff's father

But he worked in the painting and varnishing department. After escaping from the building, he remembered a very precious watch which he had laid on the bench and, in his haste, had left behind. Calculating that he could enter his

department and rescue the watch before the flames hit that part of the shop, he plunged back into the building against the advice of onlookers and his fellow employees. He did not succeed in his endeavor. An explosion also tore apart that part of the shop, and Frederick Ophoff was badly burned. He died that same day at the age of 52. The tragedy in the family was great, for he left a widow and eight children. Their only means of support from that time on was a small pension from the shop which could not possibly be stretched to cover the needs of the family. But the children were growing up and they were able to find work to add to the family income. George, however, already embarked upon his seminary studies and living with his grandfather, was not expected to contribute to the family support. Here, too, is evidence of the providential hand of God determining events according to His good pleasure, and leading His servant on in such a way that the ministry would be his vocation in spite of the tragedy which befell the Ophoff family. We shall have to wait with the second incident until our next article, the Lord willing.

Picture Captions for April issue pictures.

- 1. Ophoff house on Eastern Ave.**
- 2. Rev. Ophoff's mother**
- 3. Ophoff family picture - Rev. standing on left**

The Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies

Hudsonville Sr. Young People's Society

The Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Senior Young People's Society meets for an hour and a half on Sundays immediately following the morning service. At the present time, while waiting for our new church building to be built, we are meeting in a classroom at Hudsonville

High School. This is O.K. for a while but shelves of novels and textbooks don't convey the same atmosphere as Bibles and Psalters do.

Our meetings are divided into two main parts. The first and major portion of our meeting is Bible discussion, which is led by Rev. Hanko. This year we are

studying the book of Revelation. This book, as I'm sure all of you know, is very difficult to understand. It is also a very important book in light of the fact that the end of time is rapidly approaching. We must be prepared to stand as children of God in these last perilous days. Revelation teaches us not to fear in these days, but rather, to place our complete and unwavering trust in God as the provider of all His children's needs.

The second part of our meeting is the After Recess Program. This is led by our President, Gary Lanning. Also assisting are Vice-President, Gerry Schut; Secretary, Laura Brunsting; Treasurer, Sandy Lubbers; and Vice-all, Randy Miedema.

At the beginning of the year a committee assigned specific topics to members and also a date on which they were to give a discussion of their topic. However, a member may feel free to give a discussion on any topic he chooses.

Many of the after recess programs consist of reading and discussing an article from the **Beacon Lights**.

It has become the tradition of our society to pay a visit shortly before Christmas, to the sick and shut-ins of our congregation. This year, as in the past years, we went to their homes and sang Christmas carols to them and also gave them baskets filled with fruit and baked goods.

Also this year we planned an auction to raise money for the convention. Members of our society went around and collect items donated by members of our neighboring congregations. These items were auctioned off on April 14, at VanHill's Auction Barn in Zeeland.

In conclusion, I would like to urge all young people to join the Young People's Society of their congregation for a very beneficial and unique period of Christian fellowship.

SEMINARIANS



The three gentlemen pictured here have only one more year of seminary education until graduation in June, 1977.

First, going from left to right, is Carl Schouls, age 34. He and his wife, along with their two daughters, aged eight and five, are presently attending the Free Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Carl was born in Zierikzee, Netherlands, and moved in 1954 to Chatham, Ontario, Canada. He lived there until 1957 when he and his family moved to Toronto, Ontario. In 1972 he moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Carl went to grade school in both Zierikzee and Chatham. He had his high school training in Toronto, Canada. Carl continued his education at Richmond College in Canada for one year, and at Calvin College in Grand Rapids where he is still taking courses to get his Bachelor of Arts Degree. In 1974 he began attending our Protestant Reformed Seminary.

Carl was a member of the sister denomination of the Free Reformed Church in the Netherlands and was a member of the Free Reformed Church in Chatham and Toronto.

Next is Peter Vandermeijden, age 24. Peter, his wife and their one-year-old daughter are also members of the Free Reformed Church in Grand Rapids Michigan.

In 1952 Peter was born in Apeldoorn, Netherlands. He lived in the Netherlands only one year before moving to St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada. From 1955 to 1972 he lived in London, Ontario. In 1972 he moved once again to Grand Rapids, Michigan.

To a God-fearing wife it is important that God's Word not be blasphemed, especially that it not be blasphemed on account of her. This is what the text holds before the Christian wife as he purpose for heeding her calling. She must love her husband, love her children, work at home, and be submissive, "so that the word of God be not blasphemed."

During his grade school years, Peter attended the London Parental School in London, Ontario. His high school education was at H. B. Beal Secondary School, also in London. Peter then went to the University of Waterloo in Ontario for a year before attending Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for two years. In 1974 he began attending our seminary.

Peter was a member of the Free Reformed Church in London, Ontario, from 1953 to 1972, and since then the Free Reformed Church in Grand Rapids.

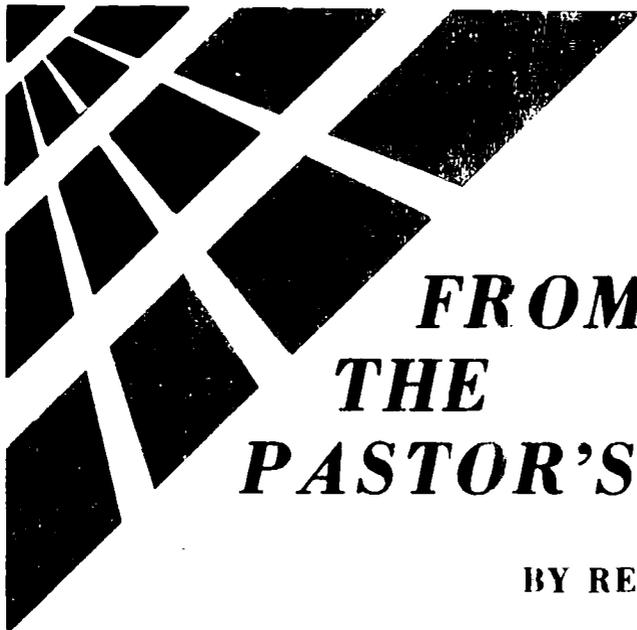
Thirdly, is Kenneth Koole from Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. He is 24 years old and has lived in Grand Rapids his entire life.

Ken was baptized in Creston Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. He, his parents, four brothers and one sister were members there until it disbanded in 1963. Then they joined Hope Church.

Ken attended Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School in Grand Rapids during his grade school years. He continued his education at Calvin Christian High School in Grandville, Michigan, where he graduated in 1969. Ken studied at Calvin College in Grand Rapids for three years and at Hope College in Holland, Michigan, for one year before entering the Seminary in September of 1973.

He presently is doing some practice-preaching in the churches around the Grand Rapids area, going as far as Randolph, Wisconsin.

Ken plans to be married in June, shortly after finishing end-of-the-year exams, which he is beginning to prepare for now.



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

BY REV. M. KAMPS

NOW IS CHRIST RISEN

I Cor. 15: 19-20

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."

We are the Church of Christ. The Church has ever confessed that Jesus arose. The meaning of Easter is that Christ **bodily** arose and ascended into heaven and is set at the right hand of God in glory. The angels declared it: "He is not here for he is risen." The bodily resurrection of Christ is the occasion for our joy on Easter morning. Nothing less than this truth of the bodily resurrection equates with the angelic invitation, "Come see the place where the Lord lay." The Church of Christ, along with Peter and John, each Easter morning runs to the place where our Lord was laid and beholds and believes.

Our God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...and of the man Jesus, who lives forevermore.

Of what benefit or profit is it to us

that Christ arose from the dead? Consider this situation: one man is wealthy and is able to satisfy his every need and desire. How does this wealth profit another? Just because one man enjoys abundance does not necessarily imply that his poor neighbor's financial position will improve. Is it, therefore, conceivable that Christ's resurrection and exaltation would be of no **lasting** significance for us? Some in Corinth would have answered in the affirmative.

The believer answers this question by saying that because Christ arose, we may be and are assured that we shall also be raised from the dead to live with God in glory. Jesus' resurrection is the cause of which our resurrection is the effect. Jesus is our legal and organic head. We have a right to be raised from the dead unto eternal life, for Jesus paid for all our sin

and guilt. Even as Jesus, the Head of the Church, is bodily in heaven, so shall we be, who are the members of His body. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him...in order that where "I am, there ye may be also." We know that this is true! This is a thrilling and comforting knowledge received through faith, the gift of God, given only to those for whom Jesus entered death and the grave. There is an inseparable relationship, an unbreakable bond, between Easter morning and the moment when the last trumpet shall sound marking the resurrection of the dead unto eternal life. Christ's resurrection is our resurrection! There is one resurrection, not several. Christ's resurrection and the believer's resurrection is one whole.

* * * * *

This truth was denied at Corinth! In the church at Corinth some believed that the dead rise not. For Paul asked: "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Some taught that this earthly life is all that there is; there is no life hereafter. The dead do not rise again. Those that taught this idea excluded Jesus from this teaching. In Corinth it was believed by all that, indeed, Jesus was raised from the dead and is now set at the right hand of God in glory. Jesus was confessed as the living Lord, whom the believers loved and for whom they lived. They believed that Christ arose, but they held the position that we shall not rise from the dead for there is no resurrection of the dead. Some in Corinth saw not the inseparable relationship between Christ's resurrection and our resurrection. So, they taught that this life is all there is for us. Christ arose, but we will not.

This position occasions Paul's penetrating analysis of their hope. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." If in Christ we do not hope with respect to the life to

come after death, we are of all men most miserable. True! Why then deny the flesh, endure trials and persecution, bear the reproach of Christ, and suffer loneliness, which is the experience of all them that enter in at the strait gate and walk in this life along a narrow pathway? If it all ends in death anyway, what's the use? We are of all men most miserable.

If you think the Corinthians were foolish, consider the unbelief taught and believed in the "church" today. Millions of people made their annual visit to the local church this past Easter. People, who regularly fail to attend worship services throughout the year and who by this failure reveal their contempt for the Word, fetishily filled to capacity the churches of the land this past Easter morning. They came early, decked out in colorful dresses and orchid corsages, as they ostentatiously displayed their spring finery on Easter morning. What was the message they came to hear? Not the truth of the bodily resurrection of Christ as God's pledge of our resurrection. Today's modern pastor scoffs at the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Christ is not bodily risen from the dead. The tomb is not empty. For the Modernists the resurrection, and thus Easter, means that the ideals and goals of Jesus' life have risen again in the hearts of his disciples. His life, His ideals of love, honor, justice and morality have risen again in the hearts of Jesus' followers. This is what was preached Easter morning by thousands of unbelieving preachers in our land. Thus, the people were told that Jesus' ideals, loved and lived, make life worth living! If we hope in Jesus only in this life we are not of all men most miserable as Paul claimed, but we are happy and blessed. This was the fodder for thousands of people who refuse to eat the heavenly manna of truth in Christ.

But, you ask, what of the empty tomb, the linen grave clothes, the angel's message, and the appearances of our

Lord? Were not these evidences of the bodily resurrection of our Lord? These, the Modernist tells us, are all symbolic representations presented by the early church in its scriptures to convey their understanding of the resurrection. They are not actual events rooted in historical fact. These are not to be taken as evidences of a "bodily resurrection" of the Christ. Science has shown the impossibility of the dead coming back to life. It is contrary to our experience. The dead rise not. Thus, Christ is not risen from the dead in any bodily or physical sense of the word. But, the Modernist assures us that in a certain sense we can say Jesus lives nonetheless. Jesus lives, for the ideals of love, righteousness and justice for which He died have become the resurging and impelling power of the Christian community in the world. After all, very little of the real Jesus was laid in the tomb. The real Jesus is to be found in the love, kindness and righteousness of His disciples. Consequently, the Modernists deny the ascension of Christ to God's right hand and, by implication, the truth of heaven and hell as local, everlasting places. This life lived for the man of Galilee is all there is.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

But now is Christ risen from the dead!

This is Paul's unshakeable foundation. The appearances of Jesus are evidences of the bodily resurrection of Christ. God hath declared that He hath raised His Son from the dead. Who would dare deny it and thus make God a liar? Modernists! But the Christian Church responds in faith to the angel's invitation to come see the place where the Lord lay, and seeing with the eye of faith, we believe. The Word preached and personally appropriated by faith every week is believed and confessed on Easter morning. Christ arose! Bodily from the dead is

Christ Jesus now risen to live forevermore. He was delivered for our transgressions and He was raised again for our justification. The bodily resurrection of Christ is God's declaration that the elect, the repentant sinner, is justified. Our God has declared by the resurrection of Jesus our right to dwell eternally with Him. Jesus' resurrection is a divine Word wherein is declared the certainty of our own resurrection.

Some truth! It is the unshakeable foundation of the Christian hope.

The Man of Sorrows is raised to the highest glory at God's right hand. All power in heaven and earth is given to Jesus. The Spirit of God was given to this man who destroyed the power of the Devil, sin and the grave. Christ arose bodily from the dead. He draws His own infallibly unto Himself. Our hope is in Jesus, both in this life and in the life to come.

Our hope is not in Jesus **only** in this life. For His resurrection life is become our life eternal. We hope in Jesus because He lives and hath given us the Spirit of God. Our living Lord's life of love and obedience unto God is ours for He hath given us eternal life by His Spirit that dwelleth in us. He that loves his brother and obeys God's commandments is born of God. In regeneration this eternal life is given to the elect, who are dead in sin and sinners by nature, by the living Lord Jesus, who is the Christ over all.

When Jesus was on earth He in perfect love and righteousness was obedient unto death, for He lived in the hope of the resurrection. (John 10:17; John 17:5) Thus the Church of Christ lives the same life of obedience unto eternal life in the new heavens and new earth.

Our life is not of all men most miserable, but is of all men most blessed and enviable. True, our life is filled with trials, persecutions and ridicule. We bear the reproach of Christ. We deny ourselves. The believer struggles against sin

and Satan in this life. We enter the strait gate and walk along a pathway too narrow for the flesh. This is all true, but our life is not of all men most miserable. For we rejoice to be accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's name sake. We know that the sufferings of **this present time** are not worthy to be compared to the glory which **shall be revealed** in us. It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, **we shall be like him!**

Jesus is become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Firstfruits? Yes, Jesus is become the firstfruits of the dead. In saying "firstfruits," Paul uses a figurative expression borrowed from nature. In the natural sense of the word the firstfruits are the first handfuls of grain that were harvested. The rest of the harvest was to follow. The firstfruits and the rest of the fruits were **one harvest, one whole**. And the firstfruits are the certainty that the whole is ripe for harvest.

Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection "harvest." Note that Christ is become the firstfruits. There were persons who were raised from the dead before Jesus was, such as Lazarus and the son of the widow of Nain. But these resurrections were not of the same nature as Christ's resurrection. Lazarus returned to this earthly life only to experience death again. This was not so with Christ. Christ arose

unto heaven. The corruptible took on incorruption and the natural became heavenly and spiritual. Jesus arose and went to heaven as the exalted and glorified Christ. Lazarus returned to the earthly, sinful sphere of death.

There was no resurrection like unto Jesus' resurrection ever before. Christ is become the firstfruits of them that slept. Jesus resurrection is the first of the bodily resurrections unto eternal life in glory. As certain as it is that Jesus arose according to God's own testimony, so certain it is that our mortal bodies shall be raised from the dead and we shall personally and bodily enter the heavenly and eternal. Christ's resurrection is the firstfruits of them that slept and the resurrection of those that die in the Lord...the rest of the harvest. There is only one resurrection -- one whole! The living Jesus lives to translate us out of the earthy into the heavenly.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you. Rom. 8:11." Believer,

Christ's empty tomb is our empty tomb!

Hope in Christ...both in this life and in the life to come.

Comfort one another with these words.

NEWS From, For, and About Our Churches

by Karla Kalsbeek

FROM OUR SOUTHWEST CHURCH:

The membership papers of Miss Lena and Miss Marie Koppenol have been received from our Southeast Church.

Mr. Lloyd Osterink and Miss Crystal VanNoord were united in marriage on February 5.

FROM OUR HULL CHURCH:

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Jansma rejoice in the birth of a son, Wally Henry, born March 18.

FROM OUR LOVELAND CHURCH:

A roller skating party was held on March 21, sponsored by the Young

People's Society.

FROM OUR EDGERTON CHURCH:

The membership papers of Mrs. Nick Vleitstra have been sent to her home upon request.

FROM OUR FAITH CHURCH:

Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Jabaay were received as members and also were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Julie Sue.

Mr. & Mrs. P. Bruckbauer were blessed with the birth of a daughter born March 1.

FROM OUR SOUTH HOLLAND CHURCH:

Mr. Kevin Poortinga made confession of faith on March 28.

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur VanBaren were blessed with the birth of a son, Arthur Dale.

FROM OUR FIRST CHURCH:

The music department of Covenant Christian High School presented a com-

bined band and choir concert on March 28.

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Rutgers Jr. were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Mary Beth, on March 12.

Mr. Wilbur Postma and Nona Miersma were united in marriage on March 24.

FROM OUR DOON CHURCH:

On March 4 there was a chapel service for Doon School. Rev. M. Hoeksema spoke for them.

An Anniversary Singspiration was held March 21 at Doon Church, with Hull and Edgerton invited to join.

The young people had their spring banquet on April 6 in Doon Church.

FROM OUR HOPE CHURCH:

The Jr. Young People's Society sponsored a baked goods sale March 27.

Hope Choral Society presented their Easter program on April 18.

The Annual Young People's Banquet was held April 23 at Adrian's Ramona Terrace.

CONVENTION-NOTE

ATTENTION YOUNG PEOPLE!!!

Can you imagine competition so vigorous that it would make the Marine physical training program seem like a Saturday afternoon stroll? Can you imagine a competitive sport so exasperating that an Iowa farmer would rather chase pigs than compete; or a California highway engineer gladly construct miles of road in the desert; or a Colorado pipeliner joyously dig ditches through miles of rock; or a Washington fruit picker exuberantly return to the orchards?

Raise up your stalwart young men, prepare your agile young women for unparalleled athletic feats! Have 'em jog up high mountains, have 'em swim across wide seas, for the things which are a-comin' can not be done with ease!

The Publicity Committee
Sandy Vander Woude, Chairman