BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

MAY 1991

Conversion . . . is the fruit of the call of God coming through the gospel and the inward working of the Holy Spirit. Conversion takes place after God has performed His work of regeneration, but it is not true that after regeneration the child of God converts himself. Jeremiah 31:8 teaches us the correct relationship, 'Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the LORD, my God. . . .'

Taken from "Adult Conversion"
by Rev. Ron Van Overloop,

VOLUME XLX NUMBER 5

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD
President - Dale Vink
Vice-President -
Secretary - Julie Huizinga
Treasurer - David Reitsma
Librarian - Beth Bartelds
Vice-Secretary - Mary Hanko
Vice-Treasurer - David Hop
Youth Coordinator - Dan Schipper
Spiritual Advisors - Rev. Slopsema
Rev. Dykstra

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF
Editor-in-Chief - David Harbach
Associate Editors - John Faber
Roger Gritters
Bruce Miedema
Rich Peterson
News Editor - Lora Bouwkamp
Finance Manager - Brian Kuiper
Secretary - Joan Buiter
Lisa De Young, Pam Dykstra, Kristen Engelsma, Thelma Westra

EDITORIAL OFFICE: David Harbach, 3162 - 16th Ave., Hudsonville, MI 49426-9635

Address Change: POSTMASTER
Joel Zandstra, 6157 Balsam Dr.
Hudsonville, MI 49426

Second Class Postage paid at Jenison, MI (USPS046-840)

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS;
Lora Bouwkamp, Mrs. H. Brands, Mr. Dewey Engelsma, John Faber, Roger Gritters, Rev. C. Hanko, Prof. H. Hanko, Rev. J. Heys, Bernie Kamps, Rev. D. Kuiper, Bruce Miedema, Rich Peterson, Rev. C. Terpstra

NEWS EDITOR: Lora Bouwkamp
4820 Eisenhower Dr.
Hudsonville, MI 49426

EDITORIAL POLICY
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.

If any material of **Beacon Light** is reprinted by another periodical, we will appreciate your giving the source.

The **Beacon Lights** is available on cassette tape. Write to Dirk Westra 6100 Bauer Rd., Hudsonville, MI 49426

Scholarship Fund Treasurer:
Howard Pastoor, 0-3829 16th Ave.
Grandville, MI 49418

COLLECTIONS: Brian Kuiper
4431 Riverbend Dr. S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504
Subscription Price $5.00
SUBSCRIPTION DUES:
MICHIGAN: Angie DeZwarte, 1501 Maderia SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504
OUTSIDE MICHIGAN:
Pam Dykstra, 2846 Vermont, Grandville, MI 49418

Contents

Editor's Notes : May 1991 - Dave Harbach 1
Adult Conversion - Rev. R. Van Overloop 3
Coming To The Reformed Faith - Tony LaCount 6
Coming To The Faith - Milo Meyerdirk 8
The Lord Moves In Mysterious Ways - Mrs. Ellamae Jansma 9
ECCLESIASTES LETTER #11
Refuting Refutations Of God's Control - Mrs. Carol Brands 11
TO LOSE THE BATTLE AND WIN THE WAR
Chapter IV - The Basic Issue (1) - Prof. H. Hanko 14
Right To Life Support Texts - David Dykstra 17
Walking With God - Rhoda Zylstra 20
FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY
Standing In Awe Before Our God - Rev. J. A. Heys 21
Church News - Lora Bouwkamp 24

EDITOR'S NOTES MAY 1991

by David Harbach

The Beacon Lights staff has seen in recent months what effect increased postage rates and production costs can have on our monthly balance. We did anticipate extra costs in production and so we were not alarmed by those increases. We have seen a generous support from our churches and individuals. We are thankful to our covenant God for the evidence of His love shown to us from our churches. We covet your prayers and continued support. The increase in postage costs and cover costs, however, in the past several years, and also maintaining an inventory of books has produced a decreasing balance in the past few months.

Promoting the sale of our books is one way of increasing the balance each month. We plan to do that in the next few months. This action alone, however, will only partly offset the decreasing monthly balance. To turn our decreasing balance to a break even or increasing balance, we are increasing the subscription to the Beacon Lights to $7.00 a year starting June 1. We believe this action now will make it possible for the young people's magazine to

be produced and mailed for the next several years without any increase in the subscription price. Several years ago the price of a yearly subscription went from $3.00 to $5.00 so we do think that an additional $2.00 now for a yearly subscription is appropriate.

Did you enjoy Rev. Heys' article last month on "Remembering Our Creator" that he wrote in "From the Pastor's Study"? You found out from that article that there are many important truths for us to remember that help us in each day of our lives as young people who work in the world or at home. His article for this month "Standing In Awe Before God" also provides an important truth that will help us. He compares a few Bible translations of several important passages of scripture to show that honoring God by using scripture's language is standing in awe before Him.

Prof. Hanko explains further the background for the beginning of our Protestant Reformed Churches in his series on the Janssen Controversy. "To Lose The Battle And Win The War, Chapter IV, The Basic Issue," begins to answer the question why the doctrine of common grace was not condemned by the Christian Reformed Church when it condemned Prof. Janssen. The staff is grateful to Prof. Hanko for giving us a clear picture that shows to us the beginning of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Conversion to the Reformed faith is the basis for the feature articles in this issue. Rev. Van Overloop provides an explanation of what is meant by "conversion" and in particular "adult conversion." I find this important for young people because you will be working out in the world. How you act in that world and how you give an answer to those who ask you about your faith may be used by God to draw His own to the Reformed faith. And to show you that can be so, the staff asked three of our members to write about how they came to the Reformed faith. I thank Rev. Van Overloop for his excellent article. I thank Tony LaCount and Milo Meyerdirk from our Grandville Church and also Mrs. Ellamae Jansma from our Hudsonville Church for writing their life history concerning their coming to the Reformed faith. As one title puts it "The Lord Moves In Mysterious Ways."

A special thank you to Rhoda Zylstra for sending in a poem "Walking With God." I enjoy receiving poems that emphasize spiritual truths. Many of us have taken walks to view the beauty of God's creation. What that creation says to us about God is also a reason why we cast all our cares upon Him.

Ecclesiastes Letter #11 is in this issue. Carol Brands finishes Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 with this letter, "Refuting Refutation of God's Control." She points out that Solomon answers such questions as why men can't find meaning in their labor? What are the things that God does? The next letter will be found in the next issue. Thank you Mrs. Brands for sharing your Ecclesiastes letters with us.

Since "Right To Life Supports Texts" concerns the same topic found in recent articles in the Beacon Lights, I have included it with this issue. Mr. David Dykstra of our Faith Church in Jenison, Michigan writes, "I really don't know if the enclosed article would

be classified as a reply, response, or whatever. . . ." I'll leave that up to the authors of the previous articles on RTL to decide. I appreciate the kind brotherly spirit found in these articles. In this way we are able to discuss issues where we have different views so that we receive a benefit. Thank you Dave.

Lora keeps us abreast of the Church News. Bulletin clerks are reminded to send her their church's bulletins every month so that the news is plenty and recent.

Take note, future ministers and teachers, of the ad from the Protestant Reformed Scholarship Fund Committee. Applications can be obtained from Jim Holstege and are due by June 1, 1991. The theme for this year is, "How should the old paths spoken of in Jeremiah 6:13-17 be preached and taught?" We look forward to printing some of your articles in future issues.

ADULT CONVERSION

by Rev. Ronald Van Overloop

A young mother was working alongside a Christian girl who is in her upper teens. A day after the young Christian had spoken of her position against abortion, the young mother approached the teenager to ask for more information about the young girl's God and church.

This began a series of conversations between the two, which were punctuated with questions. Initially, the questions were about some of the most basic and fundamental truths of Scripture. The questions were often very difficult to answer because of the almost total lack of Biblical knowledge on the part of the young mother. Some of the questions dealt with the most profound of subjects, and the answers had to be simple without being simplistic and incomplete.

This was not easy for the Christian young girl. As the saying goes, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is week," so she was willing but felt very inadequate for the responsibility which God had so evidently placed in her path. She prayed fervently. In her prayers before her meetings she asked God to guide her by His Spirit, as He promised, so she would have the right words. And after her conversations she would pray for God to bless her feeble efforts unto the spiritual awakening and development of the woman who was obviously searching. She frequently sought the assistance of her parents and of pastors. She was driven to study diligently God's Word.

God graciously answered in a positive way the prayers of the teenager and of those whom He used to assist her. Every evidence

of regeneration and conversion can be seen in the life of the young mother. Her thirst for knowledge of the truth continues. Though her husband remains unbelieving her interest in the truth steadily increases. It seems that she cannot attend worship services and Bible studies frequently enough. Hundreds of questions were and still are being asked, and every effort is made to answer them Biblically.

* *

I would dare to say that such a real life experience might seem most extraordinary to most who read this.

Should it?

* *

What is conversion?

The word "conversion" means "to turn or to be turned, a change of direction." The word is used spiritually to refer to a cessation of willful sin and a commitment to godliness, howbeit imperfectly.

According to the Heidelberg Catechism it consists of "the mortification of the old, and the quickening of the new man.

This spiritual activity of conversion takes place in two ways. First, there is the initial turning around, at which time one realizes that they are a sinner and in desperate need of forgiveness and they find that forgiveness in the only Savior, Jesus Christ. This initial conversion can be sudden and instantaneous, but often takes place gradually, both in the case of an elect, regenerated child of God who is raised by godly parents in the Church (more gradual), and in the life of that elect person who comes to know God and His Christ at a later age (less gradual). This initial conversion is the opening of the eyes of one's spiritual understanding and the opening of one's spiritual ears to the voice of the Shepherd as He speaks through the true preaching of the Word.

And second, there is the on-going activity of repentance and sanctification in the life of the believer. After initial conversion, it must be said that conversion or repentance is an on-going process which never ends.

How does conversion take place? No man can convert himself.

Conversion in its beginning, as well as in its progress, until its completion in the future life, is the work of God (Ezek.36:36,37). It is the fruit of the call of God coming through the gospel and the inward working of the Holy Spirit. Conversion takes place after God has performed His work of regeneration, but it is not true that after regeneration the child of God now converts himself. Jeremiah 31:8 teaches us the correct relationship, "Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the LORD, my God. "Turn Thou us unto Thee, 0 LORD, and we shall be turned" (Lamentations 5:21).

That having been said, conversion is also an activity of the regenerated sinner. He is sorry for and hates his sin and rejoices in Christ and delights to do God's will. Gospel preaching ever brings the responsibility to man to turn, to repent and to believe. Whereas only some who hear this call of the Gospel have the ability to obey, all must and are responsible to do so.

* *

Within the true church, adult conversions are not the norm. This is because God not only usually gathers His people in the line of

continued generations (Genesis 17:7; Acts 2:49), but also usually uses the faithful nurturing of praying and godly parents to bring the young elect child soon to the consciousness of personal sin and salvation in Jesus.

On the other hand, the initial conversion of an elect, regenerated adult child of God is the norm outside the sphere of the true church. In those locations where the church is false or where there is no church, then the norm is adult conversion. For example, when the gospel of Christ was preached by the apostles, they saw many adult conversions. These were then baptized (along with their households) as a sign of their having been turned around spiritually.

* *

Christian young people who have been raised within the true church do not often think about adult conversions. (It is hoped that they do think about other spiritual things.) For them the incident mentioned at the beginning of this article will be a happy but unusual one. For them the norm of their experience is the gradual coming to the consciousness of salvation while a child.

It is probably also true that in their minds skepticism attends the subject of adult conversion. This is because it seems that nine times out of ten the context of the adult conversion is questionable. By the "context" I mean that the theology is Arminian and the testimony of the "conversion experience" is more likely to praise the person than God.

I would contend that the Christian young people raised within the true church, should have a better perspective of adult conversion. This perspective begins by realizing that the Scriptures show that adult conversions do take place. We must be careful not to let the wrong or bad use of adult conversions cause us to conclude that they all are either wrong or of no concern to us.

It is often the case that when we get a job among the work force of this world that we are likely to meet those who are unconverted. Then there is an increase in the possibility of our having humbly to give an answer to those who ask of us a reason for our godly attitude, conduct and language.

Could it be that among the reasons why we do not see many adult conversions is because of the lack of a godly life on our part?

Could it be that among the reasons why we do not see many adult conversions is because of the lack of a readiness to give a reason for our godliness?

Could it be that among the reasons why we do not see many adult conversions is because of the sin of not exercising love for our neighbor by praying for opportunities to speak to them of the balm of Gilead?

How great is the advantage of affliction; for now indeed that we are in the enjoyment of peace we have become supine and lax, and have filled the Church with countless evils; but when we were persecuted we were more soberminded and more earnest and more ready for church attendance and for hearing.

- John Chrysostom (c. A. D. 344-407)

COMING TO THE REFORMED FAITH

by Tony LaCount

Whenever I look back and reflect on how I came to the Reformed faith I can only marvel and stand in awe of the power of the living God. Like the shepherd in Psalm 23 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Growing up in the New England town of Nashua, New Hampshire I did not know the God I now serve. Our family didn't attend church on the sabbath. Sunday was a day of pleasure, a day off from school or work, so we usually spent the day watching sports or playing outside. It wasn't until I was a senior in high school that I had an interest in spiritual things. I was dating a girl who was Roman Catholic. She thought that I should attend a teen-encounter so that I could get more familiar with her faith. A teen-encounter is a weekend religious retreat where teenagers are encouraged to practice their faith in prayer, fellowship, good works and Bible study. Her father offered to pay for the weekend and so I decided to go to see what it was all about.

I remember reading passages from the New Testament concerning Christ and how he died on the cross for our sins. We had discussions on certain texts about the death and resurrection of Christ. It was the first time in my life that I realized that I was a sinner and I needed to be made right with God, I needed to be born again.

My life seemed to be directed toward a different path after that weekend. I started going to church and read my Bible every day. I would take it to work and read it during break. I continued to go the the Roman Catholic church because I didn't know anything else, and because my friends went there.

Upon entering the Air Force in 1980, roughly a year after the teen-encounter, I was sent to R.A.F. (Royal Air Force) Chicksands, England for my first assignment. It was in England when I left the Roman Catholic church. As my knowledge of God's word continued to grow, I realized that there were serious errors in Rome's doctrines. Being convinced of the truth of scripture I departed from Rome. This happened at the end of my tour in England.

In 1983 I left England and was sent to Fort Meade, Maryland. During the next three years I attended the Protestant services at the chapel on base. The chaplain was a Baptist and the gospel Arminian. I experienced a lot of

growth spiritually during this time mainly because of an evangelistic organization called the Navigators. I got involved in Bible study, prayer, scripture memory, fellowship and witnessing. The Lord blessed me with some Godly friends who took the time to help me grow in the faith.

After my tour in Maryland I was sent to the small island of Okinawa, Japan for one year. I continued to go to the Protestant services and even ran into some men who were involved with the Navigators. There were no major changes in doctrinal beliefs up to this point and I still had not even heard of the Reformed faith. This would change however during my tour in Hawaii.

I left Okinawa in July of 1987 and arrived on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, not knowing that this would be my last tour in the Air Force. I didn't attend the services at the chapel any longer, but decided to go to an Independent Fundamental church off base. The gospel was still Arminian and the worship service similar in form. My wife and I got quite involved in the church as she was secretary to the pastor and I led the youth group.

Another year had past without the knowledge of Reformed faith, but something exciting started to take shape. The Lord used knitting class to introduce us to a couple who eventually steered us to the Protestant Reformed Churches of America. My wife took the class at a high school where she met a young lady by the name of Margaret. My wife and I became close friends with Margaret and her husband Jim. It was Jim who encouraged me to take another look at the doctrines of grace. He shared with me plenty of passages, but the one that I couldn't run away from was Romans 9. For the next couple weeks my wife and I discussed these passages and realized that we were wrong in our beliefs. We saw the foolishness of Arminianism for the first time.

Our last year on Oahu was full of excitement and anticipation because of our new understanding of God's grace in salvation. But there was a price we had to pay because of our new beliefs. We were dismissed from our congregation and lost many friends and were misunderstood as Hyper-Calvinists. There were no churches that we knew of on the island that preached what we now believed. Excitement came however when we learned about a small denomination that preached the truth of God's sovereignty. Jim told us of the PRC after he came in contact with them through Harold Camping, the president of Family Radio in Oakland, California. Camping mentioned the denomination in a telephone conversation with Jim. For the next six months my wife and I along with Jim and Margaret read all the literature we could get a hold of from the PRC.

The end of my tour in Hawaii was coming to a close and my wife and I realized that we had to make a decision concerning my career in the Air Force. We knew that if I stayed in until retirement we would spend the next eleven years going to churches that preached something other than what we now believed. Trusting the Lord we decided not to re-enlist in the Air Force, but to move back to the mainland and settle down and to find a church where we could worship the one true God.

Well it's been just over a year now since we arrived in Grandville

and looking back we thank God that he brought us here by His mighty hand. We rejoice in the one who said, "I will fulfill the desire of them that fear me: I also will hear their cry, and will save them."

COMING TO THE FAITH

by Milo Meyerdirk

I have been asked to explain how I came to the PR churches and why, since I came from a non church going family in southwest Minnesota. Up until I was about 20 I had only been in 2 churches in my life. I didn't really feel like I was missing anything by not going to church but I did always feel like something was pulling me. It is almost like I was searching for something but didn't know what. Maybe it was because I came from a family where love was never shown.

I came to Grand Rapids in 1976 after being laid off from a job doing road construction. I had a sister and brother in law working at Keeler Brass and they got me an application and I got in there. While at Keeler I worked with a girl that was PR and after about a year started dating her. She asked me if I was interested in going to church and I didn't really know if I was or not. Anyway, I did go and kept going and eventually took classes with Rev. Van Baren and Rev. Hanko. I was still kind of mixed up during all of this over the fact that I expected these people to be perfect and couldn't seem to understand how they could call themselves Christians and for the most part weren't living any different than I had up to the time I started going to church. After about a year I didn't know if I believed what I was being told or if I even wanted to belong to the PR church.

So I started going to a Mennonite church where I thought the people were a lot closer, but after I was there awhile I discovered they almost had to be closer because there were only a few families. After going there 8 months I really missed the PR preaching and being told what awful sinners we are. Anyway, I started going to Southeast by myself and took a class with Rev. Haak. I eventually became baptized on Dec. 4, 1983.

Now after several years I stand in awe at why God chose an evil sinner like me. I have also learned that just because I call myself a Christian that I am still sinful and can't be throwing stones at anyone else because they aren't living up to the standards I think they should.

THE LORD MOVES IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS

by Ellamae Jansma

I was asked to write a form of testimony of coming to the Protestant Reformed Church from the Christian Reformed Church. My first reaction was "Oh, I can't do that. That isn't our style of life."

I contemplated that effort and the longer I did the more I began to put my feelings and thoughts on paper. First, though I have to go into a little background detail.

I was brought up in the Protestant Reformed Church. I left in 1953 with my parents. That was a very traumatic time in my life. It left me very bitter and resentful towards the PR church.

I married in 1956. My husband belonged to the Christian Reformed Church all of his life. He was a very staunch and faithful member. I couldn't begin to ask him to attend my church because it was in such a state of turmoil. It wasn't even questionable where we would go.

We had many wonderful years in the CR church. However, I never did give up my belief on common grace. I thank God for that. We raised four children who all professed their faith and joined the church.

As time moved on the church began to change. It became quite liberal in a lot of ways and issues. My husband being conservative, became very unhappy and dissatisfied.

After our last child married we began to attend different conservative CR churches. That became very tiring and I sort of rebelled. I wanted to stay in my own church. I was comfortable there, had my friends, etc.

My husband and I disagreed on many things. I know he was right and I just wouldn't give in. Satan had such a hold on me. I wouldn't acknowledge that fact that my husband was the spiritual head of my home. When you don't have spiritual unity in the home both are very unhappy. I prayed earnestly because this was a real dilemma. When we pray we know God hears us. I too began to see the changes and issues in a whole different light. I also realized when I read Ephesians 5:22-23 "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husband, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church."

You know, young people, when you submit your life unto the Lord God does bless you and also moves in mysterious ways. It was evident in my life.

Somehow the Lord put it in my heart to attend the Hudsonville PR Church (A church I never thought

I'd enter again in my entire life). We heard the precious doctrinal and catechism sermons. Something kept drawing us back. That was the beginning of our becoming members. We thank our heavenly Father each day. Now we can discuss sermons and spiritual things again with unity.

I Cor. 2:7 "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."

Young people, when you become dissatisfied and critical of your church, just count your blessings for a church which holds fast to the pure doctrinal preaching of the infallible Word.

ATTENTION STUDENTS!

The Protestant Reformed Scholarship Fund Committee is taking applications for scholarships to be awarded to future Protestant Reformed ministers and teachers for the 1991-92 school year. Each applicant must also submit an essay of at least three hundred words, answering this question: "In the light of Jeremiah 6:13-17, with all the false prophets around us saying, 'peace, peace when there is no peace', how should the old paths spoken of here be preached and taught?" For an application blank, contact:

Jim Holstege,
1459 Spaulding SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

The application, accompanied by the essay, must be returned by June 1, 1991.

ECCLESIASTES 3:9-15
LETTER #11
Refuting Refutations of God's Control

by Mrs. H. Brands

Today we will try to finish ECCLESIASTES 3:1-15, the second of the three parts in which Solomon responds to his own search for meaning by saying that there is meaning but that it is found only in God. You will remember that we already went through the main idea of these fifteen verses, spending two letters on verses 1-8. Verses 9-15 finish this section, "God Controls Everything to be Beautiful in its Time". It's only seven verses but . . . seven verses can make a long letter!

Before we look at these verses one by one, I'll summarize the main thoughts they contain. I think this will make it easier to study them one by one.

Verses 9-10. Solomon asks again his theme question: "What profit is there in labor? Is there profit?" Then he reminds us of its importance: "Answering this question is man's basic need!"

Verse 11. Faith answers this question, "Yes! There is meaning because God has made everything beautiful in its proper place!"

Yet, because man knows there must be <u>eternal</u> value to labor while he is limited to time and space, man is unable to discern just where this beauty lies.

Verses 12-13. The good is not found in the things themselves but rather in joyfully using all things and all events to serve God...and this is possible only as a gift from God.

Verse 14. God has done things so perfectly that

(1) all things will last forever, they honestly will! and

(2) man cannot possibly improve on anything at all!

This truth should make men fear God!

Verse 15. Furthermore, we don't have to fear that we missed something by not living in a different time and age. Everything, with slight variations, occurs in every age over again. And be sure that God will judge all things, both past and present and future! This might be enough to make the verses clear already but, to make sure, we'll also go through them one by one.

(3:9-10) "What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboreth? I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it."

Solomon has just given his

poetic overview of God's sovereign planning of everything that occurs in time. Now he plans to draw out the doctrines behind this beautiful trust in God. To introduce this doctrinal part, he repeats his theme question and reminds us of his search for an answer to that question. He is basically saying:

"In the light of what I've just said, let's ask our key question again: 'What profit is there in labor?' I have searched, remember, and have seen that labor is profitless to the sons of men!"

The expression "sons of men" always applies to the Godless world and so he's reminding us that those who labor apart from God find no meaning in their labor...and now he's going to say WHY it is that they find no meaning in their labor, since God has made everything beautiful.

(3:11a) "He hath made everything beautiful in his time..."

This reviews what verses 1-8 taught us. By faith we know there is meaning to life and to work because God has ordained everything without error, beautifully.

(3:11b) "...also he hath set the world (or, eternity) in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."

Why can't men find meaning to their work?

REASON 1: <u>They are limited to their experiences in this life whereas to find meaning they must see everything from the viewpoint of eternity</u>, a truth they realize but an obstacle they cannot overcome. How can I, from one place on earth and from one point in history, observe all that happens from beginning to end? I cannot!

(3:12) "I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice and to do good in his life."

Why can't men find meaning in their labor?

REASON 2: <u>The good is not found in the labor itself or in things themselves but in joyfully using these things to serve God and the neighbor!</u>

(3:13) "And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God."

Why can't men find meaning in their labor?

REASON 3: <u>Enjoyment in labor is God!s gift!</u> Two men may be in identical situations; one hates his labor while the other enjoys it . . . because God gave him the gift of enjoyment.

(3:14) "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it (i.e., added to it) nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before Him."

Question: What are the things that God does?

Answer: He does all things on this earth (cf. verses 1-8).

Question: How can these earthly things last forever?

Answer: God gives to each small event an eternal value which will lead to His eternal praise.

Question: Cannot <u>anything</u> be improved upon?

Answer: Men cannot improve anything, anywhere, either by adding to it or by taking away from it. (What a statement of beautiful faith!)

Question: How will unGodly men respond to this truth?

Answer: They shall fear God! If they fail to learn this fear in this life and repent of their unGodliness, then they shall be taught this fear in eternity as they face God Himself...but they <u>shall</u> fear

God!

(3:15) "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be, hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."

Men should fear God for what He is in Himself and also for His wonderful works—that was taught in verse 14. Now Solomon adds that they must fear Him also for themselves because they will face Him as Judge. All ages repeat the same sins, over and over, and God will judge not only what is happening today but everything anyone has ever done throughout all the ages.

Thank God that He humbles us as His children now, today, so that we learn in this life to reverence and love Him! Thank God that we will not be judged as the "sons of men" but as those who are found in Christ, for whom He has died! Thank God also that, because of His gift of salvation to us, we are able to see in a small way how everything He does is beautiful and that therefore we can also find joy in our work!

Letter #11. Theme: ECCLESIASTES 3:9-15:

"Refuting Refutations of God' s Control"

Questions:

1. How does 2:9-15 fit with 2:1-8?

2. Give Solomon' s three reasons why men (without Revelation) cannot find beauty and meaning in their labor.

3. From verse 14:

a What characterizes all God's works?

b. What is the purpose of all God's works?

4. What does it mean, "and God requireth that which is past?" Can you give an example?

CONVENTION NEWS

This year Byron Center Protestant Reformed Church is sponsoring the **1991 Young People's Convention.**

It will be held **August 5-9**
At Grand Valley State University.

The topic of our convention is:
"Reformed Young People Living In The Last Times".

To Lose The Battle and Win The War

The Janssen Case
Chapter IV
The Basic Issue (1)

by Prof. H. Hanko

In our last article, we called attention to the fact that the same views which Prof. Ralph Janssen taught in the Seminary and for which he was deposed are now views which are taught openly and freely throughout the church of which Dr. Janssen was a member.

In inquiring how it was possible that the Christian Reformed Church openly teaches today what it condemned less than 70 years ago, we stated that the chief reason for this was to be found in the doctrine of common grace, a doctrine which Janssen appealed to in defense of his views on Scripture, but a doctrine which was not condemned when Janssen was condemned. It was, rather, officially declared to be the truth of the Scriptures by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church two years after Janssen's deposition.

This fact is important. It is important primarily because the history of our own Protestant Reformed Churches is inseparably connected with the whole common grace controversy. The spiritual fathers of our denomination were put out of the Christian Reformed Church for repudiating common grace and for refusing to sign "the three points."

If, therefore, common grace was also an important part of the Janssen controversy, the whole history of the Janssen controversy is part of the history of our churches. It is for this reason that it is so important for us to understand it. We must know our own history and understand it well if we are to be faithful to our heritage.

The facts are simply these. When Janssen was accused of teaching views of Scripture which were contrary to Scripture itself and our Reformed Confessions, Janssen defended himself by appealing to the doctrine of common grace. Although Janssen was condemned and deposed by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in 1922 for his views of Scripture, the Synod never said one word about common grace.

The result was that, immediately after the controversy over Janssen's teachings was settled, common grace became an issue in the Christian Reformed Church and controversy began to swirl around that doctrine. All this controversy came to a head at the Synod of 1924 where the Synod

adopted "the three points." As a result of adopting the three points, three ministers were put out of the church: Revs. Hoeksema, Ophoff and Danhof. That formed the beginning of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

This history leads us to two questions. The first is: How did Dr. Janssen connect the doctrine of common grace with his denial of the infallible inspiration of Scripture? The second is: Why did not the Christian Reformed Church, when it condemned Janssen, also deal with (and condemn) the doctrine of common grace?

We are going to answer the last of these questions first. After we have answered that question, we will discuss the question of how Janssen connected common grace with his denial of Scripture.

The question of how Janssen defended his views on Scripture with the doctrine of common grace is the most important one. And it is most important because I am convinced that the reason why Janssen's views are widely taught in the Christian Reformed Church today is that, although the Christian Reformed Church condemned Janssen's views on Scripture, it did not condemn his views on common grace; rather, two years later it adopted them. Because common grace was adopted by the Christian Reformed Church, that denomination faces the growing problem of dealing with the same heresies of Janssen which now are taught in the church.

But first things first.

Why did not the Synod deal with Janssen's common grace, but only with his denial of Scripture?

In order to understand this strange phenomenon, we have to know a little bit of the history that was involved in the whole issue.

Common grace, in one form or another, had been taught in the Christian Reformed Church from its beginning in 1847. This was chiefly because common grace had also been taught by the churches of the Afscheiding, those churches that had left the State Church in the Netherlands in 1834 under the leadership of De Cock, Van Raalte, Brummelkamp, and others. Because most of the early immigrants to this country who formed the Christian Reformed Church were of the Afscheiding, they quite naturally took common grace with them into this country.

In addition to this, Dr. Abraham Kuyper left the State Church in 1886. After he became prime minister of the Netherlands at the head of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, he too began to teach common grace, and, in fact, wrote a three-volume work on the subject. Although his views of common grace were somewhat different from those of the people of the Afscheiding, they too came into this country and into the Christian Reformed Church when immigrants came to America from Kuyper's churches in the Netherlands.

So common grace was rather generally taught throughout the denomination.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that common grace was fixed doctrine in the Christian Reformed Church. It had received no systematic development, nor had it become, by any ecclesiastical decision, official teaching. It was, so to speak, just there; it, like Topsy, just "growed;" but it was, emphatically, an open question in the churches. That is, no one was bound to believe and teach the

doctrine by virtue of the binding character of ecclesiastical decision. The majority accepted the doctrine without much thought. But a minority never really did believe it. Both found a congenial home in the Christian Reformed Church.

In 1918 Rev. Herman Hoeksema was appointed editor of a column in The Banner entitled, "Our Doctrine." Not very long after he began writing in this column he began to discuss the whole question of common grace, especially as that was taught by A. Kuyper.

At first, Rev. Hoeksema did not hesitate to speak of a certain common grace, but he insisted right from the start that this "so-called common grace" meant nothing more than that the reprobate in the human organism shared in the blessings given the elect in special grace.

But even then, this share in the blessings of special grace was an outward sharing, an outward blessing, while inwardly these very blessings were a curse. They could, so Hoeksema argued, be nothing else but a curse because the total depravity of the sinner made it impossible for him to have any receptivity at all in his heart for the grace of God.

There were those in the church, even at this early date, who were defending common grace under the name of Calvinism, and Hoeksema took the time in his articles in The Banner to warn that these men were advocating a Calvinism which would establish an alliance between the church and the world. And he insisted that "in this common grace a sphere is created in which the children of light and the children of darkness as such can find common ground, common principle, and work together in harmony.

These views of Hoeksema were challenged. In answer to his challengers, Hoeksema asked the question: Is there any favor, grace, or love to man outside of Christ? And, Does the natural man have any receptivity for this grace? He attacked common grace head on when he emphatically condemned the view that God took an attitude of favor towards the reprobate. He warned that common grace led to a spirit of broad-mindedness in the church, and attacked common grace from the viewpoint of its efforts to establish the kingdom here below before Christ comes.

This was all before the Janssen controversy. Hoeksema's position on common grace was, therefore, generally known in the churches. And yet, outside of those who publicly defended common grace, no one raised a voice against him and no one questioned his orthodoxy or commitment to the Reformed faith.

What may be on the morrow
Our foresight cannot see;
But be it joy or sorrow
We know it comes from Thee.
And nothing can take from us,
Where'ere our steps may move,
The staff of Thy sure promise,
The shield of Thy true love.

James D. Burn 1856

RIGHT TO LIFE SUPPORT TEXTS

by David Dykstra

The articles having to do with our involvement in the Right To Life movement found in the December, 1990 and March, 1991 Beacon Lights occasions me to write. I found the article entitled "Is Right To Life Right" by Karen Hanko stimulating and refreshing. Others must have had similar thoughts for it came as no surprise to see opposing views in the March, 1991 issue. The position Karen Hanko takes against RTL is not the most popular in Reformed circles today, not even amongst Protestant Reformed membership.

What I find interesting in the discussion is that both sides for the most part agree that RTL is a worldly, humanistic organization centered on moral reform. It is from this point of agreement, however, that both sides separate and veer off in opposite directions. The one side condemns our involvement in the organization while the other side promotes such involvement. Karen Hanko maintains the RTL is humanistic and therefore unscriptural and doomed to failure. To support RTL, she claims, would be an affirmation on our part to its humanistic creed. For her, Right To Life is not right.

Those who oppose Karen's view strongly endorse the use of RTL to fight the evil of abortion. They point out that because RTL is a non-violent organization and not affiliated with any religious group our involvement with RTL may be promoted. RTL can be used to assist us in our calling before God to assist the unborn and women in crisis. Scriptural support used for this position is I John 3:16-18; Matt. 25:34-40; Prov. 24:11, 12. (cf. March, 1991 issue)

For me, two of these passages present a problem in so far as how they relate to the discussion. Take, for example, I John 3:16-18. The apostle John uses explicit language in identifying whom he has in mind and our calling with respect to them. He speaks of laying down our lives for the "brethren". A little later John labels the one in need as a "brother". There should be no doubt that "brethren" and "brother" refer to brothers and sisters in Christ. They are spiritually one with us. This, of course, forces the question as to how this text fits into the discussion and relates to our involvement with RTL? Are we to view the women at abortion clinics as sisters in Christ? Are they spiritually one with us?

Someone may argue that one of God's elect could possibly be found at such a clinic, a lost sheep of the house of Israel. I concede

that could be a possibility. If that were so, are we allowed to approach such a one with anything other than the Word of God? If not, where would that leave our involvement with RTL? RTL could not assist us in our calling before God, nor would it be of any assistance to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

The second text with which I have difficulty in relating to the discussion is Matt. 25:34-40, 45, 46. Christ in this passage identifies the sick, imprisoned, hungry, thirsty, etc., as His "brethren". "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Again, to equate those who are spiritually one with us with those at an abortion clinic is a most serious mistake. And along with that, the sufferings of Christ's brethren is something quite different as compared to the sufferings of those at such a clinic. The sufferings of those at an abortion clinic may be directly related to the sin of adultery and now murder. God is visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children. The words of Christ, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me", does not fit the clinic. It therefore follows, I find no support here for our involvement with RTL. In fact, I don't see any relationship between the text and the whole issue under discussion.

But what about Proverbs 24:11, 12?

"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth he not know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his work?"

I believe we have something here. I am grateful that the Miedema's called upon this text to bear upon the discussion. This text is broader in scope than the texts from Matt. 25 and I John 3. It is as broad and inclusive as Lord's Day 40 of the H.C., Question & Answer 105-107. This text includes the neighbor, even the ungodly neighbor, who is drawn unto death and ready to be slain. It also stipulates our calling towards those found in such a predicament.

Who are those that are drawn unto death and ready to be slain? If we can identify who the inspired writer had in mind perhaps the remedy to prevent their hurt will not be hard to come by. Are they potential victims of famine, or of war, or of pestilence, or of earthquakes, or of some other natural disaster? Or did the inspired writer have in mind a potential victim of some armed bandit along the Jericho road? In the context of our discussion, we would apply it to the executions of unborn infants in the abortion clinic. Is that what the inspired writer had in mind? Close, very, very close.

Frequently, the inspired writer gives a close-up of those drawn unto death and those ready to be slain. In so doing he takes us to the house of the strange woman. What a pathetic sight! Men drawn unto death! Ready to be slain! One source of unwanted babies! And one source of abortion clinics too! "Her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life." Proverbs 2:18, 19. In chapter

5:3-11 the writer continues to draw attention to the same woman and those drawn to her house. "They mourn at the last", he writes, "when their flesh and their body are consumed". In chapter 7 he continues with more of the same and ends with "her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death". In chapter 9 we find the strange woman calling to the simple, to him that hath no understanding. "But he knoweth not", we read, "that the dead are there: and that her guests are in the depths of hell". How horrible! But how true.

Our calling is clear enough, but what's the remedy?

"If thou forbear to deliver them, . . . if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth he not know it? And shall he not render to every man according to his work?"

We stand before a very serious situation. The problem is deadly serious. Our calling is equally serious. But what about the remedy? The remedy had better be God's remedy and not one of our own concoction. Proverbs 14:27 has it in a nut shell, "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death". And to that remedy the RTL has shut its eyes, and for their remedy God has no eye. I suggest that our young people read and re-read the first nine chapters of Proverbs to acquaint themselves with God's remedy. Embrace God's remedy, witness against those who ignore or despise that remedy, and apply that remedy to yourself. Such is our calling before God.

In conclusion, how illuminating are the scriptures. They expose the sources of unwanted babies and abortion clinics. They pinpoint the sin of women in crisis and of those drawn unto death. But RTL has no way of escape.

Although you may not have your sword in hand poised to strike, if your tongue is armed in such a way as to speak evil against your fellow man, and if you have' offended him, that is a form of murder in God's sight. And even if you have not uttered a loud and clear offense, do not imagine that such will acquit you: for even if you have only mumbled under your breath, that is enough to make you guilty before God.

- John Calvin

WALKING WITH GOD

by Rhoda Zylstra

Tonight, as I was walking,
I met with God.
I walked, and talked with Him,
Telling my dreams and desires,
Sharing by burdens,
Only to shoulder them once more.

And then God spoke to me
In the chilled dark of night.
He spoke to me and said,
"Look around you! What do you see?"
As the crisp clean snow crunched
Beneath my feet,
I looked, and stood in wonder.
I gazed, and beheld the star-studded sky
like a wealth of diamonds
In a black velvet sea
Kissed by the sun,
Awe was in my eyes and face
As I beheld God's glory.

And God spoke, and said,
"Little child, I have made
That which you see.
My hands have placed each star
In the course I ordained for it.
I know when each fails, burnt out.
I am the Almighty God!
Are then these hands too weak
To carry your light load?
Give it to me - I will carry it."

Gratefully I yielded my many cares
Into His loving arms.
He took them.
He carried them.
And I said "Thank You,
My Lord, my Father,
Thank you."

From The Pastor's Study

STANDING IN AWE BEFORE OUR GOD

by Rev. John A. Heys

There are two verses in the book of Psalms, young people, that we must hold onto with heart, mind, soul and strength. The first verse in this group is Psalm 4:4 where we read: "Stand in awe and sin not: commune with your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah." (By the way, the word selah means pause, and is found only in the book of Psalms, and in the psalm that appears in Habakkuk 3. We find the word selah in verses 3, 9 and 13. It appears in songs and calls for respect and reverence for the truth just sung. The singing must stop because of the reverent and awe-some truth that was just sung.) We also find it in Psalm 33:8 where we read: "Let the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him."

The striking thing is that in the original Hebrew version of our Bible the words translated in both verses as awe are different Hebrew words. The word in Psalm 4:4 is in different passages of Scripture translated as be afraid, disquieted, and even as tremble. The word which we find in Psalm 33:8 is one that is also translated as fear, or be afraid. Certainly then the main thought is having respect and of doing with reverence the thing or act mentioned.

Now it is certainly true, young people, that we must stand in awe before God, because He is God and is God alone. Never, no never must we treat Him as though He is one of us, higher and more glorious than we but in the same class that we are. Of course He is a person, but He must never be considered to be a creature as we are. Even the high and holy angels fear Him in the sense of which we read in Revelation 4:8. There we read, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty which was, and is, and is to come." Also in Isaiah 6:1-3 we read concerning Him, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole world is full of His glory."

Then too, take note of the fact that in Nehemiah 8:6 we read: "And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up of their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord, with their faces to the ground." Surely we have here a tremendous manifestation of respect and awe before our God. They confessed Him to be far

above us and worthy of awesome respect and reverence.

God Himself in the law which He gave us through Moses commands us to live from the principle that He is God, that is, is infinitely above us and distinct from mankind. And the purpose of this article is to exhort us to have awesome respect for our God, and to warn against all disrespect that our flesh wants and often reveals. The holy, highly exalted God, Who created all things, and upon Whom all things depend, is often by man's actions and speech brought down from His glorious divine position, and He is presented to be on the same level as we are, only to a higher degree of that level. Awe and respect are minimized, and He is looked at and spoken to the way we would and do look at and speak to men when there is a way, which He has prepared, to stand in awe before Him and reverently speak to Him. And truly all of us must fight our flesh which does not have the respect for Him that we should have.

Let me explain to you young people how grieved I am by God's grace, because when I read some of our Bible translations our lofty God is presented on the same level with man, when it is possible and important to speak to Him and of Him as God alone, lofty and exalted above us.

In my hand I have a book with four different Bible versions of the New Testament. And if you look up Matthew 6:9 in the King James version, you will find the Lord's prayer which Jesus taught us presented thus. "After this manner pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." BUT in the Phillips translation we read: "Our heavenly Father, may your name be honored, May your kingdom come, and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Then in Matthew 7:22 in our King James Version we read: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" But in the Phillips translations and in the Revised Standard Version and New English Bible we read: "In that day many will say to me, Lord, Lord, didn't we preach in your name, didn't we cast out devils in your name and do many great things in your name?"

Yes, I know that men are also in the King James Version addressed and presented by the pronouns thee, thou and thine. Men today - but not nearly as much as in the past - will address a judge as "Your honor." But if we can make a distinction between men, and speak more respectfully to them, should we not do all we can to address and speak to and about God as lofty as our English language can do that?

Young people, do you for one minute think that when your soul enters heaven, and you are closer to God than you are now, that you will not show awe and respect above all the awe and respect that you revealed to your fellow men? When Jesus pretty soon raises your body from the grave, and with it your soul you are in the kingdom of heaven, do you think that you are going to treat Him as you do your fellow believers, and address Him as you speak to your fellow men? He is in Scripture presented to us as the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Remember that

verse quoted. The people answered, "Amen, Amen with lifting up of their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord, with their faces to the ground." Nehemiah 8:6.

What I cannot understand is that the Phillips translation does quote the Lord's Prayer thus: "Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done," and later "For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever." Why use the pronoun Thy here but nowhere else?

Look up Matthew 18:3, 4. There we find Jesus teaching us, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Once again, the Revised Standard Version and the New English Bible quote Jesus as saying on His cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Matthew 27:46. But the Phillips translation presents Jesus as saying, "Why did you forsake me?" And since today we do not use the words thee, thou, thy and thine when we speak to other human beings, is it not more reverent and humble to use the pronouns thee, thou, thy and thine when speaking to God?

God Himself, and get this, young people, in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament gave us different pronouns in Hebrew and Greek. You will in Young's and Strong's concordances find this, and that thee, thou, thy and thine are used less often, making a distinction between those who are addressed, and a difference between God and man. Express that in your prayers.

Our respect for God should grow. We ought to be careful and speak very, very humbly to Him. Do not approach Him as a creature, and realize that you are approaching Him, the holy God, as a sinful person yourself. Not only are we less than He is, as creatures approaching the Creator, but we sinners are speaking to the holy God! Look UP TO HIM not forward or backward, to the left or right!

In His Sermon on the Kingdom - this is a better classification than Sermon on the Mount - Jesus said: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." The Webster's dictionary even states that the word thou is presented as "formerly often used with special implication of familiarity but now replaced by you." Should not the word we use then, as we approach God, express our awareness of His loftiness? Familiarity means closeness but not here in the sense of equality. The word family is in that word familiarity. And God is our Father Who art in heaven. We are to approach Him as our Father not only, but as our Father high above us in heaven. Approach Him as children, not as one to whom you are equal.

We still sing that say. Why should we not speak that way? In the Ten Commandments He tells us to honor our father and mother. Should we not honor Him Who is our heavenly Father? When Jesus was born the angels said, "Glory to God in the highest." Should we not approach Him that way? Should we not approach Him differently than we do to sinful men? Honor God by using pronouns which He in Scripture uses only for some men and for Himself. Use words that denote a position higher than

the one which we occupy.

I do not have more space for this article, young people, but let me ask you to look up Matthew 18:3, 4. There we read: "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Turn also to James 4:10 where we read: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up." And in the fifth commandment we read: "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord Thy God giveth thee."

In John 5:23 we read this awesome truth: "That all men honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent Him." In Malachi 1:6 we find this profound truth: "A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?"

By all means read Revelation 4:10, 11 where we have this profound statement: "The four and twenty elders fell down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."

Honor God by using pronouns which He uses in Scripture for Himself. Use words that denote a position much higher than we occupy. When you pray, stand in awe before our God.

CHURCH NEWS

by Lora Bouwkamp

HUDSONVILLE MICHIGAN

We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Joel Zandstra and Mrs. Vern Haveman in the death of their father, Mr. George Ophoff.

Rev. Heys celebrated his 81st birthday, March 9.

Mr. and Mrs. Randy Van Overloop rejoice in the birth of Amber Lynn, March 2.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Wierenga rejoice in the birth of Trenton Lee March 7.

At his request the membership papers of Mr. Les Kamps were transferred to our Southwest PRC.

SOUTHEAST GRAND RAPIDS

Congratulations to Henry and Arlene Westhuis who were blessed

with a daughter, Lindsay Kate. Mike and Amy De Vries rejoice in the birth of Kiley Delaine. Baptism was administered March 31.

The consistory granted the transfer of membership for Ken and Cathy Rietema to Byron PRC.

We extend our sympathy to Herm and Louise Ophoff and family in the death of Herm's brother George.

We extend our sympathy to Dave and Diane Korhorn in the death of his father and to Gerald Korhorn in the death of his brother.

LYNDEN WASHINGTON

The sacrament of baptism was administered March 3 to Derek John the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Heystek.

Mr. and Mrs. Roger Blok were blessed with the birth of Kevin James.

Miss Heidi Vander Meulen made public confession of faith Feb. 24.

IMMANUEL CANADA

The membership papers of Allan and Janice Poettcker and 5 baptized children were received from First CRC of Lethbridge.

Mr. and Mrs. John Wierenga were blessed with the birth of a son. Baptism was administered Feb. 10.

HOPE WALKER

The baptism of Jonathan Jr., son of Jon and Lisa Langerak, and Kelsey Joy, daughter of Jeff and Kathy Terpstra was administered March 24.

We extend our sympathy to the Bloem and Veenstra families and Mrs. J. Kuiper in the death of their brother, Mr. Bert Korhorn.

At his request the membership papers of Ed Rietsma were transferred to our Southwest PRC.

The sacrament of baptism was administered Feb. 24 to Nicole Beth, daughter of Ken and Angela Elzinga and Daniel James, son of Steve and Brenda Langerak.

The consistory received the papers of Mr. Michael Bosveld (Australia).

FIRST GRAND RAPIDS

We extend our congratulations to Mrs. Frances Nouse, who celebrated her 88th birthday March 8.

The congregation expresses her Christian condolences to the Ophoff family in the death of Mr. George Ophoff.

We express our Christian sympathy to the family of Mr. Bert Korhorn.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Mrs. Henrietta Harkema who passed away.

Mrs. Jess Rietema celebrated her 86th birthday March 23.

SOUTH HOLLAND

We express our sympathy to Mel and Phyllis De Boer in the death of her brother.

The sacrament of baptism was administered to Anneke Jo, infant daughter of Joe and Marcia Van Baren.

SOUTHWEST GRAND RAPIDS

We express sympathy to Mr. Al Bleyenberg and Mrs. Ted Andringa in the death of Mr. Dick Bleyenberg from Edgerton PRC.

Mrs. H. Veldman celebrated her 82nd birthday March 30.

The membership of Mr. Henry Charles Westra has been received from Faith PRC.

Congratulations to Mrs. A. Deppe who celebrated her 85th birthday on March 18.