

1999 New Jersey Retreat

by Mark Feenstra

The young adults retreat sponsored by the Wycoff Protestant Reformed young adults of New Jersey was held May 24-26, 1999. The retreat was located at Harvey Cedars Bible Conference Center on Long Beach Island, New Jersey. About 40 young adults from the United States and Canada attended.

The retreaters arrived at the church on the preceding Saturday. After supper at the church, we spent the night at various homes of the congregation. Sunday morning, Rev. Terpstra preached on Acts 2:37-41, "Pentecost's Powerful Fruit." Sunday evening, Prof. Dykstra preached on John 14:18, "Jesus' Promise to Distressed Children." A singspiration followed the evening service.

Monday we took a coach bus from the church to New York City. There we rode the Circle Line Tour boat for a foggy view of Manhattan Island. After the boat tour, we were able to walk down 5th Avenue in the rain! Although we all were soaked, it was great fun. From New York City we traveled to Harvey Cedars. Once we arrived, we were able to move into our rooms. After settling in, we attended the first speech, which was by Prof. Dykstra. Since it was not quite a lecture or a sermon, Prof. Dykstra called it a "lermon." His "lermon" was entitled "Dating in the Light of Christ."

On Tuesday morning we split into discussion groups. The discussion topic was feminism. We discussed topics such as the role of women in the workplace and whether women should go to college. In the afternoon we headed for the beach. Aside from being quite windy, the weather was good. The ocean was numbing, but some braved the cold and swam anyway. In the evening we heard Rev. Terpstra's speech. Following Prof. Dykstra's example, Rev. Terpstra gave his speech a special name. Since Rev. Terpstra was giving a part lecture, part speech, he called it a "leech" so that it would stick with us. The "leech" was entitled "How does your light shine?"

Right after breakfast on Wednesday morning, we went to the chapel for Rev. VanderWal's speech. Rev. VanderWal looked back to his seminary days for a special name for his speech. He called it a Word of Edification, or WOE. This was a good name because the WOE was entitled "Into the Darkness of the World." After the speech, we joined our discussion groups. We discussed the meaning of love, dating a non-Protestant Reformed individual, and witnessing to the world. In the afternoon, we had the choice of going to the beach, visiting nearby Surf City, or touring the lighthouse. Wednesday night, while most went to bed after free time, some of us stayed up all night playing games so that we could watch the sun rise over the Atlantic Ocean!

We packed up and left Harvey Cedars on Thursday morning and rode the coach bus back to Wycoff. After saying our good-byes, most of us left for home on Thursday afternoon.

The retreat was very enjoyable and very spiritually edifying for everyone. We would like to thank the Wycoff congregation for all their hard work in putting this retreat together. ♦♦♦

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