

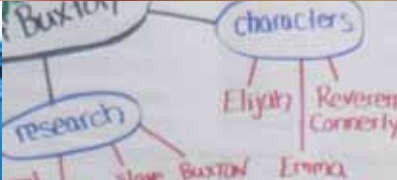


# Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

*"...tell the next generation..."* PSALM 78:4

MAY 2011



Where was I? I was at the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC) Annual General Meeting (AGM).

## Catch the Vision

*I was there and I caught the "vision".* BY LEN LODDER

What did I "catch"? The CCRTC has a lot of great things to offer. Our teachers, schools, boards, committees, and homes can benefit from the work done there. If we as Canadian and American Reformed people would accentuate the positives of having our own teacher education program, we would realize that it constitutes a most amazing blessing among us. Over the years it seems that we have allowed the more negative aspects, such as the lack of accreditation, the lack of recognition especially in certain areas, and other limitations to play far too large a role in determining our support or lack thereof for the CCRTC.

The two highlights of this year's meetings were the session on "Strategic Vision" and the "Ad Hoc Committee on Financial Stability" report. It's not that the other points on the agenda were uninteresting or unimportant, but these two discussions generated a lot of deep thinking about our goals as an institution of teacher education from a Reformed perspective. These discussions did lead us into the "vision." **The question is, "how, now, do we pass on this vision?"**





## from the PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER



With robins hopping gingerly in the snow and student-teachers frantically finishing assignments, one can be sure that the end of the winter semester is getting very close at Covenant Teachers College. We acknowledge the faithfulness of our God also in the seasons of an academic year. As Covenant College community we attest to his love and his presence on a daily basis – and we do so in deep gratitude as we are reaching the end of our 30th year of operation.



In this message from the principal, I would like to highlight one aspect of the program offered at the College. It is the component we refer to as field studies, also known as practice teaching or practicum placement. (You can find the details of such placements in the Guidelines for Associate Teachers posted on the College's website at <http://www.covenantteacherscollege.com>.) It seems fitting to write about it at this time, since all students at the College will finish the year with a practice teaching placement in schools. Attempting to ensure a smooth flow in the delivery of the course component of the program and to provide a seamless connection to classroom practice, we expect the practicum placement to serve as a final reminder of why we do what we do. We very much appreciate the schools' willingness to open their doors to the student-teachers, the associate teachers' willingness to open their classrooms and curricula, and the students' willingness to open their minds and hearts to our college students. The task of the associate teacher is to be a mentor who provides a model of exemplary teaching, while also making space for the student-teacher to

test his or her still-developing teaching wings. Somehow, the theory found in college textbooks and the instruction provided by lecturers have to become real in a classroom setting.

Throughout the course of their studies, the students at Covenant are given the opportunity to express preferences for practice teaching placements. Such preferences may include location or grade level. During the past year, student-teachers have been placed in Alberta and Manitoba, as well as in schools across Ontario. This includes Canadian Reformed Schools, Netherlands Reformed Schools, and Reformed schools such as Providence Collegiate (Komoka ON) and Heritage Christian School (Jordan ON). In addition, two students expressed a desire to embark on an extended international practice teaching placement in the bi-lingual program offered at the Gomarus College in Groningen, the Netherlands. When student-teachers express a preference for a grade level, Mr. Allard Gunnink, the placement coordinator, encourages them to move out of their comfort zone a little by trying out a grade level that

may not necessarily be their preferred choice. In the end, such experiences are well-received and allow the student-teacher to become more confident over time. For the faculty members who supervise the students while on placement, the theory-practice link is equally important: In addition to evaluating the performance of the student-teachers and providing feedback to the associate teachers, the opportunity to be in a school allows the instructors to stay in touch with “real classrooms” in which a real curriculum is implemented and “real students” are taught. Experiencing this first-hand allows instructors to take the observations back into the college classroom, and re-connect practice back to theory.

Also this year, several student-teachers have been placed in a resource classroom, where they experienced first-hand the interaction between a resource teacher and students who have been identified as students with special needs. During such a placement, a student-teacher becomes acquainted with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and with ways of implementing such a plan. In the setting of the resource classroom, the student-teacher also has the opportunity to test his or her planning and teaching skills in a whole new way. Working with only a few students at a time, carefully observing these students, as well as being keenly aware of the subtle nuances within the instructional process, often form the basis for a positive interaction between the teacher and the learners. The intricate details of the teaching-learning process stand out very clearly, and the positive, close-up experience of seeing students with special needs growing in confidence is a unique experience for our students who are learning to become teachers. Hopefully, it will help foster even greater empathy for the student with special needs once the student-teacher has become a classroom teacher. In short, all (student-) teachers ought to have the opportunity to experience the blessings a resource classroom (and mentor) can provide in helping young brothers and sisters develop their God-given talents.

**“ we expect the practicum placement to serve as a final reminder of why we do what we do.**

When looking back over the year, we also note with joy all the small things that help set the tone to make Covenant Teachers College the community it is. We think of the lunches our students (and faculty) prepare for each other on a regular basis, of the “theme week” activities, and of the social events such as treating the residents of Ebenezer Villa to an evening of story telling, “mad scientist demonstrations,” and music making. At times like this it is good to experience the camaraderie in which the bond of faith is clearly the glue that holds us together. As we are about to conclude our 30th year of operation, we look in trust and confidence to the future – knowing that the work done in Christ’s service and to his glory is not done in vain.

*...continued from cover*

## Strategic Vision Session

I will restrict myself to the Strategic Vision Session for this report.

Using the analogy of a building under construction with a strong footing, foundational walls, and the exterior brick wall, we considered where we are and where we want to go as an institution.

The really exciting part about this exercise was to determine how solid our footing and foundational walls are. The board of governors was unanimous in its desire to hold paramount the philosophy and practice of our College being based on the Word of God, as also summarized in the Reformed Confessions. This is not something to gloss over as a given. It is a remarkable gift of grace. On that basis we may, and do, continue to build.

In connection with the foundational walls, we considered the legal status of our College. In the past number of years we have been working hard at aligning our practices to the “professional” level of other institutions of higher learning. This has progressed well.

The exterior brick wall is the segment that generated the deepest thinking because it is about our educational and academic integrity both externally (our relationship with other schools of higher learning and governing bodies) and internally (our relationship and interaction with the schools we seek to serve).

Having gone through that exercise we were then asked to consider three possible scenarios: 1) we’ve done enough, let’s use the bricks we have and build an exterior wall that simply seeks to satisfy the “internal” (the relationship and interaction with the schools we seek to serve); 2) continue to work as we have been doing, using small steps to reach the goal of having a brick wall that serves both externally (our relationship with other schools of higher learning and governing bodies) and internally (our relationship and interaction with the schools we seek to serve); or 3) push hard to full academic recognition (an aspect of the external part of the brick wall) meanwhile maintaining the strong footings and working on the “internal” aspect of the brick wall as well.

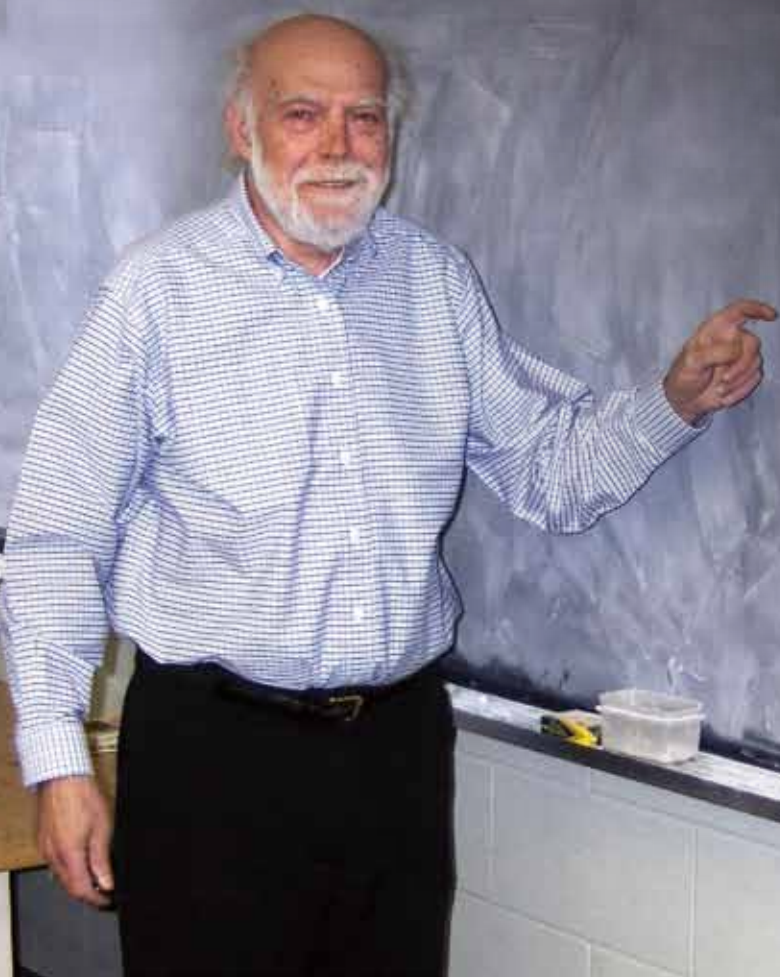
Which would you pick? Personally, I pick number three. It is definitely the most ambitious choice and it certainly will not be easy. As a matter of fact, it will be impossible without a lot of faithful support and commitment from our communities. I have witnessed the forward surge of the board of governors as we caught the vision.

**We need your help. Will you pass on the excitement?**

Mr. Horsman firmly believed in the benefits of hands-on math... I remember Mr. Horsman getting very excited about a grouping of marbles he had on the table in front of him. The lesson became much more interesting when all the marbles promptly rolled onto the floor. "Mr. Horsman's losing his marbles!" someone called out, much to the delight of her classmates. Mr. Horsman sheepishly crawled under the table to retrieve them. "I hope you can find them back", the class encouraged. Becoming flustered, Mr. Horsman went to stand but banged his head on the table. His marbles had been found (thankfully) but Mr. Horsman promptly left the classroom and returned a few minutes later with a big square of Kleenex on his bleeding head. (and he thought elementary students were rowdy..)

He used to make "bets" with us once in a while. He didn't believe the word stupid was in the Bible and promised a lunch to someone if she could prove it. She did and he kept his promise.

Mr. Horsman's classes were always very informal and relaxed, yet I always learned so much! We would often go off topic... for example, how peppermints could poison you if you ate too many, or how you could get rid of a tapeworm by putting an onion beside your bed to lure the tapeworm up your throat! Our conversations were fun and informative! Mr. Horsman would always humour us for a while and laugh when we came out with outrageous ideas. He made learning about boring things more fun.



It is appropriate to take time to say 'Thank You' as community, faculty, and alumni to Mr. Bill Horsman, one of the first instructors at Covenant College, who has officially retired from numerous years of service. Mr. Horsman was hired in 1981 as full-time lecturer, working alongside Mr. Tony Vanderven when Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College officially opened its doors. He worked there until 2004, at which time he unofficially retired, yet continued to assist in the work at Covenant as sessional instructor.

Since the College began, more than 200 students have crossed its threshold. Of course there are many memories for each of the alumni of their years at Covenant. Mr. Horsman is well-known for his dry sense of humour and rumbling laughter, for the twinkle in his eye, and his laid-back approach to class. If his twinkling eyes weren't the first to tell you that he was just about to laugh, then it was his twitching eye brows. We have put together a collection of 'memories' contributed by many of Mr. Horsman's former students. For the most part we have tried to keep the wording as it was submitted. We thank all those who took the time to share their memories.

# A TRIBUTE TO MR. BILL HORSMAN

"... ULTIMATELY WE TEACH AND LEARN IN ORDER TO SERVE GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOUR TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY. IF THE TEACHERS COLLEGE HAS PREPARED TEACHERS WHO SHARE THAT GOAL, IT IS ONLY BY GOD'S GRACE."

- BILL HORSMAN

Once upon a time, many years ago, there were two young ladies from BC who were attending Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers' College for one year. They enjoyed their time... However, Math class with Mr. Horsman was always cause for some anxiety and apprehension. Not because Mr. Horsman was so stern or intimidating, because that was hardly the case. **The reason for apprehension? The dreaded word, problems that Mr. Horsman loved to start every class with...** Math problems gave them great consternation.

One day, they just could not figure out the answer. He tried to ask some leading questions to help them along. He asked Darlene, "How far is it from your home in BC to Brenda's home?" She answered, "Thirty minutes." To their great surprise, Mr. Horsman burst out into the heartiest guffaws they had ever heard from him. Tears were even streaming from his eyes... With great difficulty and many more guffaws, he managed to stammer, "Who measures distance in time?!" Even after Darlene explained that because she is always late, distance doesn't matter, but time does, he could hardly contain himself... It took him a long time to get over this one! As for the two young ladies, well, Math problems are still not their favourite activity. **Congratulations on your retirement, Mr. Horsman!**

## He would admit when he was wrong.

Thank you, Mr. Horsman, for using your gifts and abilities to further the work of educating future teachers, seeking always to do that work to the glory of God and the promotion of His Kingdom. Your love for Reformed education was always in evidence as you worked on turning theories into practice while trusting in God's grace and rich promises to complete those goals. We entrust you and your future plans into His Hands, trusting that He will use the work we do in all our human weakness to accomplish His purpose and plan.

No one is quite clear on the details of this story, but many agree on the general idea... Mr. Horsman got locked in the janitor room when no one was around, so he resorted to standing on a pail, removing ceiling tiles, climbing into the rafters area, shuffling down the whole length of the hallway precariously through cobwebs and mice dung, ...to finally swing his long legs down into the library ...much to the surprise of Mrs. Van Halen-Faber, who had only just arrived!

In morning devotions in the library, he was almost always quietly bent over, writing or drawing on a piece of paper. And this, even while talking to someone. Mr. Horsman had a knack for teasing people he knew would most likely react in a funny way. He had a carefree approach to life that, at times, was enviable.

Science was never my strongest subject but a challenge for a science "lesson" was issued and I wanted to impress. Well, I am not sure if I impressed him but I am doubtful he will forget how I spent the better half of a class trying to get a boiled egg in a bottle using fire and the science of air pressure, barely managing to keep the "fire alarms" from going off due to the amount of smoke that was created by all the paper towels I burned... **The point is, he put up with it, he never made me feel silly or uncomfortable about my mistakes, but used it as a teachable moment** and encouraged us to be sure our "experiments" worked before trying them out in front of a class. **Thank you Mr. Horsman** for helping me see that Science is not scary but rather enjoyable and exciting to teach!

I always remember and appreciate that he emphasized process over content. For example, I remember that he came to our school my first year teaching to supervise a student and he came to chat with me to ask how it was going. I said that it was going well, but that I was finding all the information I had to learn in order to teach (esp Science + Social Studies) overwhelming at times. His answer to that was, "I'm sure you learned all that when you were in grade 4 ....." and not to put too much emphasis on the information I was passing on. And here I was an educated woman - fairly well rounded and all that - and I forgot most of the names of the different kinds of clouds and who came first to explore Canada and so on. (and didn't really need to know them in my adult life.)

## He did not like it when teachers considered their students to have learned well when all the students did was memorize a bunch of facts and definitions.

When the cold winter weather came upon us we would often times see Mr. Horsman making mysterious trips to the furnace room. Strange smelling smoke could be seen wafting out the door shortly after. Whatever was going on in there must have made him hungry because he would leave quietly, popping peppermints in his mouth as he went.

## Mr. Horsman taught us the importance of helping the students put head knowledge into practical knowledge.

The whiskers would start to twitch and smiling eyes would widen. Tapping fingers would beat out a deeper, more persistent rhythm on the table top. And the pen was suddenly still over artistic renderings of loops, swirls, dives and dots.

**And he would lean forward.**

The ponderous rhythm of the lesson with its adjectives and outcomes, Considering strategies, and skills, tactile teaching tools for arithmetic, It was halted in a moment of incredulity.

**And he would leap from his chair.**

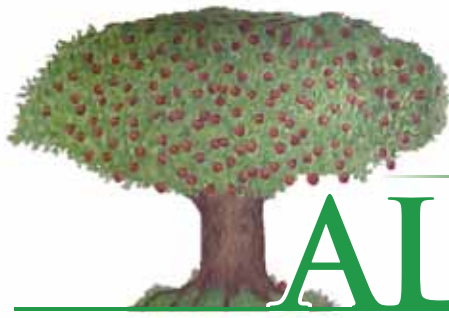
The chalk poised in his weathered hand above the blackboard, he would ask, "You've never heard of THAT before, don't remember being taught THAT?!" The chalk would scurry up, down, back and forth across the black in diagram or chart **And he would come alive!**

My ignorance and faulty memory of long ago lessons was the catalyst. I approached his world of logic, reason, with so much (too much) artsy passion and drama, My weakness was the reason for the fire in his eyes, the fervour in his gaze.

**And the quiet, wry professor became my teacher.**

- Thank you Mr. Horsman.

...One class he asked us to draw a scientist - not one of us drew a woman - he was illustrating something about perceptions of people and how they could affect their learning. **Mr. Horsman often had a creative way of bringing his lessons across.**



# CCRTC ALUMNINEWS

HOW IT WAS AND HOW IT IS

## Jon Kingma

CLASS OF 2009

In 2005, I made a life-changing decision: I was going to be a teacher. I immediately planned to attend CCRTC, but I wanted to obtain a university degree first. Since music is my deepest passion, I went to McMaster University and in 2008 I graduated with my BA in Music.



I then attended the one-year program at CCRTC. What a valuable year that was! Although I find my music education very helpful in teaching, it doesn't quite compare with the hands-on experience of the teachers college. (It was also during this year that my wife, Sharon (nee Ludwig) and I were blessed with the birth of our little girl, Avaiya.)

I graduated from CCRTC in May 2009, a little less than two years before writing this. Er. . . um . . . , wait a minute – it hasn't

even been two years yet? Whoa. So much has happened in those 22 months, it seems impossible to fit it all in!

At CCRTC, all measures are taken to ensure you are good and ready for your first year. (It also becomes an "inside joke" that you will never feel 100% prepared for the first day of school.)

And as September loomed on the horizon, I realized that the "inside joke," at least in my case, perhaps had a little truth to it! My first teaching position was Grade 8B at John Calvin School in Smithville. If I had been given the option to delay the beginning of the school year until I felt ready, I would probably still be waiting today. But time doesn't wait. So September 8, 2009, rolled around right on schedule and I welcomed my first class of eighteen students.

The first year of teaching was, as expected, a whirlwind of activity: teaching, marking, planning, marking, drinking unhealthy amounts of coffee, marking, planning, marking, and writing a report card here or there. I am very thankful for the loving patience of my wife as she helped me to maintain the balance between home and work that first year.

In my second year, I took up a new position teaching Grade 6 at Attercliffe Canadian Reformed Elementary School. At the very beginning of the school year, I was given the opportunity to celebrate with my family when the LORD blessed us with the birth of our son, Javan, in September 2010.

Again, it seems like all this activity couldn't have happened in 22 months! When I think back to the beautiful education I received at CCRTC, my first two years of teaching, and the blessings bestowed on my family, then I can only say, "What is man that You are mindful of him, the son of man that You care for him?" (Psalm 8 : 4). Praise the LORD for all His wondrous works!

# Ronn Vanandel

CLASS OF 1983



## Small Beginnings... Big Dreams

I was at Covenant Teachers College the other day, supervising several high school students who were writing their Gr. 10 Literacy Test. I was enjoying the “academic spirit” which was wafting

through the building, and as I pondered the atmosphere of Covenant, I couldn’t help but remember how it all started for me nearly thirty years ago.

“...could hardly imagine today’s cluster of students in a functional building, bent confidently over their laptops.”

Memories flooded back. Those humble beginnings in the Cornerstone Church basement set the stage for the present rooms full of students eager to begin their teaching career. Those of us experiencing the hiccups of the first one-year program could hardly imagine today’s cluster of students in a functional building, bent confidently over their laptops. Nor does the early library of educational resources – books and tapes –shelved in what is now the janitor’s supply room in the church basement, compare with today’s well-filled, beautiful, sun-drenched library.

What great changes in three short decades! As I drifted in and out of my pleasant reveries (I had a job to do, after all) I took stock of this magnificent gift we call Covenant Teachers College. The first instructors, Mr. Tony Vanderven and Mr. Bill Horsman, have been succeeded by today’s full-time and part-time instructors. Individuals move on, but the love for teaching others remains strong.

My training at Covenant so many years ago prepared me well for a wonderful, lasting career in teaching. Some memories fade, individuals move on, life forces us to “snap back” to the present. But it was fun to spend a bit of time in the past, to take a mental snapshot of my year at Covenant.

May God’s blessing continue to be showered on Covenant and on the next generation of Reformed teachers.

# Annelies Faber

CLASS OF 1994

Moi, je m’appelle Annelies Faber. In 1989 I started a four-year honours BA program at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. My areas of interest were French, German, and Linguistics, and I focussed on grammar and translation. The work of Bible translation by the organization Wycliffe Bible Translators had caught my interest, and I had dreams of a career in this field. In the summer of 1992 I married and abandoned these plans for the more common, though no less noble, calling of wife.

I went to the Canadian Reformed Teachers College in Hamilton that fall, where I benefitted from the practical and theoretical Reformed training in education. The one-year program became a two-year program for me, as our eldest son was born in the spring of 1993. Graduating in ’94, I was privileged to stay at home raising our three children for the next thirteen years. I have always appreciated the education I received, both at university and at college, and believe it has been vital for my development. I still refer to relevant notes and handouts which I have kept from my college and university days.

In 2007 I started teaching French to grade 9 students at Emmanuel Christian High School in Fergus, Ontario. The learning curve was steep and the work was very rewarding. Standing in front of a class of twenty students and sensing the responsibility of teaching each individual character with his/her own unique learning ability is both daunting and amazing. At that time I realized I needed a refresher course in French, which I

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took at the University of Waterloo. The stimulation of attending school at a vibrant campus was coupled with a desire to learn as much as possible from the course. Since then, three more years of teaching French have come and gone. I continue to learn along with my students in many ways, whether it is something new about the French language or culture, about education, or about how people learn. I also realize that we, as a Christian community, have been richly blessed here in Canada and must make use of the opportunities we receive to do our part in promoting God’s work. Though we do our work in weakness, we pray that God will use it to His glory.

# from the finance committee

ARCHIE BAX

The Lord has blessed us with the funds to meet our current financial requirements. We are at the half-way point of our fiscal year and the donations are at 51% of the budgeted amount.

Having said this, I must add that there are still some concerns. Historically, the donations tend to be highest in December and August. We guess this is due to the fact that donations made before the end of December qualify for a charitable donation tax receipt for that year. The August donation spike is likely the result

**“ The capital fund will be used this spring to replace the shingles on the roof and the amount remaining will be about one quarter of a month’s cash requirements for the College.**


of information that funds are needed to meet the budget. Thankfully this worked last year, but we have had some years where special appeals were required to address deficits or to meet the budget. This year the contributions received in the month of December amounted to 58% of the donations received from September to the end of February. What

does this mean? The key concept is cash flow. For example, in the months of January and February, the donations for the month were less than half of the expenses. Since we pay the faculty’s salaries (the largest expense of operating the college) twice each month, we need the necessary cash in the bank. It is not an option to pay the staff in January and September after the donations have peaked. To be fair, there are other amounts we receive, such as tuition, which is paid at the start of the year, but this amount is not so large that it will cover the cash requirements, particularly towards the end of the fiscal year. In the past we have temporarily borrowed some money from the capital account until the donations in August were received. But this option is not going to be available in the future. The capital fund will be used this spring to replace the shingles on the roof and the amount remaining will be about one quarter of a month’s cash requirements for the College.

So our concern is twofold: to receive the total amount donated to meet the annual budget, and to receive these donations regularly in order to meet our cash flow requirements. It would be a great help to us if you would make use of the pre-authorized donations option

on a monthly basis. You are free to select the amount you wish to contribute, and if your situation changes you are free to change the amount by notifying us. Would you consider trying this for a year so you can see how it works for you? It would be a great help to us.

THANK YOU



Covenant College would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the Harvest Endowment Fund for their generous donation this past year. The Harvest Endowment Foundation's mission is to serve God and their neighbour by financially assisting Reformed causes that are engaged in education. We are grateful for the assistance that you have provided in helping us to sustain Reformed education for the coming generation. May God richly bless your work!

We invite you to visit the **CCRTC website** at [www.covenantteacherscollege.com](http://www.covenantteacherscollege.com)

 Please detach and mail to: **CCRTC • South Square RO • P.O. Box 30026 • 1576 Upper James Street • Hamilton, ON • L9B 2Y5**

## Yes! I would like to support the CCRTC!

- One-Time gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (cheque Enclosed)
- Monthly by pre-authorized Automatic withdrawal

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ PROV \_\_\_\_\_ PC \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

## Pre-Authorized Direct Withdrawal Form

I hereby authorize Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College to withdraw regular monthly payments from my bank account in the amount of and agree to accept annual increases as set by the board.:

- \$33/Month** - Withdrawn on the:
  - 15th of the month  30th of the month
- \$396/Annually** - Withdrawn on \_\_\_\_\_ each year
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_/Month** - Withdrawn on the:
  - 15th of the month  30th of the month

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

Please ATTACH a blank cheque marked "VOID" to this form.