

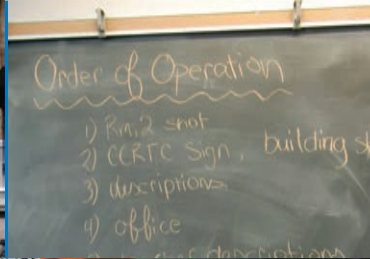


# Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

MAY 2012

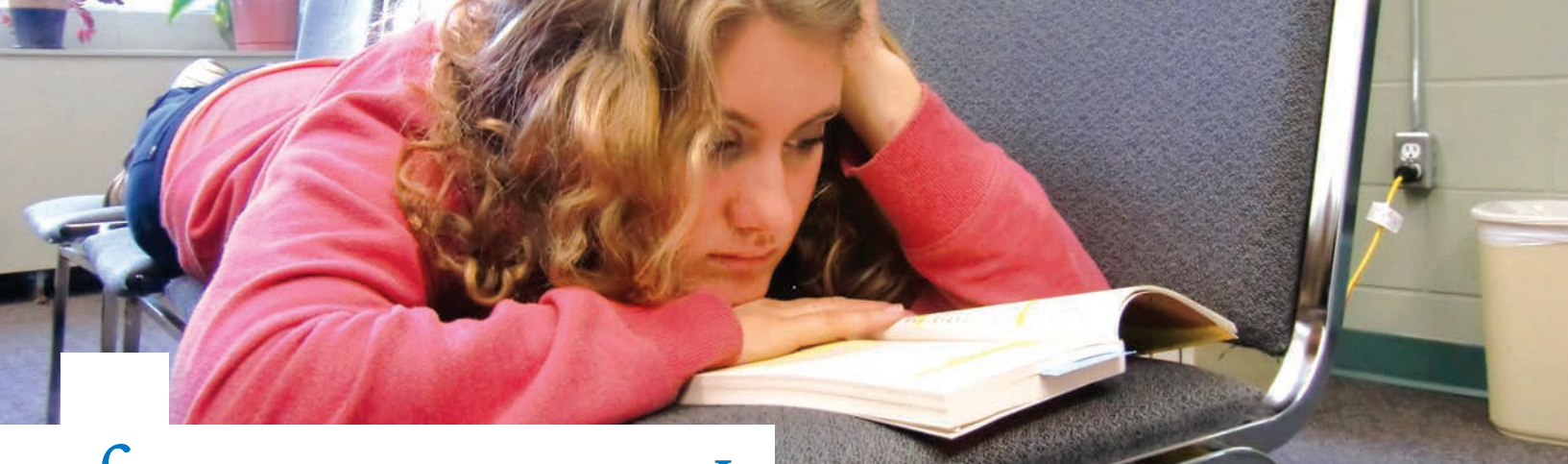


CCRTC NEWS

**SPRING 2012**

[www.covenantteacherscollege.com](http://www.covenantteacherscollege.com)





## from the PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER

At the time of writing, only a few weeks of course work remain in the second semester of the 2011-2012 academic year. From the perspective of the faculty, the year has flown by. Days extended into weeks, and weeks became months – all under the rich blessings of our faithful God.

With exams looming on the horizon, along with the deadlines of final assignments, our students look forward to concluding their studies this year with a 3 or 4-week practicum placement in an elementary classroom. One of our students, Miss Katie Jager, is enjoying an extended placement at one of our Dutch sister schools in Groningen. We congratulate the Gomarus College at having obtained the formal designation as a “TTO School.”

The winter semester has seen several first semester sessional instructors, as well as two returning sessionals. We welcomed back Mme Dominique Wildeboer, who has indicated that this will be her last year at Covenant. We will miss her enthusiasm, energy, and creativity in teaching French to a widely divergent student group, but wish her well in her ‘retirement’. In the Art Methods course it is Ms. Cobie VanEerden who creates a Tuesday evening after-hours buzz in the Guido art room. Our students not only learn how to teach art, but also have the opportunity to work with various media. In addition to learning, we make time for some extra-curricular activities. A visit to Ebenezer Villa turned into a fun-filled

evening of singing, riveting storytelling, applying our math facts to solving a unique problem, and honing our origami skills. The experience proved yet once again that being young-at-heart really is an ageless concept – and we thank our senior brothers and sisters for their invitation.

This semester also saw two theme-specific sessions in which all students and full-time faculty participated in learning about topics that affect teaching and classroom practice, but that do not necessarily appear within a specific course. The first session dealt with “*Growing up on-line*” – and explored the joys and challenges of ever-increasing access to a virtual world made possible through technology. The second session focused on *Loss, grief, and growth* and the Christian classroom teacher’s task and responsibility when confronted with this in the lives of students and their families. We appreciate the willingness of br. Rick Ludwig, a funeral director, to share with us his knowledge and experience, as well as point us to valuable curriculum resources. Offering these two sessions proved to be a positive experience for students and faculty alike.

In anticipation of the Graduation on Friday, May 25 at the Cornerstone Church in Hamilton, we also look beyond this year to the next. Requests for admission are coming in. At the same time we encourage you, the reader, to do your part in encouraging young men and women to consider becoming





a teacher. Speak positively with your friends, your children, your nieces and nephews, your grandchildren, or your former students about the teaching profession. Our Reformed Christian schools need dedicated persons who are intrigued by the challenges of teaching the next generation, and who want to work together with parents in educating children for a life in God's service. Speak to teachers – they will tell you that teaching is a rewarding and joyful task!

As Principal of Covenant Teachers College I want to express my gratitude to the Board of Governors for the excellent Annual General Meeting held in February of this year. In seeking to foster the vision of Covenant College as the definitive source for Reformed teacher training, we were able to commit to a strategic plan for the coming year. In so doing, we articulated a renewed commitment not only to the task of training young men and women for teaching, but also

to the goal of seeking opportunities for continuing Reformed Christian teacher development. Members of the faculty are involved in professional development and in-service sessions at several schools already, and the option of offering summer seminars is a real one. It is exciting and gratifying to see that new member schools are joining the team of

“ Our Reformed Christian schools need dedicated persons who are intrigued by the challenges of teaching the next generation...

supportive communities. The matter of offering professional development opportunities to schools further away from the CCRTC campus in Hamilton holds the attention of the Board, and so the launch of the first professional development collection was one of the highlights of the February meeting: The public lectures on *Kingdom and Education* given by Dr. Jason Van Vliet, Dr. Nelson Kloosterman, Dr. Ben Faber, and Rev. Bill DeJong are now available in a professionally produced binder that

includes DVDs as well as additional resources for use by schools. In addition, the lectures-only are available for purchase in a collection of four DVDs – and will make a good addition to church libraries and personal collections.

In closing, I wish to express publically our deep appreciation to br. Gerrit Bos for his many years of service to

Covenant College. Gerrit is well-acquainted with the postsecondary learning scene, and his contributions as a governor, as vice-chair,

and as chair helped bring the College to a new level. We thank him for that. At this time, we welcome br. Frank C. Ludwig as chair, and know that his rich experience at the elementary school level will stand him in good stead. We look forward to working with you!

May the favour of our Covenant God rest on us and may the work of our hands be established for us – to the praise of his glory.

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# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FRANK C. LUDWIG

## CHANGES...

Every year, for the last 30 or so, while the bleak heart of winter still prevails in the land (this year being the exception), all the governors of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College from across the country meet at the College facility to effect change... sometimes major, sometimes minor. Such was again the case on February 24th and 25th, 2012, when the brothers and sisters, tasked with guiding the affairs of the College, sat down to review the year that was and plan for the year to come.

In looking back we could once again be thankful for all that the Lord provided for the broader educational community by means of this small, but vibrant, institution. The most obvious of these benefits are, of course, to be seen in the students, a contingent of whom graduates each Spring and is quickly absorbed into the school system Covenant was established to serve. There are many other benefits which are and can be derived from the College, which I hope to write about sometime in the future.

Looking ahead, we devoted quite some time at this Annual General Meeting (AGM) to exploring our VISION for the future of the College. We created a number of specific goals and objectives to realize that vision, and began to plan how to achieve these goals and objectives. At a subsequent CCRTC Executive Board meeting, an AGM Scorecard was discussed and refined to serve as an aid to track our progress and add some meat to the bones of our planning structure. This will help the Board to stay on track and hopefully

help it to realize the goals undertaken for the coming year. By the time of the AGM 2013, we hope to be able to present a Scorecard with quite a number of check marks, meaning "goal accomplished".

This will, however, not happen automatically, but will require hard and creative work on the part of some: the Board and its various committees in the

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first place, and the prayerful and financial support of many - the church and school communities the College was established to serve. "So what has changed?" I hear many of you asking. "We've heard all that before." But here's the change: we're

sharpening our focus and specifying our goals to achieve the vision that we have established, as summarized in this sentence: "Covenant... the definitive source for reformed teacher training". One of the changes we will pursue is to alter the perception of Covenant College as merely the hobby of some, to the commitment of many - realizing as we do that in many hands the burden is light, while in a few, it weighs heavily.

Another significant change, which usually occurs near the end of the AGM, is a change in the executive personnel. This year that happened at the Chair level, with Br. Gerrit Bos having served well beyond his term as Board Chair. Gerrit has stepped aside to the Past-Chair position and yours truly has stepped into the position vacated in the Chair. Allow me, therefore, to add immediately a few words of appreciation to Br. Bos: Gerrit, you have served the Board admirably for a long time, most recently in the position of Chairman. You fulfilled the role with dedication, commitment, and ability, and always humbly - to the benefit



# MY LIFE@ CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

## I remember my very first day of my first year at the College like it was yesterday.

As all my friends were going off to huge universities and colleges, I walked into this tiny building. No more than 30 people were sitting in the library, ready to start the day with devotions. Despite the fact that the College is small and there aren't many people, I still remember feeling nervous and intimidated. That feeling went away very soon as I got to know my fellow classmates. Now in my third and final year, I look back and realize that as time went on, we all got closer. Friendships began to grow. Every May, a graduating class leaves, and each September new students come. New friendships sprout and grow until May, and then the cycle continues.

We're one big family here at the College. We eat our lunches together in the Student Lounge, and if we have late class, we eat dinner together as well. This year, we have a very hungry group at the College. All seventeen of us love to eat. We have hot lunches at least once a month, if not more.

We also love any opportunity where we can be together at once. Usually our classes are split into groups, first year and second year together, third year students on their own, with the one year program students joining in occasionally. So as soon as we get to be all together, we have a lot of fun. This semester we are together for Art Methods.

Our other classes represent a wide variety of courses. These range from Bible, Church History, Foundations and Research, as well

of the institution as a whole, and the governors in particular, as they steered the affairs of the College under your capable leadership. I know also that the staff, and the Principal in particular, benefited from being able to discuss matters and consult with you on various issues as they arose. Your wise counsel was always appreciated. We know you always perceived your task

as being done in service to the Lord in the first place, and pray that He might bless you now as you lay down this burden of responsibility.

As for myself, I can only hope to continue in the pattern established by my predecessor, and pray that the Lord might enable me to use the gifts He has given to

as Curriculum and Academic studies. These courses provide the theory for our teaching.

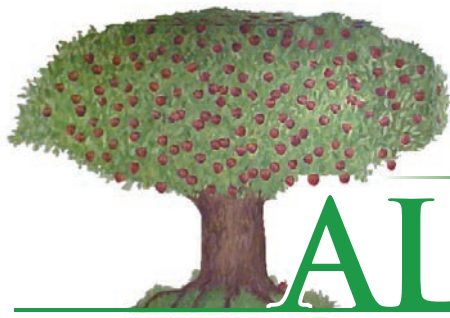
We also need to learn the practical aspects of teaching. We need to practice making lesson plans and carrying them out. This is done in two ways: teaching each other, and teaching an actual class: practicum. As much as we love going on practicum, we have a lot of fun practicing at the College. At the beginning of the lesson, the practicing teacher will tell the rest of the class which grade they are in - usually grade 2. These classes often end in fits of laughter as most of us are very good at getting into character and acting as if we are actually seven years old.

Practicum is when we have to get serious. Now we are actually teaching a real group of children. The first day of practicum is always somewhat overwhelming as twenty-something little kids crowd into the classroom, their huge eyes staring at you. It's a challenge to remember all those names! But the best feeling in the world is when you're teaching a group of children and they finally understand the concept you're teaching. It is almost as if you can see the light go on in their eyes.

Reflecting on my three years at the College, I am so thankful that I decided to come to Covenant for my teacher education. The experience not only helped me become confident that I can teach God's covenant children in a class of my own next year, but these years also helped me grow as a person and as a child of God.

advance the cause of Christian education in this new sphere - as I have been allowed to do in the reformed school system for the past 43 years.

We are looking forward to exciting but challenging times - let us put our collective shoulders to the wheel, and depend upon the Lord to show us the way.



# CCRTC ALUMNINEWS

HOW IT WAS AND HOW IT IS

## Dave & Erica Nienhuis CLASS OF 1992 & 1990

Erica Nienhuis (née Blom)

I attended the CCRTC from September 1987 to May 1990. When I started, the Teachers College held its classes in the basement of the Cornerstone church building, and by the time I finished my studies we were at the Mohawk Road location. We started with 6 members in our class, and by graduation we were down to 4. Upon graduation I received a position at the John Calvin School in Smithville, teaching Grade 3. I taught Grade 3 for almost 3 years (finishing at the end of March, 1993), and shortly after that, on April 5, my husband Dave and I received our first child, our son. Since then we have been blessed with three more children, all girls. We are presently living in Fergus, ON, where Dave is teaching in the Emmanuel Christian High School.

Some of my favourite memories of my time at Teacher's College include: the Science experiments in Mr. Horsman's class, singing in two part harmony in the morning devotions with Mr. Vanderven, and keeping the secretaries away from their work while we were on break.

Attending Covenant allowed me to get a solid basis not only in how to teach, but also how to do so from a Christian perspective. Although I only taught for a few years after graduation, the time spent at the CCRTC was most beneficial, and has been the source of many great memories.

### Dave Nienhuis

After graduating from McMaster University, I attended the CCRTC from September 1991 until May of 1992. I taught Grade 5 in Timothy School in Hamilton for 5 years. Then we moved to Winnipeg where I taught in Immanuel Christian School for 13 years. In July 2010 our family moved to Fergus, where I took a teaching position in Emmanuel Christian High School, where I continue to teach.

There were 3 males in the 1 year program the year that I was at Teacher's College. Although the three of us came to the Teacher's

College at different times in our lives, we bonded together and left an impression on the college. I'm sure it took Mr. Horsman a long time to recover from the extended Science activities that we did in his class. I'm also sure that Dr. Witten marvelled at our impressive focus in his Ed Psych and Social Studies classes. The final impression that we left was probably the most memorable – all those who were at our Graduation will remember our rendition of La Cucaracha.

After moving to Manitoba I took my Bachelor of Education at the University of Winnipeg. Much of what was taught during this degree was covered in the CCRTC. As well, I was given credit for several CCRTC courses and allowed to count them towards the requirements of my B.Ed degree. Not only did the courses at the CCRTC help me as I started my teaching career, but they also provided a good foundation that benefited me in further education. My year at the CCRTC was very important for my preparation as a teacher, and has certainly benefited me in this career.

## George & Sharon Hofsink CLASS OF 1985 & 1987

It has been many years since we attended Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College; twenty-eight for George and twenty-five for Sharon. George graduated in May 1984 and Sharon in May 1987. Although this was a long time ago and the college was conducting classes in the basement of Cornerstone Church at that time, we feel that the instructors at Covenant prepared us well for our teaching careers. The fact that CCRTC was not (is not) a ministry recognized institution did not mean that the instruction we received was inadequate or second rate. We believe it equipped us for our task as teachers in Canadian Reformed Schools better than any other program could have. Look where we are today: both of us still involved in education and enjoying



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it. The Lord has certainly blessed us in this regard.

George began his teaching career at Eben-Ezer Christian School in Chatham where he taught students in the junior and intermediate grades. After three years in Chatham, he accepted a position offered to him by the John Calvin Christian School in Burlington. He was hired to teach grades seven and eight at the new school in Millgrove – Covenant Christian School. Sharon Knol was hired by the same board to teach grades three and four at Covenant; and the rest, as the saying goes, is history. We met, fell in love and got married in December 1989. Sharon continued to teach at Covenant until the birth of our first child, Geoff, in May 1991. By October 1999, the Lord had blessed us with four more children: Kaylee, Kelvin, Benjamin, and Kara.

George continued to teach at Covenant and assumed the principalship in September 1993. He has served as teacher/principal at Covenant until now. He’s been a fixture at the school and is the last of the original teachers working there to date. This is, however, his last year at Covenant as the Lord has steered him in a new direction. Next school year, D.V., he will be taking over as principal at John Calvin School in Smithville.

Sharon has also continued to be involved with education. Over the years, she acquired her specialist certificate in special education from Brock University and has served as a special education consultant since 1993. She has also served as a part-time and supply teacher for several local elementary schools as well as at Guido de Brès Christian High School.

Throughout our careers as educators, Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College has always been close to us, literally and figuratively. We still maintain regular contact with the instructors of the college and Sharon occasionally serves as a guest lecturer, telling prospective teachers about her work as a special education consultant. At various points over the years we have both served on the CCRTC board of governors as well. The motto of the college, “...we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord...” (Psalm 78:4) continues to be very much a part of our lives as parents and educators, whether in relation to our own children or to those we teach in the classroom.

## Wendy Koster

CLASS OF 1995

It was in September 1992 that I first walked through the doors of the Teacher’s College, at that time located on Mohawk Rd. in Hamilton. Little did I realize then how much my training

there would shape and influence who I am today. Today my daily role is that of wife to Duane Koster and mother to five growing boys, namely Connor, Samuel, Bradley, Jackson, and Reuben. However, I am thankful that I am able to say that I am also still a teacher, having been educated at the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers’ College. Although I haven’t taught in my own classroom now for many years, I still have many great memories of my years at the College and I feel truly blessed that I was able to attend a college that gave me a solid reformed foundation as well as practical experience before I began in my own classroom.

I have some great memories of each of my placements at various schools in Ontario. Every practicum was an excellent teaching and learning experience. The guidance of the college professors as well as the mentor teachers was foundational in shaping me as a teacher. I also have many memories of student life at the college. Of learning to write straight on the blackboard, (it really is a skill!), of having discussions with Mr. VanderVen as he pushed us to think critically on many issues and educational matters, of listening to various Church History stories that we as students had to write, of going to Quebec, of studying the epic Beowulf in English (although I am pretty sure I still haven’t had the occasion to use that in my life – at least not yet!), and the list goes on. To this day I still know and entertain my own children with many of the classic jokes from Mr. Horsman. Ironically, I began my formal education in grade one and ended it at the college with the same teacher- Mrs. VanHalen-Faber.

After graduation I used my newly acquired skills to teach grade two at Maranatha Christian School in Fergus for three years, an experience which I thoroughly enjoyed. Although the time in my life of having my own classroom has been over for a number of years now, I continue to stay very involved with the school whenever and wherever I am able. I have served on various committees, helped out with school events and I love coming to the school to supply teach on occasion.

I am so thankful that the Lord directed my life in such a way that I was able to attend Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers’ College. The education and guidance I received there was instrumental in making me who I am. It was there that I was expected to put into words what I believe, why I believe it and how it is to be applied not only in a classroom but in all of life.



# from the finance committee

ARCHIE BAX

As Finance and Fundraising committee we are happy to report that we are blessed with sufficient funds to pay our expenses to the end of February and have about 2 months cash flow reserve. We are thankful to the Lord and to the contributors who have made this result come about. February is the halfway point in the fiscal year. In terms of fundraising, traditionally our “big” contribution months are: September – tuition payments, December –personal year end charitable donation deadline, June, and August –College end of year. The months January through July can be scary for the treasurer. Money goes out on a regular basis, largely for salaries of staff but sometimes only half or even one quarter of this is covered by the donations in the month. Hence a two months cash reserve for the current budget year can very quickly evaporate.

At the Annual General Meeting in February the target contribution amount per donor was left at \$396 per year. On a monthly direct deposit basis this translates to \$33 per month. Allow me to put this into perspective: one coffee per day at Tim’s will easily cost \$1.25. Repeating this five days per week for a month amounts to \$25. I am sure that many in our congregations have more

than one Tim’s coffee per day and up size it and add some goodies. My point is that while I am aware that money does not grow on trees for the picking, this suggested contribution level is not outrageous for most of us. This leads me to another point. In doing some

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figuring with the number of donations from different addresses for 2011 and assuming each address represented two communicant members – which is not necessarily the case I know- and using the figures for Ontario only (regional Synod East) because I had a limit on the time I could devote to this exercise, and taking the 2011 church yearbook as a reference, my calculation showed that, with the assumptions made, about 13% of the communicant members contributed. While the exact number may vary somewhat if the percent of contributors were to double, it would still only be approximately one quarter

of the communicant membership of the churches in Regional Synod East. The point being there is ample opportunity to attract new donors.

The Finance committee, in collaboration with the Public Relations Committee, generated a brochure, to help acquaint those who are not familiar with the College with who we are and what we do. No single brochure is going to explain everything, but we hope this will help to explain the purpose of the College and generate interest. Each local Governor has access to the brochure and you can get a copy from him / her. Obviously this is geared to generating new interest. If you know someone who is not supporting the College and you want to bring the College to their attention you might contact your local Governor to provide them with the brochure or you may wish to get a brochure from the Governor and talk to the person directly.

In summary, we are cautiously optimistic about the current financial situation and certain that the Lord will continue to lead the work done at the College. We thank the Lord for the blessings He gives us out of grace and follow His directive to work and pray.

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

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