



Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

APRIL 2015



CCRTC NEWS
SPRING 2015
www.covenantteacherscollege.com





from the PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER

Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again: Rejoice! —PHIL. 4:4

With these words we began our 2014-2015 academic year at Covenant, and it seems fitting to frame the Principal's Report in this Newsletter with these same words. Indeed, as God's people we have much reason for rejoicing – always!

As faculty and students we rejoice as we bring yet another year of teaching and learning to a close. The LORD has been so good to us, granting us health and strength to carry out our respective tasks, and providing us all with the stamina necessary to do the small, every-day tasks required for being prepared for class, as well as the big, occasional tasks: writing papers and exams. Students at Covenant quickly learn how to organize their time well, how to pace themselves, and how to juggle the various responsibilities – skills that will prove to be invaluable once they enter into the teaching profession. The

“serious” work at the College is punctuated with social events, at which students, faculty, and staff rejoice in different ways: a baby shower to celebrate the gift of new life in the family of one of our students; hot lunches that demonstrate the culinary prowess of students and their

teachers; a visit to our elderly neighbours at Ebenezer Villa, to name just a few. Covenant is, indeed, a joy-filled place.

We rejoice in the work done behind the scenes, and are grateful for the willingness of so many who give of their time and expertise to shape and implement the vision of the College to be the definitive source of Reformed teacher training. The AGM of the Board is one occasion at which the work done by committees and the Board really comes together in a powerful way. This year's AGM was no exception. We rejoice in the appointment of a fourth full-time faculty member, and look forward to welcoming Mr. Jack Huizenga to the faculty in due time. Another significant decision is the proposed change to the Diploma of Education program. Effective September 2017 it moves from a one-year to a two-year program. The rationale for this change is to bring the program in line with current Ontario (and other

provinces') pre-service teacher education offered at Faculties of Education. For CCRTC to prepare itself for seeking accreditation, this program change needs to be put into effect. Clearly, this will affect course offerings and faculty, but will present us with a unique opportunity to strengthen the program overall.

The full-time faculty continues to be involved in a number of extra-curricular activities, allowing us to stay abreast of the work done in our member school communities. For example, all faculty members participate in the Ontario Principals Association meetings. In addition, we are involved in several League committees dealing with curriculum and professional development, and interact with special education resource teachers on a regular basis. As well, there are the special highlights:

“ Covenant is, indeed, a joy-filled place.

rubbing shoulders with the important first formal teachers during a PD Day for Kindergarten teachers, and rejoicing with colleagues in celebrating the launch of the C.A.R.E. Bible History Curriculum. Given that at Covenant we offer teacher training that is aimed to align very closely with Reformed Christian schools, it is important for the instructors to stay in



MR. JACK HUIZENGA

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THE HALLS ARE ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF FRENCH CLASS . . .

Under the capable guidance, direction, and instruction of Mme Teresa Boisvert, the Diploma of Teaching Year 1 & 2 students are audibly, visibly, and olfactorily engaged in their learning: French songs (including several *Psaumes de Genève*) resound throughout the building, costumed students act out les petites histoires, and the fragrances of *la cuisine québécoise traditionnelle* wafts right under closed classroom doors.

As has been the practice for many years, the French course is offered at two different levels simultaneously: Advanced for those students who took French in Gr. 12, and General for those who had some French (even Gr. 11, perhaps), as well as those who were exposed to very little or even no French at all (not all provinces offer mandatory French in high school!).

All students are expected to hone their French vocabulary and grammar skills, become familiar with Ontario French curriculum expectations, and plan French lessons at various grade levels. In short:

student-teachers, through a variety of activities, will practise listening, speaking, reading, and writing French within the context of French culture studies. Many of the assignments will provide students with ideas and activities for their own future classrooms.

Recently, an increasing number of CCRTC elementary member schools are embracing the accelerated integrated method (AIM) for teaching French. This approach uses speech, combined with gestures, to provide an auditory-visual-kinesthetic experience for those learning French as a second language. As a result, we now see les trois petits cochons running through the hallway to get away from le grand méchant loup who is trying to blow down their respective homes... There are many varied activities throughout the morning, and at the end of class, one of the students leads in lunch devotions, en français, of course! For those of us looking and listening from the outside in, it is wonderful to witness the students' growth and development as they improve their own language skills. It is our aim that one day, most students will become responsible, competent, and creative French language teachers for elementary education in Reformed schools. This course offers a small beginning!



MENU D'UN DÎNER QUÉBÉCOIS

Entrée:

Soupe aux pois

Plat Principal:

*Tourtière
avec du ketchup québécois
Carottes à l'estragon
Baguette*

Dessert:

*Fromage Brie
Sucre à la crème
Tire d'érable*





CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FRANK C. LUDWIG

ANNUAL general meeting 2015

– ANOTHER weekend of milestone moments

On the weekend of March 6 and 7, 2015 governors, as were able, from B. C. to Ontario, met at Covenant College for another annual meeting.

We began with a quick review of the visioning structure under which we operate. This is an image of an ancient Greek temple, with five main pillars, which support our vision of the College as the 'definitive source of Reformed teacher training'. We track our progress on a 'score card' under each of the pillars to which a certain commitment applies... as we did again near the end of our meeting on Saturday afternoon. As committees report, they may generate motions on which future action is based. Such was the case for instance with the PPC (Program and Personnel Committee) which worked on a number of items, generating seven related motions. Several of those have to do with a major program change, about which you can read more in the Principal's report.

The Faculty Report is always a major highlight and contains lots of specifics about the year in progress and the activities of students and faculty. It is interesting to note that while our graduation classes are usually quite small, over the years 230 teachers have graduated from Covenant!

One feature of our annual meetings is a course review by one of the faculty. Dr. Wes Bredenhof, who teaches North American Church History, enlightened us on the details of his work with the students. This year he did a very special unit of historical research in the framework of that course involving the "Hamilton troubles" in the 1950's. A challenging task, but very relevant. We would like to extend a special "thank you" to Dr. Bredenhof for all his good

work at the College over the last few years, in view of his imminent departure to Tasmania.

Also reported on at the AGM was the development of a new Certificate of Reformed Education course which is "a six course program for practicing elementary and secondary teachers who are working in a Reformed school". This is largely in response to an initiative of the principals and boards of our schools in B.C. This program is already underway and some elements are still in the development stage, but we are excited about being able to share more of the College's resources with our Western schools and colleagues in this way. A postcard promoting this course is making its way to all the schools.

Another very exciting development came to the meeting by way of a motion from the PPC, via the Faculty Search Committee. When Keith Sikkema was hired two years ago, we thought to have filled the desire to come to four full-time faculty members. However, Judy Kingma moved to half-time status, bringing us back to three and a half faculty members. We have now been able to achieve the four full time faculty goal, as the Board voted to accept the recommendation to hire Jack Huizinga as a full-time faculty member. He is currently vice-principal (Secondary, at Heritage Christian School) with 16 years of experience in



You are cordially invited to the graduation celebration of the Class of 2015.

When: May 29, 2015 at 8:15 p.m.

Where: Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church, HAMILTON, ON

Please reserve the date!

teaching. His academic background is in Science, with an honors B. Sc. Degree in biochemistry from the University of Waterloo. He is currently completing a M.Ed. degree at Brock University. He will officially join the faculty as of August 1st. This also means a change for Judy Kingma, who will move from part-time status to sessional instructor.

On Saturday morning we began with an item especially dear to my heart and that of Gerrit Bos. Due to a long-time vacancy in the position of vice-chairman, both of us have served in our positions much longer than we should have. With Ken Stel indicating his willingness to take on this position, we can now move forward in these offices. Gerrit will now give up his role of Past-chair at the end of April, after a 10-year commitment to the Board!! To say “Thank you” hardly seems enough.

Another major item was the Accreditation Committee Report. Karl Veldkamp, a lawyer and committee member with many useful contacts, was able to join us for that portion of the

meeting. Through one of those contacts, a “lay of the land” survey in government and teacher professional circles was initiated, and feedback was received. A fuller report is pending before our next move can be made, but an application to begin the serious, intensive, lengthy and expensive process has begun.

In the meantime, a lot of work has been going on behind the scenes to prepare ourselves for the thorough investigation of the College that will be involved. The Ad Hoc Committee for this purpose has been turned into a permanent standing committee in order to facilitate the on-going work and reporting.

One final point... one of our absentee governors was Will Gortemaker, a normally

faithful attendee. His father, Bill, is seriously ill with cancer and, humanly speaking, his life expectancy is uncertain. Bill was a founding Board member of the College Board back in 1981 and a strong supporter ever since, often visiting our AGM's to encourage us. Bill and his wife know they are in God's hand and trust His leading. May He sustain you in this struggle. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

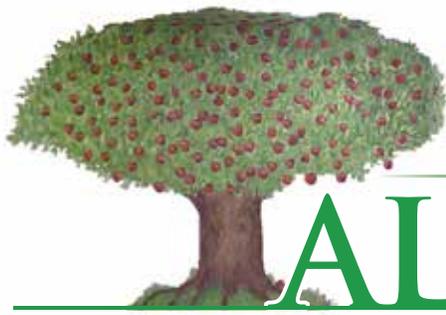
“ This is an image of an ancient Greek temple, with five main pillars, which support our vision of the College as the ‘definitive source of Reformed teacher training’.

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touch with practising principals and teachers.

We also rejoice in the Supreme Court decision with respect to the Loyola Case. Last year, our students and faculty keenly followed the process and watched the court case ‘live’. We will take a closer look at the Court's decision, but are thankful that the highest court of the land upholds parental rights when it concerns the education of their children, and that parental choice for faith-based education falls within the right to maintain religious freedom. We thank ARPA, and in particular legal counsellors André Schutten and Ian Moes, for the work done on behalf of Christian schools.

Lastly, and most importantly, we rejoice in doing the work God calls us to do. In Him, our teaching and learning finds its beginning and its end, as we tell the next generation of the great deeds He has done!



CCRTC ALUMNINEWS

how it was and how it is



Matt VanPopta

CLASS OF 2002

My time at the Teachers College did not have the most auspicious start. During the first week of classes, an instructor rushed in to the school and announced apologetically that she had knocked over someone's motorbike in the parking lot. "I barely nudged it," she said, "and it just gently fell to the ground." I don't think I've ever moved so fast in my life. Thankfully, that was the only accident that bike ever got into!

After completing my B.A. in English at McMaster University, I applied at and was accepted into the one year program at Covenant. I graduated from the Teachers College in 2002. I recall the year I spent there with much fondness. The small classes and intimate setting were conducive to in-depth discussions and reflections. Walking those hallways now brings back memories of Dr. VanHalen's joyful laugh and the dry

witty jokes Mr. Horsman would crack in the middle of class.

After graduating, I was hired by the John Calvin Christian School in Burlington where I taught grade seven for five years. At the time that I started teaching there, John Calvin had over 150 students enrolled in grades 1-8—almost bursting at the seams. After five years at JCCS, I applied at Guido de Brès Christian High School in Hamilton and was hired to teach English. I've been teaching at Guido for almost eight years now and still greatly appreciate the Christian framework and context that the Covenant College gave me. My learning there gave me a lens through which I can rightly view education, the student, and my role as a teacher—and for that, I'm thankful.

Clarence Blokhuis

CLASS 1995

Almost twenty years ago now, I took my first reluctant step towards a career in teaching, by enrolling in the one-year Diploma of Education program at Covenant College. At the time, I was filled with doubts about whether teaching was the right path for me. I had once said to a friend in high school, "I don't know what I'm going to do with my life, but I know what I'll never do – teach!" Looking back on my Covenant days, I see that "a man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps" (Prov. 16:9). In His wisdom, God led me to be a teacher, and He



used my positive experience at Covenant to encourage me in this task.

One encouraging experience that really stands out for me took place while I was on a grade 6 practicum at Covenant Christian School in Flamborough. Mr. Vanderven came to observe a writing lesson. I was using a short story called "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" as a model to inspire flights of imagination in my students. I'm not exactly sure what Mr. Vanderven saw that day to prompt the comment, but I'll never forget what he said: "Clarence, you've been wondering if teaching is for you. Well, I can assure you, this is where you need to be." These words did not magically make all my doubts disappear, but they have often provided some light in times when the clouds of doubt cast their shadows.

Time does not permit me to share more stories in detail, but I do want to briefly acknowledge the positive impact of each of my instructors at Covenant. I remember Mr. Horsman as the man who taught me, for the first time, to love Math as a beautiful form of logic that I had never

BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2015

really understood before. Dr. Oosterhoff, who I esteemed highly as a thinker and writer, showed appreciation for my weekly essays in her “Morals and Ethics” course. Her high opinion and her words of encouragement helped me to recognize and use these particular God-given talents. Rev. Agema firmly impressed upon me the need to discern themes of Scripture through careful study. He emphasized that God has His own purpose in every passage, and as teachers, our task is to direct students to God’s purpose, not to use Scripture for our own purpose. In “Foundations of Reformed Education”, Mr. VanderVen taught the importance of creating every lesson to be distinctly Christian, an ideal I continue to strive for, to this day. And finally, in Mrs. VanHalen I saw an amazing talent for recognizing particular gifts in others and providing feedback for growth in an up-building way. I have often struggled with the tendency of negative criticism toward my students, and am often reminded of how I was encouraged by Mrs. VanHalen’s emphasis on the strengths of her students.

Now, nineteen years into a career I did not initially choose, I look back with thankfulness to God for leading me to teaching, and with thankfulness to the instructors at Covenant who, in one short year, had such a profound and lasting impact on my life.

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THANK YOU!

The students and faculty are thrilled with the WATCH gift to the College: **A NEW (TO US) PIANO!**

We really appreciate the work of all WATCH representatives across the country to make this gift possible.



from the finance committee

NATHAN HELDER

We are near the half-way point in the fiscal year and we see again the rich blessings from our Heavenly Father. Financially, we are meeting our obligations and are experiencing renewed energy for Covenant College. Thank you to the many people who give of their time, energy and money!

As you have read elsewhere, we had a successful Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on March 6th & 7th. The budget presented at the AGM, effective as of September 2015, reflected many of the motions which were passed. This includes a renewed focus toward accreditation, the approving of a 4th faculty member, and a ramping up of the Certificate of Reformed Education program. The governors have also challenged themselves to promote and collect the 8% budget increase required to meet the goals of the College, which is excellent. Since the role of the Governors includes Fundraising, (a daunting task that may not always seem enjoyable) the Finance Committee, in collaboration with the Public Relations Committee, completed a workshop at the AGM on Goal Setting and presented some tools for the Governors to better equip them for their task of Fundraising. These tools include:

- “Tips on How to Collect Money – the Like-Minded Approach”
- An information sheet on “Why Covenant College”
- A list of “Common Misperceptions with Responses/Answers”.

These documents were well received by the Governors and so you can expect to hear from them in the near future.

Also at the AGM, the recommended donation amount has remained the same at \$480 per year or \$40/month. With regard to the Member Society fees, the Board of Governors approved an increase

“ In summary, we are positive and enthusiastic about the future of Covenant.

that is strategic in nature, resulting in small incremental increases of \$1.00 per student enrolled in the member school for the next 5 years. More information will be shared with each School Board prior to September 2015.

In summary, we are positive and enthusiastic about the future of Covenant. We truly appreciate your gifts and are grateful for the prominent position the College has in your giving. We thank the Lord for the blessings He gives us and continue to look to Him for wisdom in the operation of our Teachers College.



✂ Please detach and use the postage paid envelope enclosed or mail to: CCRTC • 410 Crerar Drive • Hamilton, ON • L9A 5K3

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 want to be a regular donor to Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College and allow automatic donations from my bank account as indicated below. I agree with the conditions in the application and can terminate this agreement at any time.

\$40/Month - Withdrawn on the:
 15th of the month 30th of the month

\$480/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.