



Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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



**SUMMER
BIBLE
COURSE
2008**
WINNIPEG, MB



REVIEWING

the foundations OF Reformed education





from the CHAIR GERRIT BOS

Thank you for reading this fall 2008 newsletter of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College. We appreciate your interest and involvement, and hope that this newsletter will be informative and encouraging. The fall newsletter is the appropriate time for an overview from the Board's perspective of what has been happening and what we are planning. I want to frame that overview by quoting Eph 3:17b to 19:

“ And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

I was blessed in being able to attend Covenant's opening assembly with the faculty and the students, and referred to these words. These words are very real to us. The love of Christ in the four dimensions Paul speaks of permeates everything we do. We are an institution of knowledge, knowledge of academic subjects, of pedagogy, and of how learning takes place, and this knowledge is often wide and long and high and deep. However, we know that the love of Christ surpasses all this knowledge, and that only by grasping the full extent of the love of Christ in our lives, our learning, our teaching, can we be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

I was struck by this 4-dimensional description, and realized that in many parts of the College we see the same dimensions. The program is both broad and deep, covering a wide range of subjects, and covering especially the how of teaching in depth. It is also high in the sense of its quality, and long in the sense that it marks the beginning of a life-long learning which continues every year that our students teach, also through professional development activities in which the College can play a large part. Our support base has four dimensions as well: we get support from school boards through basic membership fees and additional means, we get financial contributions from the students in the form of tuition fees, and we get support from individuals through donations and pre-authorized payments. In the fourth place, we get support from a number of corporations. Our services are also used by four main groups: our students, school boards, teachers, and the reformed community at large.

At the board level all these things and more have our attention. We were blessed in that our appeal was answered, and that you contributed in such a way that we could make our budget and recover most of last year's shortfall. Our sincere thanks to you all! We will continue to work toward further financial stability, and the pre-authorized payments are a very positive contributing factor toward that. Look for further information from the

Finance Committee in this newsletter, and keep it in mind as we get closer to December. We are making preparation for an upcoming external review and discussing the very real need of a fourth faculty member. Pressing on toward these same goals, we continue to explore additional ways for further recognition of our courses, our program, and our institution. As board we are also busy with broadening the support so that the base of supporting school societies is as close as possible to 100% and all governor positions are filled.

Lastly I will tell you about some changes in the Executive positions on the Board. Over the summer Martha DeGelder completed her term as past-chair. Martha, on behalf of all of us, our deepest thanks for your many years of faithful and selfless service to the college! Peter Vandersluis moved from chair to past-chair, and I became chair. In addition, John Schoon, our assistant treasurer, had to give up his position due to other commitments. John, please accept our thanks for your service. We are looking for a new vice-chair and assistant treasurer, both of whom fill member-at-large positions and therefore do not need to be governors representing a school society.

All these things require much perseverance and prayer. But they require something more. In Christ's letter to the same Ephesians Paul prayed for (Rev 2:1-7), Christ praises them for their good deeds, their hard work and their perseverance. But He has this against them: That they had forsaken their first love. At Covenant, indeed in all our schools and all our churches, we need to expressly hold on to the love we had at first. After all, this love surpasses knowledge, is the fulfillment of the law, and the most excellent way. Without this love our school bells are but noisy gongs. **Enjoy the rest of your newsletter!**



2008 Students at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College

from the PRINCIPAL **CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER**

On Tuesday, September 2, twenty-one students [nine new, and twelve returning], three full-time, several part-time faculty, staff, and the Chairman of the Board convened to begin the 2008-09 academic year. Our students are distributed over the two programs as follows:

- Diploma of Education - 6
- Diploma of Teaching 1 - 3
- Diploma of Teaching 2 - 4
- Diploma of Teaching 3 - 8

This year our opening theme was taken from 2 Corinthians 2:14-17. As we were about to begin another year of teaching and learning, we reflected on what it means for us as individuals, as students and teachers, and as a College community to “spread the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ.”

We then placed this thought in the context of the motto of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College, “telling the next generation” and concluded that this telling of the great deeds of God includes speaking of His glorious acts of splendour; meditating on God’s wonderful works; proclaiming His great deeds; and celebrating His abundant goodness (Ps. 145). We reminded each other that in ourselves we are not up to such a task, but that we may draw near to a gracious and compassionate God.

Our Orientation Agenda included words of welcome by the Board Chairman, an

overview of the program and courses, introductions of students and faculty, and a review of the Academic Calendar, including financial and library-related matters. In a nostalgic mode, we also shared some fond memories of former classmates,

“ we reflected on what it means for us as individuals, as students and teachers, and as a College community to “spread the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ.”

specifically of the ten students that form the “Class of ‘08” – bringing the number of CCRTC graduates to 177. As we begin a new academic year, we wish them the LORD’s rich blessings as they begin their teaching tasks in their respective settings: Miss Erica Broekema (Timothy, Hamilton), Miss Jessica Broersma (Immanuel Christian School, Winnipeg), Miss Barbara Bultena (Guido de Brès Christian High School, Hamilton), Mrs. Diana Forsyth Kelly (John Calvin School, Smithville), Mrs. Petrina Post Kelly (John Calvin Christian School, Burlington), Mr. James Spoelstra (Credo Christian School, Woodbridge), Miss Marianne Swaving (Maranatha Christian School, Fergus), Miss Amanda VanderHoeven (Credo Christian School, Woodbridge), Miss Jolene van Dijk (Dufferin Christian School, Carman), and Mr. Ryk Veldhuizen (Rehoboth Netherlands Reformed

School, Norwich). May the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ emanate from your classrooms also – spreading throughout your school and school communities!

Since our Orientation Day, much has happened already. Courses could begin, the business of completing assignments is in full swing, and the first practice teaching session of the year is already an event of the past.

The practical experience our students gain in classroom settings forms an invaluable part of the programs offered at the College. Having reviewed the practicum requirements of several Faculties of Education, and having consulted with the Ontario principals, the faculty proposed several changes in the current practice of the College. One change is an increase in the number of practicum placement weeks in the one-year Diploma of Education program. Another change is the duration and nature of the final practicum placement for students in the graduating class. This practicum will now reflect typical induction-into-the-profession characteristics, and students will be required to perform all duties of a classroom teacher with a high degree of independence, while still closely supervised by the principal or his or her designate.

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Reviewing the foundations of Reformed education

KEN LEFFERS



Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking to them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up (Deuteronomy 11:11).

The existence of our Reformed schools should not be taken for granted. We as a Reformed community need to constantly ask ourselves why we have our own schools. What is their purpose and character? What makes them different from other schools? Are they really necessary? It is important for every generation to re-think these questions for themselves. If we inherit these institutions from the past without reflecting upon them, they may become something followed out of habit or custom.

“ We examined the covenantal, confessional, and antithetical character of our schools, as well as the relationship between church, home and school. The combination of lectures, readings, discussions, and presentations helped new and experienced staff further their understanding of the purpose and need for our Christian schools.

Many teachers in our Christian schools are graduates of secular universities and colleges, where Reformed thinking is absent and humanistic philosophy is dominant. Therefore, it is important for these graduates, as well as all teachers, to continually reflect on the purpose and identity of Reformed schools. Thankfully there are institutions such as Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College to assist in this regard.

It was with great pleasure that Coaldale Christian School welcomed Dr. Christine van Halen-Faber to our doors this past summer. As principal and dean of Covenant College she is well-versed in the tenets of Reformed education, and we were very fortunate to have her visit our school. From June 30 – July 4, Dr. van Halen-Faber taught a five-day course on Reformed education. The focus of this seminar was to

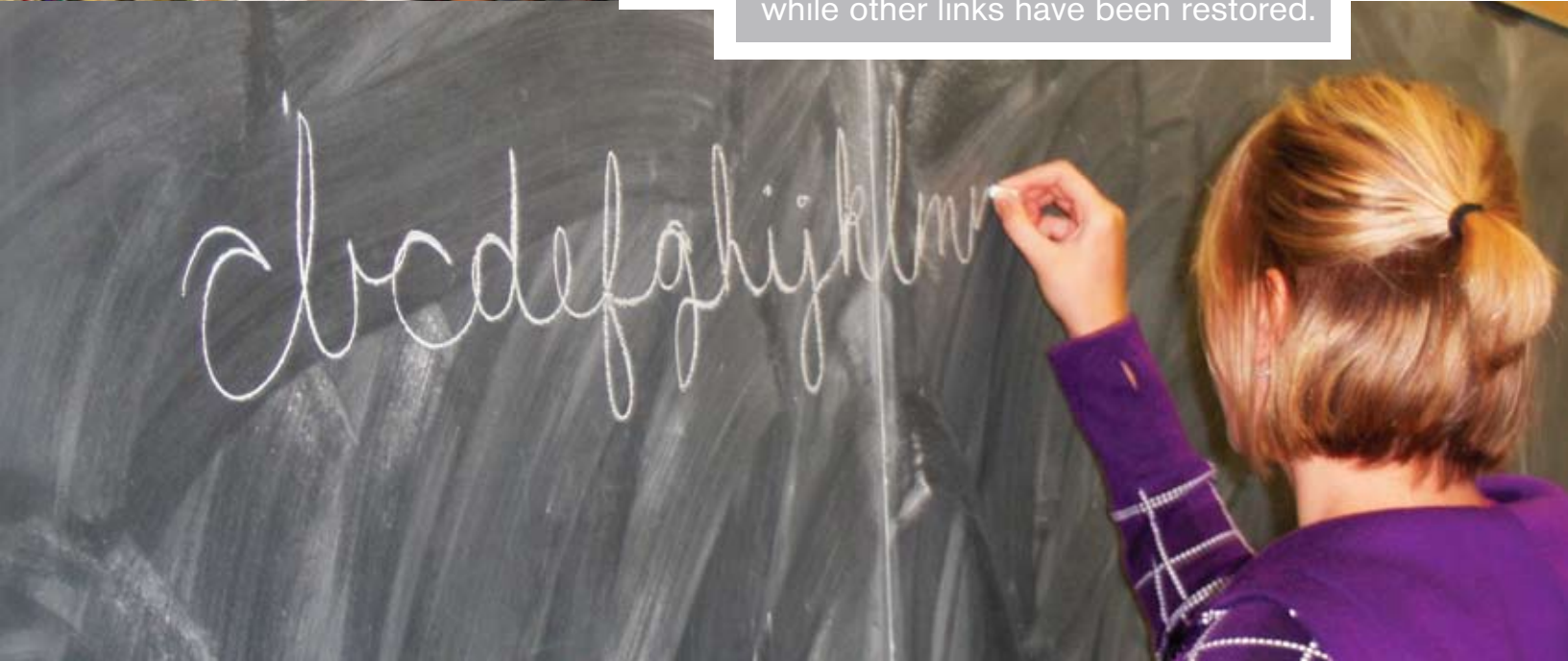


TO OUR READERS:

We invite you to visit the CCRTC website at

www.covenantteacherscollege.com

New links have been added, while other links have been restored.



examine the foundations of Reformed education and teaching practice. We examined the covenantal, confessional, and antithetical character of our schools, as well as the relationship between church, home and school. The combination of lectures, readings, discussions, and presentations helped new and experienced staff further their understanding of the purpose and need for our Christian schools. Dr. van Halen helped our staff to develop personal statements of Reformed education to force us to think about what “Reformed” education means to us. It was important for our staff to stop and reflect on the “how” and “why” we teach. Dr. van Halen’s wealth of knowledge and experience was invaluable as we reviewed the basic foundations of Reformed education.

So are our schools really necessary? What is their purpose and character? Throughout the in-service taught by Dr. van Halen-Faber we discussed, among other things, the “why” of our schools. We concluded that our schools assist parents in fulfilling their baptismal promises to instruct their children in the fear of the Lord. Reformed schools need to reflect the truth of God’s Word in their curriculum and atmosphere. They must recognize and uphold God’s truth in a world that hates the light and loves the darkness. Since every aspect of our lives is a struggle against sin and Satan, it is imperative that we equip our students for this reality. Education that is founded on God’s Word is Biblical and necessary for the instruction of our covenant children. Since public education does not acknowledge God, the Bible, the covenant, the Reformed confessions, or the antithesis, an alternative needs to be found. And that alternative is Reformed education.

The need for Reformed education has never been greater, as our society continues to rebel against God’s authority. Let us then continue to reflect on and support Reformed education. It is vital that together we establish God’s Word in our hearts and minds, and in the hearts and minds of our children.





Summer Bible Course 2008

WINNIPEG, MB JESSICA RAAP

This past summer, as the students started their summer holidays, 17 Immanuel Christian School (Winnipeg) and Dufferin Christian School (Carman) teachers went back to school – as students! From June 30 - July 4, 2008, we met at Redeemer Canadian Reformed Church for “Reformed Perspective on Bible Instruction 1”; our Summer Bible Course. Rev. Agema spent 4 days teaching us this condensed version of a Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College course. Each day, we started with opening devotions, followed by our first seminar, a break, our second seminar, lunch, an interactive workshop, and closing devotions.

This course was described as “examining the place of Bible history within the school curriculum...in the context of Reformed understanding of Bible instruction.”

On our first day, we dove right in to discuss the basics of Bible History. We addressed questions such as What is Bible History? Why teach it? What does it mean to us as Reformed teachers? Rev. Agema emphasized that we need to stress to our students that the histories recorded in the Bible happened to people just like us and that we need to know these histories to know better who we are as God’s children. As the histories are retold, our students should come to the point where they realize that they are part of this history of redemption. We discussed the meaning of the term “history of redemption” – giving attention to the concepts of the covenant and God’s kingdom work. Every Bible lesson we teach must fit within these two categories.

In the afternoon of the first day, we split into groups and discussed and compared stories from different Children’s Bibles. This made us realize that when teaching Bible history, we need to examine the Bible storybook we are using next to an open Bible. This will help us see if the Bible is followed properly. As

well, we need to consider whether or not the Bible storybook is applying the story from a covenantal perspective.

Our second and third days provided us with a general overview (from a redemptive-historical perspective) of the Old Testament and touched on the Gospels. This was a quick overview, but it helped us to see themes developed in each book. These themes point to redemption and God’s covenant and kingdom work being fulfilled.

“ Living in the joy of knowing Christ will make it easier for us to pass on this joy to our students.

For the workshop on our second day, we were again in small groups and used the book of Joshua to find how each chapter adds to the book’s main theme. This was an activity that really showed us God’s continual presence with His people.

For our third day’s workshop, we worked in small groups comparing Gospels, finding different methods of relaying the same histories, and finding similarities in the Gospels; we also talked about how the Gospels make use of the Old Testament.

On our fourth and last day, we spent time reviewing the Gospels and the Book of Acts to become more familiar with them in a redemptive-historical light.

After this, Rev. Agema spent some time with us going over the steps to preparing a Bible lesson. We applied these steps to two different Bible stories. We learned that when these steps are followed, we should be spending about an hour preparing a Bible lesson. This will ensure that we have a good understanding of all the parts involved and can share this with our students, helping them to a deeper understanding.



Rev. Agema encouraged us to look ahead and live in the joy of the covenant. Living in the joy of knowing Christ will make it easier for us to pass on this joy to our students.

This week of Bible instruction was enjoyable and educational for all of us, as teachers and as God's children. We learned much to help us in our jobs as Reformed teachers, and were strengthened by it. **Here's what some teachers thought about this course:**

“ To me the course was very useful, even if I wasn't a teacher. Rev. Agema showed so many things ‘anew” that it left me in awe again about God's redemptive history throughout the Bible. The implications for teaching Bible history were practical and down to earth.

What I found most helpful was the use of strategies to break down and teach a Bible story rather than simply reading the text to the students. The steps are to know the history, know the context (the big picture), use building blocks (look for important details), formulate a theme, organize material and, after telling the story, evaluate to see what can be improved. These steps help bring the story to life for the students.

I think the idea that stayed with me the most is that the Bible is real history involving real people and real events. Although I don't teach Bible, I do feel that having had this truth reaffirmed has resulted in a conscious effort to include it in both science (history of the Earth's Crust, effects of fall into sin, the flood), as well as in social studies with respect to hunting and gathering, Tubal-Cain forging bronze and iron, etc.

I found the text, *Symphony of Scripture*, to be an insightful summary of the history of redemption, with proper emphasis on the centrality of Christ. The lectures and readings dealing with the redemptive-historical interpretation of the Scriptures are essential for teachers and preachers. The discussion of themes within the history of redemption on the final day not only nicely rounded off the course, but also enriched the teachers' knowledge by indicating themes within the “big picture,” themes that show the unity of Scripture and of the works of the triune God throughout redemptive history.

...continued from page 3

In the planning for this year's practicum placements we gratefully acknowledge the support of schools across Canada and Washington. We again hope to place students in schools in Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia/ Lynden in sessions 2, 3, and 4 respectively, as well as in Ontario. During the practicum sessions, faculty members will make supervisory visits to the student teachers, and will also be available for presentations to teachers and other members of the school communities.

The theoretical component of the College's programs also saw some changes this year. Balancing the most efficient use of our instructors and class groupings with the most effective way of course content delivery is always a challenge. Changes in sessional faculty members resulted in minor adjustments in some areas, while other courses underwent a more major restructuring process. We are pleased to welcome Dr. Benne Faber and Dr. Steve Foster as sessional lecturers in the English Literature courses and the History of Ideas course respectively.

You may ask yourself the question why changes in the practical and theoretical components of the College's programs are necessary from time to time. The answer to this question contains at least two aspects – one that can be described as “internal” in emphasis, while the other might be considered more “external” in nature. The former attests to the fact that in the 25+ years of offering teacher education programs, annual program and course reviews have always been a standard fare on the menu of the faculty. Care is taken to present our students with a carefully chosen package of courses that will best prepare them for teaching in a Canadian Reformed school, while also maintaining a high degree of academic relevance. This leads me to the “external” element of the need for a regular program review: As a small, independent, non-accredited institution, our College has to ensure that its programs of studies mirror closely the requirements offered by accredited faculties of education. Course loads, course contents, and course structuring need to be considered carefully at all times in order to demonstrate the validity of our programs. We pray that these efforts may be blessed by forms of formal recognition in due time. Even more importantly, as faculty and Board of Covenant College we want to do everything we can to offer our students the best teacher education possible. We want to set our standards as high as possible in order to graduate students who will be effective teachers – teachers who are well-equipped to assist parents in the nurturing and education of children entrusted into their care by our heavenly Father. We acknowledge His faithful care over us, and commend our efforts into His hands, also throughout the academic year 2008-09.

from the finance committee

ANTHONY VIS, Treasurer

The 2008/2009 school year is already well under way. Although the last few years seemed to be a bit uncertain from a financial standpoint, it is a real pleasure to report that the CCRTC is no longer operating from a deficit. This comes as a blessing from the Lord. We'd like to thank everyone who has made an effort to show their support to the College over the past years. The surplus that we received this year was almost equal to the deficit of previous years. Please refer to the table for the year-end results. Included in the table is also the budget for the coming year.

At this time, we'd like to thank everyone who has donated to the College over the past year, and especially those who have signed up for automatic withdrawal. We are encouraged by this regular commitment that you have made to the training of our future teachers. We continue to encourage other donors to sign up for the automatic withdrawal, as this convenient method of donating provides a stable income for the College. Above all we are thankful to our Heavenly Father who has watched over the College for another year and has once again provided for the financial needs.

*Includes income from various workshops that the staff conducts in different communities.

2007/08 Results and 2008/09 Budget

Revenue	Actual Results for 2007-2008		Budget 2008-2009
	ACTUAL	% OF BUDGET	
Contributions / Donations	\$277 318	100%	\$252,000
Society Revenue	\$64 024	85%	\$85,000
Student Tuition	\$113 630	144%	\$106,000
Revenue for Capital Expense			\$25,600
*Misc.	\$2 956	296%	\$1,000
Total Revenue	\$457 929	106%	\$469,600
Expenses			
Remuneration - Teaching	\$267 325	100%	\$277,302
Fringe Benefits	\$40 522	94%	\$44,226
Prof. Dev./Princ. Conf.	\$691	31%	\$1,500
Research Leave	\$7 500	100%	\$7,500
Practicum Teaching	\$12 970	173%	\$7,500
Building Expenses	\$30 549	100%	\$42,788
Administration/Library	\$35 869	76%	\$63,184
Miscellaneous	\$26 607	102%	\$25,600
Total Expenses	\$422 150	98%	\$469,600
Revenue Less Expenses	\$35 779		\$0

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

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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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.