

*"...tell the next generation..."*

PSALM 78:4



CCRTC NEWS  
**SUMMER 2023**

## from the principal **CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER**

The month of June is a unique one in the life of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers. The celebratory graduation event is an event of the past, the Class of '23 is finding its new bearings, while returning teacher candidates have shifted their attention from being engaged in formal learning to being part of the summer workforce.

The halls and classrooms are quiet during the daytime, but the staff lounge can be a rather noisy place during "coffee & cookies time" when faculty members poke their heads out of their respective offices or take breaks from formal year-end

meetings. In the evenings, the building is often alive with Board and committee activities as the academic year wraps up.

From the faculty's perspective, June is a month in which we review courses, make plans for next year, and work on special projects such as preparing the accreditation application for the Ontario College of Teachers. Individual faculty members engage in their own research and offer assistance to schools by making presentations and conducting seminars and workshops.

Of all the places in our wonderful building, the front office and the library are probably the busiest spots as transcripts are prepared, audits are

conducted, handbooks and policy documents are reviewed and made print-ready, and inventory is taken.

Indeed, June is a special time during which we finish one year and make preparations for the next. Filled with deep gratitude, we look back over the past year in order to look ahead to a new year of teaching and learning. The graduation text chosen by the Class of '23, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col 3:16), is applicable always. God's Word shapes us – at work, at home, at school, and also during vacation time.

Enjoy a wonderful summer under the rich blessings of our Triune God.



## GRADUATION 2023 DEBBIE BETHLEHEM

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*

**Colossians 3:16**

On May 24, a smiling Dr. van Halen-Faber led Darrin, Tonya, Sheryl, and Kendra down the aisle at Cornerstone Church for the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC) Graduation. The Chairman, Mr. Bert Poort, opened the evening with the reading of Deut. 6:1-9 and prayer. He welcomed everyone, especially the graduands. He then introduced the keynote speaker, a former teacher and now preacher, Rev. Rodney Vermeulen.

Rev. Vermeulen's speech was entitled, "Be Your Redeemed Self". When it comes to teaching, *who* you are is more important than *what* you teach. So, *be* the child of God you are. *Be* the teacher who has been formed and shaped by The Teacher. *Be* the spirit-filled teacher that you are. A scripture-filled perspective is the most important aspect of teaching. Those redeemed teachers at CCRTC who shaped you, are who you have become! They, being their redeemed selves, helped you become your redeemed selves. Using quotes from Deut.

6:1-7, Rev. Vermeulen showed that Moses' concern for the Israelites was also multi-generational. Focusing on the text the students chose, Col. 3:16, the graduands were reminded that as redeemed teachers they must love and care for their students even when they are overwhelmed and frustrated. Just by being your redeemed selves, showing the fruit of the spirit, you will have a great impact on your students. Redeemed teachers do all things with thankfulness to God in their hearts.



After the main address, Dr. Christine van Halen addressed the graduands. She reminded them, and all of us, to be mindful of the Lord's faithfulness in our lives. Be thankful for all the daily occurrences like travelling mercies, in-person classes, freedom to study at CCRTC, and schools and teachers willing to take an active part in training future teachers, especially during the practicums. She also mentioned some special events from the past year: Mr. Mark den Hollander successfully completed his first year of teaching at the College. As she put it, "He was onboarded by the students." Jo-anne now has the leading role in the office, capably assisted by two new helpers, Alisha and Michelle. Thankfully, it has been a smooth transition. At the Board level, Mr. Bert Poort will become Past Chairman and Mr. Bill Buist will become the new Chairman.

By way of conclusion, the Principal addressed the graduands directly, "Darrin, Tonya, Sheryl, and Kendra... it's time to part ways. It is our prayer that you will run the course the Lord has set out for you. Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, run with perseverance the race marked out for you, always keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith." As the graduands would receive a devotional along with their diploma, they were encouraged to look for the chapter

### DIPLOMA OF EDUCATION:

#### **Darrin Bethlehem**

He will be teaching grade 7 at Bellstone Christian School. DV

### DIPLOMA OF TEACHING:

#### **Tonya Bartels**

She will be teaching grade 3 at ACRES. She will be getting married June 2nd. DV

#### **Sheryl Overbeek (nee Bouwman)**

She is presently teaching grade 2 at Oxford Reformed Christian School (ORCS). She will be taking on the special role of mother this summer. DV

#### **Kendra Schuurman**

She will be teaching grade 4 at ORCS and will also be married this summer. DV.





that will fall in their 17th week of teaching, just before Christmas break...it will be very appropriate as it deals with the very text you have chosen. Dr. van Halen then declared the graduands ready to graduate officially!

Darrin gave the Valedictory Address in which he summed up the quirks and characters of each graduate in a humorous way, including one student who liked to hide on the floor. He expressed thankfulness to the instructors at CCRTC and especially to our covenant Father for all his blessings.

The program concluded with a presentation on behalf of W.A.T.C.H. by Beth Stel who presented a cheque for \$8,000, and with praise and thanks to God.

Mr. Bill Buist, as new Chairman, and as uncle to one of the students, closed the evening with a prayer of thanksgiving to our heavenly Father.

## Executive Musical Chairs

Even a Board table engages in musical chairs sometimes and the CCRTC Board forms no exception.

We express our warmest thanks to **Mr. Bert Poort** who after a short stint as Vice-Chairman served his term as Chairman and has now moved into the Past-Chairman's role. Bert, we thank you for your wisdom and leadership during a few challenging years!

At this time, we welcome **Mr. Bill Buist** to the position of Chairman, having served briefly as Vice Chairman. Bill, we wish you God's blessings as you take on this new role.

**Mrs. Mary DeBoer** vacated her chair as Secretary in December, having served many years in that role. We thank her for her deep commitment to the College. At this time, we welcome **Mrs. Michelle Helder** as the Board Secretary.

The Executive Committee benefited from the virtual presence of **Mr. Ron DeHaan**, a retired teacher who now lives in Chilliwack, BC, and who joined the meetings as a member-at-large. We thank him for his thoughtful input.

Lastly, **Mr. Dan Witten's** term as Treasurer is coming to an end. To ensure a good transition, the Board is looking to appoint an Assistant Treasurer. If you have the expertise and are looking for a new challenge please consider whether this role might be for you.

And that brings us back to the beginning of our musical chairs: We need a new Vice-Chairman! Please contact the College, one of the Governors, or one of the executive Officers for more information.

## GREETINGS FROM W.A.T.C.H.!

BETH STEL

The summer newsletter means that it is time once again to update you on what W.A.T.C.H. has been doing over the past year. We were blessed to be able to experience the regular flow of events this past year – the committee's meeting in the fall, local representatives holding fundraisers in the first quarter of 2023,

and our presentation of a cheque for \$8,000.00 at graduation. Although I thanked them at the graduation ceremony, I would like to repeat our thanks here to our representatives and to each and every donor. It is because of you that we can support the College in this way! Thank you!! We pray that our heavenly Father will bless these efforts and use them for the furthering of his kingdom.

The W.A.T.C.H. Committee,  
Beth Stel (President)  
Chandra Vanderboom (Treasurer)  
JoAnn VanIperen (Secretary)  
Monica Riemer (Member-at-Large)  
Eleanor Boeringa (CCRTC Liaison)





## far away - and yet at home!

Two teacher candidates share their out-of-province practicum experiences:

When I heard there was an opportunity to complete a practicum out of province, I had to take it - for two reasons. First, I

had heard about differences in education between the provinces. I was interested in observing this firsthand. Second, I love to travel, and this was a way to see more of Canada.

During my time away I indeed got to experience both of these things. While in Neerlandia I toured Jasper, Banff, Maligne Canyon, and crossed an ice bridge. I saw the Northern Lights, and the sunrises and sunsets every day were breathtaking! What a Creator we have. I also did what I really came for: Teach in Grade 2.

Although there are many differences, many things are still the same. In both provinces there is the obvious goal to "Tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord" (Psalm 78:4). The commitment to walk alongside parents in keeping the vows they declared at their children's baptism has been tangible in every Reformed Christian school I have entered. The teachers in Neerlandia are no different. Their care and love for a God-centred education was always noted. One big difference is that they receive government funding for their schools, which we do not. This comes with blessings of extra E.A. support, less tuition, and higher teacher wages. But it comes with the added stipulation of following Government guidelines. At some point, this may become a hard thing to do, in the light of God's Word. I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Neerlandia, and am encouraged by the guidance, support, and hospitality I was shown by everyone there!

**Natalie VanLuik**

This past practicum session, I had the wonderful opportunity to go out of province. Makayla

and I both went to Dufferin Christian School in Carman, Manitoba. Upon arriving, we were very warmly welcomed by our hosts. The school community happened to be skating at the school on the evening that we arrived, so our hosts showed us the school. We got to see the excellent, ocean-themed decorations for reading month. The school put a lot of effort into this, and I distinctly remember seeing the principal dressed up as a ship's captain for the last day of reading month.

I was in the high school portion of the school for my practicum and had the opportunity to teach several Math classes and a Reformed Studies class. The Math curriculum covered similar topics as in Ontario but was broader in Grades 9 and 10, specializing more in the upper high school classes. The high school Reformed Studies classes were uniquely set up. All the high school students were split between four classes, rotating each term. Each class had students from grades 9-12.

While in Manitoba, we had a few opportunities to visit Winnipeg and skated at the

Forks with some friends. In all, it was a blessing to have been able to do a practicum in Manitoba. Experiencing the uniqueness of teaching covenant youth in another province was beneficial to my perspective on teaching. It is wonderful to see how schools in both Ontario and Manitoba strive to teach in a God-honouring manner.

**Chantal Lof**

To sum it up: Although both of us were far away, we felt at home in our respective school and church communities where we experienced that a shared faith is a beautiful blessing from our Covenant God!

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