



Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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



www.covenantteacherscollege.com





from the BOARD SHARON HOESINK

The 2009 Annual General Meeting is now a thing of the past. Many aspects of the college were discussed at length and in depth, and over the course of this two-day meeting it became clear that supporting the college at any level – be it as a governor, a committee member, or a member of the broader Reformed community – is a matter of the heart.

Much has been said about the heart in Scripture. Strong’s Concordance lists over 800 texts that reference the heart. Genesis 6:5 records the first such listing, “The LORD saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.” Glancing down the columns, it becomes clear that many of the references identify a similar sentiment. It is no wonder, then, that as Reformed Christians, we confess “I am inclined by nature to hate God and my neighbour” (The Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A. 5).

graduated, 68 of whom are currently teaching in our schools on a full-time basis. College graduates continue to serve in ways that extend beyond the classroom. Many sit around the local board or education committee table and bring a unique perspective to it. Others faithfully serve as volunteers in the school, be it in the classroom or in some other way.

They serve . . . Much is said in Scripture about serving as well. Christ came as one who served (Luke 22:27) and, as his followers, we are called to serve one another (Galatians 5:13). How blessed it is to be able to serve a Reformed community as teacher, board or committee member, volunteer, or supporter. To whichever of these you have been called may you, as member of the communion of saints, “use your gifts readily and cheerfully for the benefit and well-being of the other members” (Q&A. 55).

It is our desire, as members of the board of Covenant College, to work also for the benefit and well-being of the communities we serve. To that end, a number of key decisions were made at the 2009 AGM. Highlights of this meeting may have already come to you via the Featherpen Newsletter that is published in your local school magazine. One noteworthy decision is, however, worth repeating.

The board ratified the proposal from the Program & Personnel committee that a fourth full-time faculty member be appointed effective August 1, 2010, D.V. This proposal came as the result of several years of deliberation. It outlined nine reasons why this appointment is necessary, reasons relating to practicum and course changes, recent board decisions, current faculty implications, and post-graduate mentoring. Quoting from the proposal, “Technology is enabling new ways



“ We did so with our hearts... but also with our heads. We are convinced that this appointment is necessary if the college is to move forward.

Neither Scripture nor the catechism end there, however. Because of what the Father has done for us through the Son and by his Spirit, we are to live a life of thankfulness. Our new life implies “a love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works” (Q&A. 90). We are called to a new obedience.

It is on the basis of this understanding that Covenant College was established. The Reformed community in Canada recognized that, in order for the growing number of day schools to be adequately staffed, a teachers college of our own was a necessity. In the years since the college first opened its doors, 177 persons have

of teaching and sharing information throughout the world. The board and Information Technology Committee are cognizant of this development, and based on decisions made at previous AGMs, are exploring several ways of offering distance education at Covenant College. However, one matter is apparent during all these discussions: finding the time to make this happen." Also, "Through its staff, our college has much to offer. The broader educational Reformed community would benefit from the faculty's intellectual writing and community service such as offering workshops, lectures, courses, etc. The addition of a fourth instructor would offer opportunity for professional development for the benefit of the community." And finally, "New initiatives require additional time. These initiatives include the accreditation process, preparation for an external review, information technology, distance education, preparedness for summer teaching, increased international contact, etc. The principal requires adequate time to address these initiatives."

The board did not make this decision lightly. Over the past number of years, we have had great difficulty meeting our budget. Several times, an urgent appeal has been necessary in order to avoid ending the year in a deficit position. Knowing this, how could we, in good conscience, adopt a proposal that has a significant budgetary implication?

We did so with our hearts... but also with our heads. We are convinced that this appointment is necessary if the college is to move forward. We pray that the LORD will bless this decision and, by stirring the hearts of many, will make it possible for us to acquire the necessary funds.

It truly is a matter of the heart . . .



Academic Studies 503

Perspectives on Literature BENNE FABER

What role does literature play in reflecting and shaping the major streams of thought in the 20th century? What insight does reading literature provide into the modern and postmodern mind? These questions are at the heart of the new "Perspectives on Literature" course for the Year III students in the Diploma of Teaching program.

The course borrows the emphasis on literature from other academic courses for the Dip. Teach. and combines it with the historical and philosophical focus of the course in the History of Ideas. In this way, the modernist and postmodernist stories, poems, play and novel we are reading are seen to embody central themes of the 20th century. A visit to the Art Gallery of Hamilton (followed by good food and conversation in Hess Village) allowed us to explore similar themes in the visual arts. Throughout, Dr. Oosterhoff's *Postmodernism: A Christian Appraisal* serves as our guide in setting this literature in the wider context of the cultural shifts of the current era. Ultimately, the main objective of the course is to discern and evaluate within a Reformed Christian frame of reference the worldview assumptions expressed through the arts, especially literature. Learning to discern in order to teach with discernment.

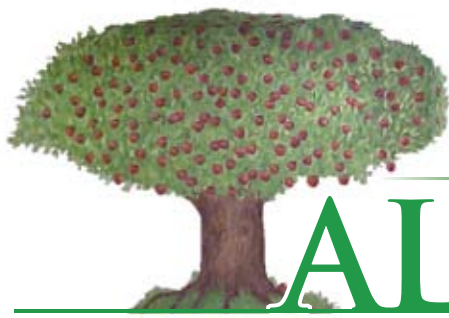
I'm sure that the students in the class sometimes feel like Pi, adrift on the ocean of bewildering ideas in a life boat, with a Bengal tiger (me?) as travelling companion. Or they may feel, like Marlow in Joseph Conrad's short novel, that we are moving into a heart of moral and cultural darkness: "The horror, the horror!" (Me, again!?) Perhaps students' experience is a little more like the falcon in W.B. Yeats's poem, turning in ever-widening circles away from the centre. (Definitely me.) Or simply lost, like the poor characters in Tom Stoppard's absurdist play, without direction. In short, we often don't feel at home in this modern and postmodern world--a world that lost its moorings when it abandoned Christ, our sure and steadfast anchor. Thus, we may see the multiple, shifting perspectives in and around the literature we are reading in this course in the eternal perspective of God's Word, which endures forever.

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.



CCRTC

ALUMNINEWS

HOW IT WAS AND HOW IT IS

We hope to include this feature from time to time allowing some of the 177 graduates opportunity to share their college and post college experiences.



DEBBIE JOHNSON

For much of my childhood I planned to be a teacher. But as the years went by and it was time to decide, I almost changed my mind. Nevertheless, when September 1988 arrived, a quiet, shy Debbie entered the Hamilton church basement with the rest of the students. There were a few other BC-ers there, but most of the faces were unfamiliar, including those of my new instructors.

Little did I know how much the decision to enroll would affect my life. I look back at that time now and remember how I thought I had come so far and knew so much. I was quite mature; after all, I was a high school graduate! In truth, I had no idea of what to expect. But by Christmas, when I went to BC to visit my family, changes in timid Debbie had already begun to take place.

The three years of study and practicum weren't always easy. In high school I had dealt with essays and exams, but teaching in front of others was quite another story. Sometimes it went well, at other times less so. But I always learned something. There are still lessons that come to mind today when I am standing in front of a group of students or even adults.

It is almost eighteen years ago that I taught my first class at Timothy School, Hamilton, ON. Although no longer quite as timid, I was uncertain as to what the year would bring. That first year had its challenges. So did the next year and the next. In fact, all thirteen years of teaching challenged me, but that wasn't bad.

We had been well trained. Our instructors had taught us to think. We had learned to plan, but to also accept and deal with the unexpected.

My teaching career began at Timothy school in Hamilton. I stayed there for twelve years. Most of the time was spent in the grade four classroom, but I also did some teaching in grades five, six, seven, and eight. After Mr. VanderVen became seriously ill, I quickly had to exchange my role as vice-principal for one as principal. There was a lot to learn in a short time. My thirteenth teaching year was at John Calvin School in Burlington, ON. It was a wonderful way to finish that chapter of my life.



aLISHA BOERINGA

How can you ever be prepared for being a teacher? How can someone teach you how to handle the exhaustion, the frustration and the chaos? Can anyone tell you about the joy of seeing smiling and excited faces and about the pleasure of seeing the “light” go on when a child understands a hard concept?

And of course, no one can prepare you for a child that throws up all inside of his desk or a student that comes in from recess covered from head to toe with mud!

Yes, there are things that no one can prepare you for. It really is a “trial of fire” for the first little while.

When I came to the Teachers College, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. I had recently graduated with a music degree from a secular university, so it seemed strange to me to go to college.

My year at the College was well spent. I learned a lot about children, about subjects and about teaching methods. These have all been necessary in my teaching career. I learned how to look at curriculum, how to write lesson plans, how to engage the interest of a student, and how to deal with the differing abilities of the children. My practicum sessions were also integral to my education. The advice from the associate teachers has helped me in many ways. I learned much about how to teach the students, how to set up a classroom, and I was instructed in various other routines and methods.

But even more importantly, I learned what it meant to be a Reformed teacher. The teachers at the College worked hard to instill in us the need of making our faith an integral part of our daily life as a teacher. We also studied about the ideas that have shaped our world so that we could help our students to see the truth of the Bible and to refute falsehoods.

I am now in my second year of teaching. I have learned to deal with long hours, cranky students, lots of marking and many extracurricular duties. I’m still learning how to balance work and my personal life. My husband, Mike, has had to put up with a lot! He doesn’t even mind stepping in and gluing, cutting, colouring, researching and even doing a bit of marking. Oh, and he’s great when setting up bulletin boards!

Through teaching, I have learned more about my own weaknesses and shortcomings, and I have learned to put my trust more and more in my Heavenly Father. I have tried to teach my students to trust in their God, and I have also learned much from them about what trust means.

Although teaching is hard work and although it can be stressful, it is also a job that allows you to grow. It is very rewarding to work daily with God’s covenant children and with colleagues who have the same faith and dedication to the Lord that you have. Reformed education is definitely a wonderful and precious gift from the Lord!

Soon after that school year was completed, I married my husband, Bob. In the almost five years we have now been married, the Lord has blessed us with two fun-loving girls, now close to three and four years old. What a change this has been for me!

A change, and yet not a complete departure from what I had been doing. Those now in my care are a lot younger, and they don’t leave at three o’clock in the afternoon, but I know that some of what I learned at Covenant and throughout my teaching career has helped me in my role as mother. I’m also fairly active in the church and school community and there, too, the skills I learned are a great benefit. Teachers College is an institution whose purpose is to prepare teachers for their role in the classroom. Covenant certainly did that, but it also did more than that. In many ways it prepared me for life as an active member of the communion of saints. We were told that we were teaching fellow covenant children. That gives the proper perspective to everything we did in the classroom, but also to everything I do in our home now and in the communion of saints. We are members of the Covenant. What a blessing! What a gift! So is Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College.



from the PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER

We are well past the mid-point of the 2008-09 school year and much has happened since our latest report in the CCRTC Newsletter. As the days, weeks, months, and terms of an academic year fly by it is easy to take for granted the many blessings we enjoy on a daily basis. Good health, safe travelling, the will to persevere, the ability to think and work, the freedom to teach and learn, good hope and trust for the future, and so much more. As faculty and students we are grateful to our covenant God for his faithfulness and love – and for not letting go of the work of his hands.

At the beginning of the second semester we could welcome (back) several sessional lecturers and start several new courses. Every Tuesday, in the late afternoon, most of the students disappear – if only to join Ms. Cobie Van Eerden in the Guido de Brès art room. Artistic vibrations come also from Dr. Benne Faber's classroom where Perspectives on Literature is a brand-new course offering that takes students on virtual (and real) excursions into the world of text and re-presentation. An altogether different language is heard in the room where Mme Dominique Wildeboer teaches the French Methods course: Dominique is a native Québécoise who has taught French for many years at the John Calvin Christian School in Burlington. Her teaching experience at

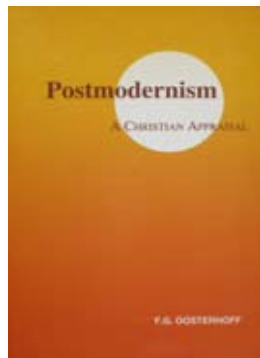
the elementary school adds a rich dimension to the French Methods course, and we welcome her as a sessional instructor at Covenant. Mr. Bill Horsman's science classes sparkle with student-led "experiments" (or demonstrations) and vibrate with bellows of laughter every now and again. Rev. Agema's Bible course and Dr. Foster's History of Ideas course round out the contributions made by the sessional instructors. Together with these colleagues, Mr. Gunnink, Miss Kingma, and Dr. van Halen continue to keep the students engaged in their preparation for the craft (or art or science) of Christian teaching. Assignments, discussions, projects, exams, and other regular activities are punctuated by practicum placements in which students apply, practise, and extend their newly-acquired theoretical knowledge and skills. We thank the schools across Canada and beyond for opening their doors to our students: Your involvement in their learning process is deeply appreciated.

Closely linked to what goes on in classrooms, our library represents another hub of activity. Circulation numbers have seen a very healthy increase, and during the past year several acquisitions could be made and processed. Of special interest are the books that are purchased as part of the "Dr. Frederika G. Oosterhoff Collection." These books represent writings

on worldview-related topics, and form an invaluable resource to the "apologetics discussion group" consisting of high school teachers and interested others. We remind our readers that the library is open to the public: We would love to add your name to our list of patrons.

From time to time the College is privileged to host special presentations to the student body and beyond. Earlier this year, Wayne and Cheronne Van der Heide provided us with a glimpse into their very special teaching task in Papua New Guinea. Their commitment, courage, and sense of purpose inspired us all, and it is our prayer that they may continue to be a blessing to the people who seek to be taught in God's Word. Recently, it was Dr. Geert Spyker who in an engaging way made an audience of teachers and other interested persons think mathematics for a whole evening. We are grateful we could experience his enthusiasm as he shared with us his love for God's world and work – also the world of numbers –, and trust that many were inspired by his presentation and by the many "playful" examples he provided to illustrate his points!

In addition to these international visitors, we could meet again with four colleagues from the Gomarus College in Groningen, the Netherlands. The purpose of their visit was to confirm and extend contacts with Reformed elementary and secondary schools in Ontario, in the context of an in-



novative English immersion program now offered at their school. The contact with the College focused on seeking ways in which some of our native English-speaking students in the Diploma of Education program could spend an extended practicum placement in the Netherlands. As faculty of the College we are excited about this new initiative, and hope that in the future there will be some students who are equally excited to accept this invitational challenge by our Dutch colleagues.

With the arrival of Spring comes the Graduation (Friday, May 29 at 8:15 p.m. in the Cornerstone Church, Hamilton ON) of fourteen students, final preparation for a summer course (in July, Rev. Agema hopes to offer the in-service Bible course in Neerlandia AB), as well as the planning for the next academic year. Judging by the applications and expressions of interest received to-date, we look forward to receiving an encouraging number of new students into our programs next year. Changes to some courses, as well as adjustments made to the class combinations, and the timing and duration of practicum placements have gradually led to an increased teaching load for the full-time faculty. More importantly, the need for continued support of

the very core of Reformed education and what it stands for – e.g., (re-)articulating the identity of our schools and translating this into classroom practice – motivates Covenant College's board and faculty to review the purpose of the College on an ongoing basis. As a supplement to the regular programs offered to the full-time students at the College, the Board and faculty continue to investigate options for in-service support to teachers. In time, we hope to be able to extend the services offered to schools by responding to real needs as perceived by administrators, boards and education committees. The decision made at the February 2009 Annual General Meeting to appoint a fourth full-time lecturer (effective August 1, 2010) is certainly cause for gratitude on the part of the faculty. We pray that these plans may indeed receive the LORD's blessings.

Spring is also the season in which school societies hold membership meetings and administrators in schools look at organizing year-end/beginning professional development days. Please keep in mind that College board and faculty members are willing to participate in your local school activities by making presentations and/or offering workshops or seminars.

“ We thank the schools across Canada and beyond for opening their doors to our students: Your involvement in their learning process is deeply appreciated.

Remember that we are only a phone call or email away.

Lastly, if you are in the Hamilton area, consider paying us a visit: Whether you are a supporter or a prospective student, seeing and experiencing for yourself what Covenant College is all about will bring us closer to you and you closer to us. If you are not in the Hamilton area, feel free to visit us virtually via our website at www.covenantteacherscollege.com and get to know us that way. Your suggestions for improvements and your comments of support are always welcome, for only when we work together can we make a difference in the education of God's children. Together with Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College let us form a strong and supportive community that supports all its members in their work in the classrooms and board rooms of our Reformed schools. Let us do so to the praise of God's glory and as willing instruments that spread everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ (2 Cor. 2: 14-16, our theme text of the year).

from the finance committee

ANTHONY VIS, Treasurer

Once again we find ourselves at the mid-way point of the fiscal year. We have just finished our Annual General Meeting (AGM) with all the governors from across Canada. During this meeting, some misconceptions and concerns were brought forward which I would like to deal with in this write-up.

One misconception deals with how the Teachers College is financed. Many believe that the funding comes primarily from our school societies. Although this would be ideal, it is in fact not the case. Most schools give only a small token amount each year. This is why 59% of our budget consists of donations from individuals or companies. It is for this reason also that you will find that most of our fund-raising efforts are focused on individuals within our congregations.

At this time we'd also like to remind you that the requested annual donation is \$396, but we will gratefully accept donations of any amount. You may fill out the form below and send it to the College with a cheque, or pass it on to your Teachers College representative. There is also the automatic withdrawal form if this is the method that you prefer.

Another concern that was brought up during the AGM was that using automatic withdrawal will cost the College money. In fact, the College pays the small monthly fee of \$8.50 for the automatic withdrawal system. This is a flat rate that does not change based on the amount of automatic withdrawals. So you don't have to worry that signing up for automatic withdrawal will cost the College extra money.

Once again we offer thanks to the Lord who continues to keep the College in His care. We also ask that you continue to remember the College in both your prayers and your financial giving.

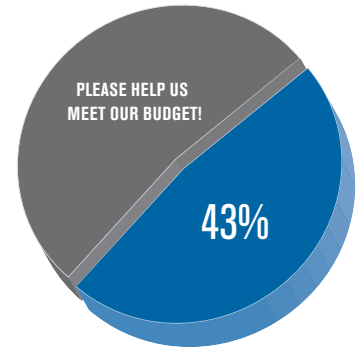
*These funds were raised for a specific curriculum project which was not included in our budget. The offsetting costs are included under miscellaneous expenses.

Results at Mid-Year 2008/2009

| Revenue | ACTUAL | % OF BUDGET |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Contributions / Donations | \$119,961 | 43% |
| Society Revenue | \$40,680 | 48% |
| Student Tuition | \$111,300 | 105% |
| Miscellaneous Revenue* | \$12,000 | |
| Total Revenue | \$283,941 | 60% |
| Expenses | | |
| Remuneration - Teaching | \$144,098 | 52% |
| Fringe Benefits | \$18,099 | 41% |
| Prof. Dev./Princ. Conf. | \$360 | 24% |
| Research Leave | \$3,750 | 50% |
| Practicum Teaching | \$6,074 | 81% |
| Building Expenses | \$16,876 | 55% |
| Administration/Library | \$27,926 | 51% |
| Miscellaneous* | \$18,328 | 92% |
| Total Expenses | \$235,615 | 53% |
| Revenue Less Expenses | \$48,325 | |

Contributions & Donations of Revenue

Results at Mid-Year 2008/2009 is 43% of Contributions/Donations Budget



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.