



Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

OCTOBER 2016



CCRTC NEWS

FALL 2016

www.covenantteacherscollege.com



from the PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER

With the early morning frost on roofs and windshields, the shifting and changing hues of the plants, shrubs, and trees around us, the departure of hummingbirds and Canada geese it's becoming very clear: A beautiful summer is giving way to a glorious autumn. It also means it's time for our Fall Newsletter.

So much has happened in and around Covenant Teachers College since the publication of our Spring Newsletter. In May, seven students graduated from their respective programs, and are now busily engaged in what they trained for while at Covenant Teachers College: Teaching! School communities in London, Norwich, Owen Sound, Smithville, and Winnipeg warmly welcomed our graduates, and continue to provide them with a supportive environment in which they can employ their God-given talents. We wish Janita, Heidi, Tim, Erica, Katrina, Chantel, and Kristen the Lord's rich blessings as they guide their students on a path of discovery of our Father's world.

It is good to note that school boards, as well as the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies, are well aware of the importance of creating a supportive professional development environment for all their teachers. To be (and to remain) a teacher who is well-versed in applying biblical principles to every-day teaching involves hard work and requires

constant vigilance. To be able to do one's regular task in new and exciting ways that engage our students adds yet another challenging dimension. Most school Boards acknowledge the importance of ongoing professional development, and some Boards have established a routine of inviting College faculty to present a series of courses or in-service summer seminars to an entire team of teachers. In July, the teachers and support staff of Coaldale Christian School in Alberta took three days to explore the foundations of Reformed education and biblical virtues under the guidance of Dr. Christine van Halen. In August, Mr. Allard Gunnink and the staff at Covenant Christian School in London ON explored ways in which to practice differentiated instruction in the Christian classroom. Other Boards are looking ahead: The first request for in-service courses in Summer 2017 is in!

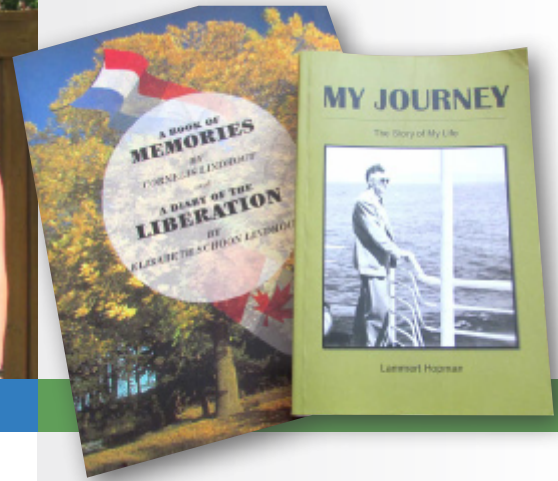
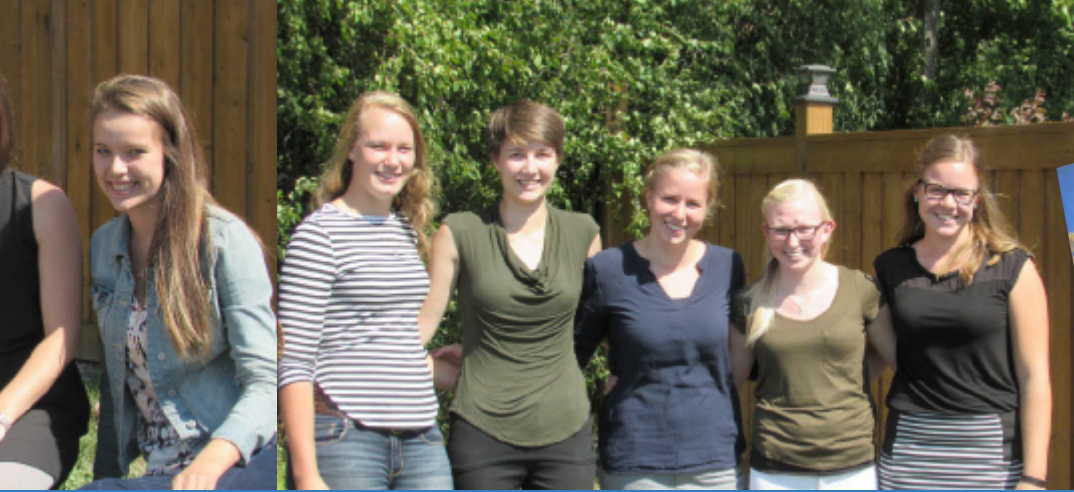
Faculty members at CCRTC have also been engaged in professional development. Mr. Jack Huizenga has embarked on a program of doctoral

“ I can do everything through him who gives me strength”

– PHIL 4:13

studies at Brock University. We acknowledge the support of the Board in this regard, and wish Jack the Lord's blessings on these endeavours. As full-time faculty, we have spent considerable time developing the 2-year Diploma of Education program during the summer. Several courses required streamlining, while other courses needed to be developed from scratch. These are exciting challenges and opportunities!

Speaking of challenges and opportunities, the work of the College also takes place in a world-wide context. In September, the Principal participated in the Fifth International Conference of Reformed Education. Together with colleagues from The Netherlands, South Korea, South Africa, India, and Canada she explored the topic “*The relevance of Reformed schools for society*”. The keynote speakers addressed both the “personal” [or inside-out], and the “public” [or outside-in] formation of our students. One of the take-aways from the conference was that as Reformed Christian schools we need to let our distinct light shine within



the community in which we are placed. Assisting parents in the nurturing of their children by offering faithful, excellent education is the first and foremost task of a school. It not only implies preparing students for a world of future study or work in which they can attest to the hope that lives within them, but also educating and training students in ways that benefit society at-large.

It is interesting that similar discussions around the question “Does society know our Reformed schools exist?” have taken place around the continuing efforts towards seeking accreditation for the 2-year Diploma of Education program. As you will have noted from the regular updates, meetings with government officials have been positive, and to that end the CCRTC is positioning itself to submit the full application shortly after the 2017 Annual General Meeting. To create a climate for a positive reception for such an application, a number of schools in Ontario will be asked to join us in meeting area MPPs. The intent is not only to introduce school communities to the MPP, but also to demonstrate the schools’ connection to the College based on the defining foundational principles we have in common. We are blessed by your interest and financial contributions towards this cause, and ask that you continue your prayerful support for this important endeavour.

As you can see, the 2016-2017 academic year has gone off to a very good start. By the time you read this Newsletter, practicum placements will be in full swing, and the full-time faculty (Mr. Allard Gunnink, Mr. Jack Huizenga, Mr. Keith Sikkema and Dr. Christine van Halen), the sessional instructors this semester (Rev. Douwe Agema, Mme Teresa Boisvert, Dr. Ben Faber, and Miss Judy Kingma), along with our 22 students are well on the way towards the final exams that will mark the end of the semester. In all of these matters, our reliance is fully on the Lord – and the theme text chosen for this year will give us the sure confidence and hope in the knowledge, “*I can do everything through him who gives me strength –Phil 4:13.*”

Telling the Next Generation

Recently, two very special books were added to our library. Both are “real stories of real families”. Both illustrate early immigration experiences. Both are written with the intent of “telling the next generation”,... and both are compiled, edited, illustrated, and published by daughters who wanted to keep the family narratives alive. *A book of memories* tells the story of the Cornelius Lindhout family, while *My journey – The story my life* recounts the life of Lammert Hopman, who recently celebrated his 100th birthday!

At CCRTC, books such as these will help our students appreciate the pioneers of a previous generation, their deep roots, their love for family, their courage, and their desire to be faithful to the Lord and his Church.

REQUEST: If you have a similar collection of stories to share, we would love to hear from you!



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT KEN STEL

“ Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.” – ECCL. 9:10

The work of training teachers, under God's grace, has begun for the 36th year of operation at Covenant Teachers College. What a year it is shaping up to be! With Accreditation and all that entails looming large in our sights, there is a good deal of extra activity and preparation to ensure we have the necessary grounds covered and all of the parties involved know who we are, what we do and how we do it. At this point we anticipate making our submission to the Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development by March 2017.

In order to meet the financial needs that come with Accreditation, a sub-committee was established to drive a program of fundraising. This committee's dedicated members outlined a two phase fundraising approach with the first phase being a “quiet” campaign to generate the initial seed funds through personal contacts in our communities. The second portion is the “public” campaign phase which seeks to raise funds throughout our communities. Overall the goal, approved by the Board of Governors, is to raise \$350,000 for the purpose of Accreditation. The first phase has wrapped up with \$107,000 raised. The goal had been set at \$100,000. So, we have been blessed with surpassing our goal. It is a fabulous start to the campaign and our thanks go out to those who helped get us to this point; those who raised the funds, but most importantly those across Canada and into the U.S.A. who so willingly supported this endeavor

in starting us toward our final goal. We are thrilled with the positive response received so far. As we proceed to the second phase we pray the LORD will continue to bless us with what is needed.

The faculty has been diligent over the past school year in preparing for the change of the one year Diploma of Education program into a two year program, ensuring it met ministry requirements for the B.Ed. program. It is this program that we are specifically looking to have accredited. A good deal of work has been done to compare the program to the ministry requirements and in the course of doing so we have been delighted to see that we were already very near what was asked of by the ministry. The exercise has been a good one, both to confirm what was already in place, but at the same time to see where we could perhaps strengthen and augment. The program is currently in place and being run for its first year.



One thing that has become abundantly clear as we have been proceeding down the road to Accreditation is that being uniquely Reformed in our approach to Education is not a hindrance when it comes to the ministry. In meetings with ministry officials we are being encouraged to be thoroughly Reformed and to continue in that vein. Faith communities are encouraged.

Along the road, we have also seen that there will not be a lack of speedbumps. A recent shuffle of the Ontario cabinet has slowed our progress in ministry contact. Names and faces, together with ministerial changes, have meant the need to step back and wait for the changes to take effect. Once the ministry “gets going again” we can make new contacts and continue down the road. This is an unfortunate but not unexpected part of the Accreditation process.

Being known by the government officials who will be determining whether or not to even recommend our application is of the utmost importance. To that end Christine van Halen and Karl Veldkamp together with our government relations consultant form our contact committee who are active in meeting with officials at the Ministry and the Ontario College of Teachers. They are engaged in making the necessary contacts, determining what is necessary for a successful application and creating the necessary comfort level in the ministry. They have been putting

in a tremendous effort on our behalf for which we express our appreciation. May they receive the wisdom and words needed to present our College to the various government representatives!

As the doors to the College opened for the 36th year, we have also welcomed 22 students. This ties the highest enrolment the college has seen. We wish our new students a quick acclimatization to the routines of the College and together with our returning students, every blessing and perseverance in faith as they pursue the goal of becoming educators who stand beside parents to aid in the educating of covenant children. At times the task of preparation will be daunting and not without its setbacks but, like all things in life, difficulties are the way the LORD sharpens us and matures us as His children. Go forward in diligence and in prayerful trust!

So, as we proceed we ask for your prayers for the success of the Accreditation fundraising campaign; for the courage, strength, energy and wisdom necessary for those involved in the process and meeting with government officials; for the work of the Governors throughout Canada and the U.S.A.; for all involved to work with all our might despite our inhibitions and weaknesses, that we may proceed trusting God for every success.

Our apple trees...

Visitors to Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College generally take a very special interest in our student lounge. No, it's not the unique collection of disparate pieces of furniture that catches the eye, but rather the apple tree that graces the wall. For many years, the College has had the tradition to place the name of a graduate on an apple on the tree. However, our tree was running out of space. As a result, a new tree was added in September!

We warmly thank Heidi Breukelman and Kristen Oosterhoff, members of the “Class of ‘16”, for their artistic abilities that helped shape this new tree into an eye-catching addition to the student lounge. For those who keep track, there are two hundred forty-six apples in total: As of September 2016, the number of CCRTC graduates stands at 246 (196 females; 50 males). Many are currently employed as teachers in our schools, while others are active as educational assistants, volunteers, board and committee members, parents etc.

In short, our apple trees tell a wonderful story!



INTRODUCING THE TWO-YEAR DIPLOMA OF EDUCATION PROGRAM

September 2016 is the month in which the new Diploma of Education program was launched after considerable time and energy was spent on its development and preparation. This program replaces the one-year post-degree program offered by the College since its inception in 1981.

“Why?!” you might ask. The answer is rather straightforward: A two-year teacher preparation program for those who hold a bachelor’s degree has become the standard for teacher education in Ontario. When we wish to seek accreditation for the Diploma of Education so it is academically recognized as a B.Ed. degree and professionally certified by the Ontario College of Teachers, the program has to meet or exceed the provincial standards. Needless to say, an additional year of teacher education will allow a student to develop both broadly and deeply in

preparation for a career in teaching at a Reformed Christian school.

The guiding principles of the Ontario College of Teachers are outlined in the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and in the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*. Upon reviewing these standards, we can agree that also for the Reformed Christian schools, these standards such as care, respect, trust, and integrity form a basis for the teaching-learning process. The standards can easily be incorporated in the overall outcomes of the CCRTC program as they address matters related to the knowledge, skills, and commitment elements that also shape our diploma level expectations.

Another component of the provincial standards relates to the practice teaching requirements. In order to meet these requirements, the students in CCRTC’s two-year program will be placed in a school that offers the Ontario curriculum under the auspices of an Ontario-certified associate teacher. In addition to a number of observation days, the minimum of 80 days in a school setting will be met.

Students entering the program will

need to indicate a teaching preference: Either primary/junior [Kindergarten-Grade 6] or Junior/Intermediate [Grade 4-10], supported by required course work completed at the undergraduate degree level. Students are encouraged to apply their specializations to course assignments and practicum placements.

At CCRTC, the courses in the former one-year program will now be supplemented to include several new courses: An additional *Survey of OT/NT Studies* course; a course dealing with *Foundations of Reformed Identity: Worldview and Apologetics*; a *Schooling, Government, and Society* course; a *Foundations of Reformed Ethics & Standards of Practice* course; a course on *Learning Theories and Assessment*; as well as courses in various curriculum subject areas.

In structuring the courses, utmost care is taken to offer the required course material from a Biblical perspective, keeping in mind the goal of shaping a teacher-candidate’s personal professional identity as a Reformed Christian teacher. For example, the description of the *Foundations of Reformed Identity*:

Worldview and Apologetics taught by Dr. Ben Faber, reads as follows:

An important component of the Reformed identity is the way that a biblically-informed worldview is expressed through faithful engagement with critical questions, crucial issues, and current challenges. A Reformed teacher in a Christian school will put into practice with knowledge, skill, and commitment a way of approaching problems, analyzing questions, assessing theories, and applying information that embodies a life-long journey of “faith seeking understanding” (Augustine). This course provides students with the foundation of the philosophical aspect of their Reformed identity. It does so with three components: first, students will be shown a way of reading the story of western philosophy through a Reformed Christian perspective; second, students will be challenged to reimagine “worldview” as the cultural activity of heart, soul, and mind; and, third, students will be introduced to Reformed apologetics and apply the tools of apologetics to an important contemporary social issue.

In conclusion: Are we excited about the new program? Yes, we are.

In the end, we are convinced that the new two-year program will provide a solid foundation on which any teacher candidate can build a God-pleasing teaching career anywhere in Canada. We pray for a blessing on these endeavours, and do so in the confidence that Biblically-based teaching and learning at Covenant Teachers College is in line with the goals of elementary and secondary education offered at our member schools across Canada and beyond.

A MARI USQUE AD MARE,

““ May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!” – PSALM 72:8

As you may know, Canada's official motto is A Mari usque ad Mare, which translates “From Sea to Sea.” We rest secure in the knowledge that God does indeed have dominion over our country, despite the fact that our nation continues to turn away from him. One way in which we see evidence of this is through the fact that he continues to provide people with a passion to teach our children in his ways. We are blessed to have people across the country who wish to help this become a reality by supporting the Teachers College.

Each spring we hold a fundraiser. No doubt you have seen bulletin announcements, or received information in your church mailbox regarding this. We usually request that each communicant member contribute a toonie, and we are very grateful to those who support our

cause! It is amazing how a little from each person can amount to so much when we all work together! This year, at graduation, we were able to present the college with a cheque for \$5500.00. This money is used to purchase items for the college that are not included in the regular budget, and can be anything from new tea towels for the kitchen, or on the other end of the spectrum, a new piano. We very much appreciate your financial support, and ask that you will also bring the work of our committee before the LORD in prayer.

We especially like to thank our reps, because without them there would be no committee! If you would like to join us in our work, or have any questions, or would like to make a donation, please contact us at: watchhamilton1@gmail.com.

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Treasurer's Report

NATHAN HELDER

With much thankfulness to the Lord, we can report that Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College had a good financial year. As you read this report we are in the midst of completing the year-end financial statements. With the preliminary numbers in, we have managed to keep expenses slightly below our budget and finish ahead by approximately \$8,000.00. Praise God! How did this happen? Well, it wasn't by our strength, but it came from God's Hand. Once again He has shown us to trust in Him!

Overall there was a 26.4% increase in donations over the previous fiscal year. The number of pre-authorized payment contributions also increased to approximately \$8,000.00 per month. In 2013, this number was \$5,000.00 per month, which is a 60% increase in just three years!

The Finance Committee continues to meet and is active with different things. We would like to thank Colin Meerstra from Meerstra & Co. Chartered Accountants for his many years of service in assisting CCRTC with our year-end financial reporting. Thanks, Colin! This past summer, after an extensive review process, SB Partners was retained to perform the year-end accounting functions as well as the OSAP reporting.

We also would like to thank Brian Jager and Rita DeGelder, who have assisted the Finance Committee and have now completed their terms, and would like to welcome Mark Bremer. Mark joins Jack Kingma, Karen VanVeen, Adam VanHof, and myself on the Finance Committee.

There is much reason for gratitude that we have the CCRTC, not only for the training of new teachers, but also to support the professional development of practicing teachers. Thank you for your financial commitment, it is very much appreciated!

With the help of everyone's continued financial contributions and prayerful support, the College will continue the training of Reformed teachers for the benefit of the next generation, and to the honour and glory of our Covenant God.

Yours in Christ!

Nathan Helder



Thank you for your financial commitment, it is very much appreciated!

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

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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:
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\$480/Annually - Withdrawn on _____ each year

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