

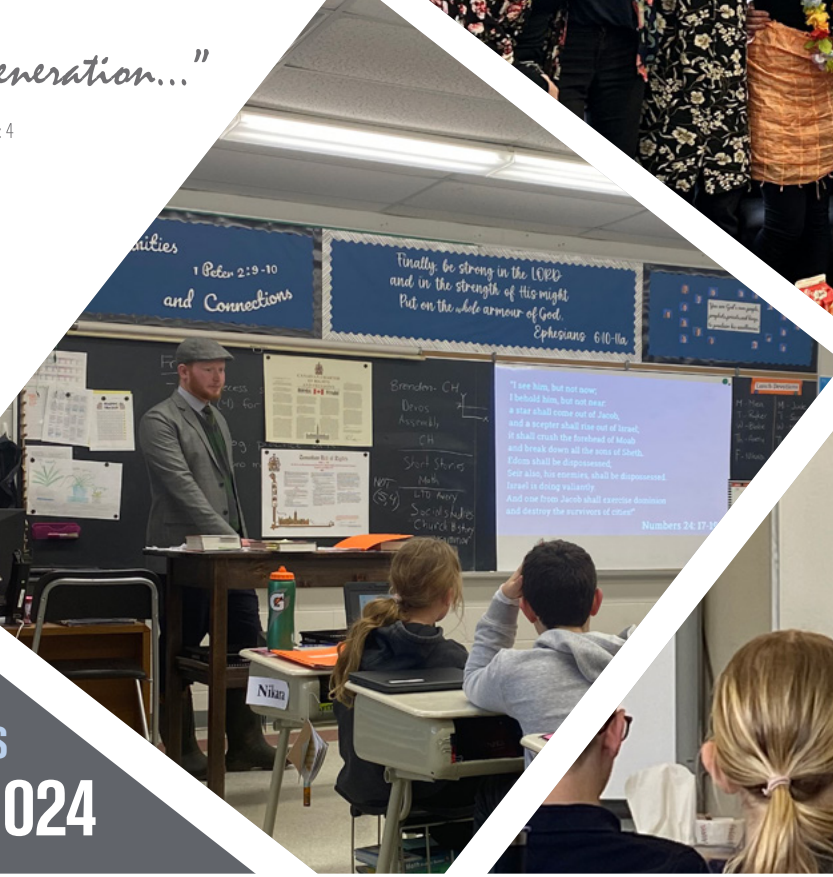


Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

PSALM 78:4



CCRTC NEWS
SPRING 2024



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

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

1 PETER 4:10

During the past months, the words of this year’s theme text were definitely on the hearts and minds of those involved with Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC). Around the Board and committee tables, many men and women give of their time and energy to govern the affairs of the College and assist in making its operation run like a well-oiled machine. This year’s Annual General Meeting once again was a testimony to the willingness and enthusiasm on the part of those involved in providing valuable feedback and direction for the College.

The words of this text also echoed in the hearts of the teacher candidates who form the Class of ’24. Each one of them prepared a professional portfolio, submitted applications, attended job interviews, and prayerfully came to a decision regarding the way in which the gifts she received can best be used to serve

others. As a result, Attercliffe Canadian Reformed Elementary School in Attercliffe, Cornerstone Christian School in Guelph, Harvest Canadian Reformed Christian School in Owen Sound, John Calvin Christian School in Smithville, and Jordan Christian School in Jordan Station each may look forward to welcoming a CCRTC alumna in due time.

During the past month we could witness that sometimes one’s faithful service comes to an end. In this respect we think of Emma Vandervelde who, having served the College for many years in the role of custodian, decided that due to health reasons is no longer able to carry out her task. We thank her for her work and continue to pray that the Lord will be near her as she deals with the effects of the stem cell transplant treatment she received.

Alisha Ravensbergen, our administrative assistant, also decided to terminate her work at the College. We thank her for her willingness to use her gifts in cheerful service and wish her God’s blessings as she takes up a new position closer to home.

In all these developments we humbly acknowledge that our faithful God continues to provide. We are thankful that

Michaela Wattel was found willing and able to fill the custodial vacancy. We are also very grateful that the Board of Governors was able to appoint Mr. Lennart de Visser as a full-time faculty member, effective August 1, 2024. Elsewhere in this issue you will be able to learn a little more about this recent appointee.

As the semester gradually draws to a close, we look back on a Winter Semester filled with regular and special activities. Teaching and learning continued on a daily basis, practicum placements could take place unhindered, an informative week under the theme of Earth Stewardship could be enjoyed, and in it all the Student Council managed to fit in a variety of extra-curricular events, ranging from a visit with senior brothers and sisters at Ebenezer Villa to competitive (and noisy!) lunchtime activities aimed to strengthen collegial bonds and camaraderie.

Under God’s blessing we carry on with the many tasks that are before us, knowing that “those who serve may do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised.” (1 Peter 4:11)





INTRODUCING CCRTC'S NEWEST FACULTY MEMBER: MR. LENNART DE VISSER

The Board of Governors of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College is delighted and thankful to announce the appointment of Mr. Lennart de Visser as a full-time faculty member, effective August 1, 2024.

Lennart was born in Pretoria, South Africa. Upon arriving in Hamilton, he attended Timothy Christian School and subsequently graduated from Guido de Brès Christian High School. He then completed an honours Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Philosophy at McMaster University. Lennart obtained his Bachelor of Education degree from Wilfrid Laurier University and accepted a teaching position at Providence Reformed Collegiate in Komoka, Ontario, where he currently serves as the Vice Principal. In this capacity he has been able to support beginning teachers in their induction into the teaching profession. He has also assisted in developing and implementing a model for instructional curriculum units and has shared this work with principals and teachers at conferences.

Eager to pursue graduate studies, Lennart completed a Master of Education degree at Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa. The capstone project involved high

school students, and consisted of action research through which elements of social emotional learning were explored using "Crew" as a model that promotes and captures a spirit of togetherness, belonging, and inclusion. Lennart's findings affirmed that this approach leads to fostering a school culture in which all students are valued contributors who use their God-given gifts to the praise of his glory and to the service of each other.

Lennart de Visser is married to Hannah (née Verburg) and they are blessed with three boys: Levi, Micah, and Bennett. We wish the family a good transition, trusting they will be welcomed warmly as they settle in their new church, elementary school, and CCRTC community.

As we share our excitement with you, we also recognize that one institution's gain is another institution's loss. We pray that God will

bless the efforts of Providence Reformed Collegiate as it seeks to fill the vacancy that now exists due to this appointment.

We covet your prayerful support as Lennart prepares himself for the new task at hand. May our shared efforts in providing faithful covenantal education continue to serve as a blessing for Christ's church.





THEME WEEK 2024: EARTH STEWARDSHIP

MARK DEN HOLLANDER AND JACK HUIZENGA

Each year, our teacher candidates in the first and second year of CCRTC's Diploma of Teaching program participate in a week-long exploration of a thematic topic. Theme Week is intended to broaden and deepen the personal knowledge of teacher candidates (and their instructors). Recent topics have included: *This city of ours – Hamilton*, *The Holocaust*, *Foreign missions*, and *Touched by Disabilities*. Planning for Theme Week 2024 began when weather and climate were often in the news, both in Canada and across the world. In 2023 there were a record number of wildfires across Canada. Smoke from these fires caused hazy skies as far south as New York City. In the east, some provinces, like Nova Scotia, experienced torrential rainfall and flooding, while in the west, provinces suffered from a

lack of rain creating concerns for farmers. In light of these recent events, it seemed fitting that *Earth Stewardship* would be the topic for Theme Week 2024.

What are we to make of all these natural events? Is there something to be said for climate change? How are we to respond as Reformed Christian school teachers? What can we do to equip our students to be discerning individuals and faithful stewards of God's creation? These are some of the questions we considered when planning for this week.

Theme Week started with a presentation by Dr. Peter Buist, professor emeritus from Carleton University in Ottawa. His presentation reminded us that God created a good world which was not only beautiful in the grand scheme, but

also that beauty can be seen in the most intricate structures of creation and science. Yet this good creation groans because of sin and this can be seen in many different ways. The presentation shared some of the science regarding climate change through a Christian lens. This provided a helpful context for the other presentations that would take place during the week.

Two education-based organizations also shared their work with us. First was *A Rocha* (arocha.ca) which focuses on Christian environmental stewardship. One of their education coordinators shared with us the work their organization does in Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia. The other organization was *EcoSchools* which shared with us a robust program for integrating environmental learning in schools but from a secular perspective. One theme





that emerged from both presentations was the concept of ecoliteracy, a term that has come about due to students living most of their lives in a built environment. One way some schools have tackled ecoliteracy is through the development of natural playgrounds. Although that may not have been the motivation of some of our Reformed schools, several nearby schools have recently built natural playgrounds. The teacher candidates were divided into three groups to visit Grace Christian School, Timothy Christian School, and John Calvin Christian School to see their natural playgrounds and to learn about different projects and programs these schools had in place to promote environmental stewardship.

Two young, Reformed farmers also came to present to the teacher candidates. They have recently started an organic farm,

The Good Ground Natural Farm in Beamsville, Ontario. They gave a biblical perspective on farming, sharing their vision for their own farm based on teachings found in scriptures and summarized in the Westminster Confession. Their presentation challenged us with how a biblical perspective on Earth stewardship might inform our agricultural practices.

To bring all these topics together, Dr. Van Dam, professor emeritus of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, provided a beautiful devotional to illustrate Biblical principles for Earth stewardship, concluding that Christians must watch, work, and hope. After a brief wrap-up session and a pizza lunch, teacher candidates headed home, ready to take up their practicum placements the following week.



MARK THE DATE
 Help celebrate the
 Class of '24!

DATE:
 Wednesday,
 May 22, 2024

LOCATION:
 Cornerstone Church,
 Hamilton ON



BOARD OF GOVERNORS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: FEB. 23-24, 2024

ROBIN VANDERGRIENDT

What a beautiful, sunny weekend for an Annual General Meeting! Over 20 Governors, faculty, and Executive Committee members gathered together to reflect and give thanks for the past year at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC), and to get right to business planning for the year to come. Exciting things ahead!

On Friday morning, many Governors boarded their planes - destination: Hamilton. They flew from Smithers and Langley; from Coaldale; from Winnipeg and Carman; and drove from Ottawa, Owen Sound, Chatham, and many places in between. It is always such a joy to be able to meet together face-to-face to work for the growth of CCRTC. There was excitement in the air as Chairman Bill Buist opened the meeting by reading Psalm 133 and praying that there would be a spirit of unity during this year's AGM.

The real work began. Various committees presented their work for approval and

discussion. The Governors approved the intake of a large number of new students for Fall 2024. What an answer to prayer! We also rejoice that a new faculty member could be hired -indeed providential timing. Between Human Resources reports on compensation for CCRTC faculty, and plans for the Property and Fundraising Committees, it's clear that much work is being done by many committees throughout the year.

Dr. Christine van Halen-Faber gave a faculty report and a brief history of CCRTC. It was beautiful to hear a first-hand account of the changes and growth that have occurred in her time at the College. Indeed, the Lord has been faithful. Much has been accomplished. Dr. van Halen gave a brief accreditation update. We wait patiently for news regarding accreditation, knowing it rests in the hands of our Heavenly Father. We echo the words from Proverbs 21:1, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will." We are so thankful to Dr. van Halen for her expertise and steadfast commitment to this project. Thank her in person when you see her!

Governors gave short reports about the work they are doing locally in their school communities to garner support for the College. Encouraging prayerful

and financial support for the College is a significant role of the Governors and with the addition of a full-time faculty member there is a need for committed monthly support.

The Governors spent time on Saturday morning in breakout groups, discussing the ramifications for the College if accreditation is awarded or denied. We are in a season of waiting but are still eager to plan for both situations. We analyzed the various strengths and challenges of both scenarios. Through all these discussions, we kept circling back to our deep appreciation for the work of CCRTC; Reformed teacher training is as important as ever.

We ask that you remember CCRTC in prayer, that we may continue to be blessed with all that we need to operate, that the Lord will bless our efforts to become accredited, and that we may also continue to support schools with covenantal educated teachers. May God bless us all in our task to "tell the next generation" (Ps 78:4).



IMMIGRATION STORIES...

Immigration is an important topic in one of CCRTC's Church History courses. In order that our teacher candidates might take a glimpse into the lives of faithful men and women who helped shape the early history of Reformed Christian churches and schools in North America, our library

houses a growing collection of post World War 2 immigration histories.

Most recently our attention was drawn to a nicely illustrated book written from a young child's perspective. Perhaps *Anna's Big Adventure* by Julia Sinke is a book you, your children, or your grandchildren might be interested in?

New Children's Book Anna's Big Adventure: A 1950s Immigration Story

I've written a children's book (from a five-year old girl's perspective) retelling the experience of many of the Dutch immigrants who came to Canada in the 1950s. I gathered stories from several families, including my own. This book is a beautiful keepsake and preservation of history that can be enjoyed by all ages.

To purchase, visit:
www.booksbyjuliasinke.com
"So that we will not forget the journey our ancestors took, and the sacrifices they made in a new land."

Julia Sinke



In the meantime, please feel free to contact us if you have a suggestion for an immigration story to be added to

our collection. Who knows? It could be an account of your own family's immigration experience!

NOTE: All photos included in this issue are used with permission.



To explore ways to financially support the College please scan the QR Code or visit covenantteacherscollege.com/donate.html

✂ Please detach and mail to: CCRTC • 410 Crerar Drive • Hamilton, ON • L9A 5K3 or visit: covenantteacherscollege.com/donate.html

Yes! I would like to support CCRTC!

- One-Time gift of \$ _____ (cheque enclosed)
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CITY _____ PROV _____ PC _____

CHURCH _____

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I prefer to receive my charitable tax receipt by email

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 understand that I can terminate this agreement at any time.

\$50/Month - Withdrawn on the:
 15th of the month 30th of the month

\$600/Year - 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.



A W.A.T.C.H. UPDATE

The group fondly known as Women Assisting the Teachers College in Hamilton (W.A.T.C.H.) continues to support the College in a quiet yet persistent manner. In many local church communities, annual

fundraising efforts are initiated in order to collect monies that go towards those 'extra' items which normally are not part of the regular operating budget. For example, this year we plan to use W.A.T.C.H. funds towards putting the finishing touches on the renovated student lounge.

The management of W.A.T.C.H. lies in the

very capable hands of the members who form the executive committee:

- Beth Stel** (Chairman)
- Chandra Vanderboom** (Treasurer)
- JoAnn Van Iperen** (Secretary)
- Eleanor Boeringa** (CCRTC liaison)
- Monica Riemer** (Member-at-large)

In turn, the committee is equally capably assisted by the representatives listed below.



W.A.T.C.H. REPRESENTATIVES 2023-2024

CLASSIS CENTRAL ONTARIO

- Burlington Ebenezer.....Grace Balch
- Burlington Waterdown.....Susanne Hutten
- Flamborough.....Brenda Bartels
- Hamilton Blessings.....Deb Alkema
- Ottawa.....Elizabeth Smith
- Toronto.....Anita Kampen

CLASSIS NIAGARA

- Attercliffe.....Diane Feenstra
- Dunnville East.....Diana Kelly
- Grassie.....Krista Jager
- Grimby.....Rachel Vis
- Lincoln.....Adria Stulp
- Spring Creek.....Teresa Schulenberg
- Smithville.....Beth Stel

CLASSIS NORTHERN ONTARIO

- Arthur.....Carina Bijlsma
- Brampton.....Gertie Vanluik
- Elora.....Anne-Marie Sikkema

- Fergus North.....Amy Lodder
- Fergus Maranatha.....Natasha Huijgen
- Grand Valley.....Petra Jonker
- Guelph Emmanuel.....Robin Westrik
- Guelph Living Word....Lataunya Penninga
- Orangeville.....On the School Budget
- Owen Sound.....Glenda Kapteyn

CLASSIS ONTARIO WEST

- Ancaster.....Chandra Vanderboom
- Chatham.....Jennifer Vanderveen
- Hamilton Providence.....Monica Riemer
- Kerwood.....Mary Lenting

CLASSIS MANITOBA

- Winnipeg Grace.....Jenise Vangoor
- Winnipeg Redeemer.....Erica Nienhuis

CLASSIS ALBERTA

- Coaldale.....Erin Becker
- Edmonton Immanuel.....Elizabeth Saipe

CLASSIS PACIFIC EAST

- Aldergrove.....Linda Vane
- Lynden.....Debbie Johnson
- Nooksack Valley.....Debby Lodder

CLASSIS PACIFIC WEST

- Cloverdale.....Rachel Vandersluis
- Houston.....Arlene Leffers
- Smithers.....Ann Penninga
- Surrey.....Michelle Faber
- Willoughby Heights.....Yvonne Jacobi

Please note: Only congregations with a W.A.T.C.H. representative are listed. If your congregation is missing from the list above, and you would like to be a W.A.T.C.H. representative, please contact the College at office@covenantteacherscollege.com and we'll happily connect you.

W.A.T.C.H. COULD NOT BE SUCCESSFUL WITHOUT YOU:

WE WARMLY THANK ALL THOSE WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THIS YEAR'S W.A.T.C.H. FUNDRAISING EFFORTS!