



# Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

APRIL 2010

## agm: all aBUZZ at the BOARD

F. C. LUDWIG

Every year near the tail end of February, all the governors of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC), gather at the College for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Normally, the on-going business of the College is transacted at Board meetings consisting of the Ontario governors for rather obvious, geographical reasons. However, major decisions with long-term and often considerable financial implications are held off until the AGM occurs. This year was no exception, and that most recent meeting happened on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 26th and 27th.

No doubt the idea has crossed your mind from time to time, "I wouldn't mind being a 'fly on the wall' at....." this or that event. Well, let me be your 'fly' and flit around to the more interesting and relevant parts of the agenda, but hopefully without the nuisance factor!

First up, after beginning the meeting in the usual Christian manner, our chairman, Br. Gerrit Bos, had all participants introduce themselves.....and everyone around the table went through that moment of self-

consciousness which always elicits a sigh of relief when once again it is over. And so, now more visibly relaxed, we got on with the matters of the agenda.

In buzzing about the pile of correspondence an interesting item was spotted having to do with insurance, specifically Directors and Officers Liability Insurance. This was an item left over from last year's AGM and it was decided that it would be prudent to protect the governors and board officers from any possible liability suit, especially

since the cost involved was quite reasonable. Thus it was proposed and decided.

The next perch was at the lectern where Mrs. Martha DeGelder (a past Chair) presented the Governance/Handbook Committee Report - especially the newly revised and updated By-laws. This has been quite a lengthy and intense undertaking, under the supervision of a lawyer, as part of the process of preparing for an external review - which is a necessary part of seeking official status for the College. These by-laws have also recently passed the scrutiny of all member societies and fortunately were approved without further amendment.

After the completion of Mrs. DeGelder's presentation our observant fly dizzied itself in buzzing about the 'potluck dinner' table, which was loaded with many attractive and delicious choices. Replete with sated appetite our languorous observer barely made it back to his perch, from where he observed the principal of the College present an overview of the Language Arts

*Continued on page 5 ...*



## from the PRINCIPAL

CHRISTINE VAN HALEN-FABER



On the cusp of the March break ... days filled with sunshine, with the sounds of busy birds, and with the memory of students diligently at work to submit those assignments before the break rather than doing them during the break ... !



Days in which we may look back with deep gratitude on yet another Annual General Meeting in which the business of the College could be conducted in a harmonious manner. Yes, all of these observable signs indicate that the 2009-2010 academic year is moving along at (what seems to some of us) an ever-increasing pace: A mere few weeks of teaching, of exams, of a final practicum – and then May 28, the day of graduation, is before us. For the ten students who hope to graduate, this semester has been a special one since during this time positions were posted, applications sent out, interviews conducted, and appointments were made. It is interesting to observe how this process brings about a subtle change within the College community. Suddenly, those who were “mere students” at the

beginning of the year have now become teachers-to-be. They have turned into student-teachers who now focus more specifically on a particular grade level, and on the reality of what it means to be a teacher in a Reformed school. In various courses we emphasize the importance of schools and teachers assisting parents in nurturing their children in the fear of the LORD. In this context, we also identify the unity of purpose that exists between home, church, and school. Together with our students, we stress the importance of knowing our role as professionals within our school communities, of recognizing the relationship of trust that undergirds all our actions as teachers within our classrooms and beyond. We acknowledge the significance of being in step with the Reformed community we serve, and of reflecting what we profess when we apply the Scriptures, “summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian church” to all areas of the curriculum – from Bible History to Science to Art and Music and beyond. Teachers in Reformed schools ought to be knowledgeable of the developments in

their field of study, including the theories which may exist in specific areas of the curriculum. Possibly, a teacher may hold a private view of such theories which may differ from a more commonly-held view. In such a situation, a teacher who understands the trust relationship within which he or she works will not teach or publish such a privately-held divergent view. Rather, he or she will maintain a clear biblical and confessional stance in the classroom at all times – acknowledging in humility that man-made theories cannot speak authoritatively where the bible is not silent. At Covenant College this has been, is, and under God's blessings, will continue to be our practice. This practice applies equally to students and to active full time and sessional faculty. Teaching and developing discernment is part of faithful teaching and faithful learning. We hope that the College can play a role in providing resources for our teachers. This includes, for example, the ongoing development of an annotated bibliography in the area of apologetics. Readers who are interested in participating in this project are encouraged to contact the Principal directly.

In addition, we are always ready to receive visitors from far and near. Perhaps you will add Covenant Teachers College to your list of "things to see while visiting Hamilton." If you indeed come, you will also be able to see the beautiful made-to-scale replica of Herod's Temple. Spearheaded by br. G.Gritter of Hamilton, this project speaks of patience and precision! Thank you, br. Gritter, for allowing us to house this special piece of handiwork – so others may see and use it.

Looking ahead at the remainder of the semester and beyond, we may share with you a number of interesting developments:

Two students in the one-year Diploma of Education program have been invited by the Gomarus College in Groningen to spend an extended practicum placement in the Twee Talig Onderwijs [English Immersion Program] division of the school. Maria Gracey and Diana

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Nobel will be teaching History and Geography respectively, as well as English Literature and Bible Studies. Their first reports from Groningen are exciting ones, and we wish them well as they apply Canadian ways of teaching in this Reformed Dutch school setting. As a Reformed College community we are pleased to be able to offer our students such an international experience opportunity, and look forward to continuing our involvement with Gomarus in the future.

Along similar international lines we look forward to representing the College at I.C.R.E.-3, the third International Conference of Reformed Education to be held at the end of April in Lunteren, The Netherlands. Educators from Reformed school communities across the globe plan to attend. The theme of the conference is Teacher Development, and Dr. Christine van Halen will participate as a respondent to one of the keynote speakers, Prof. Dr. Fred Korthagen of the University of Utrecht, as well as presenting a workshop on reflective practice in developing personal professional knowledge.

Back to the Canadian scene: The College will be involved in professional development activities this summer also. Mr. Allard Gunnink will teach a one-week in-service course during July at the invitation of the Maranatha Christian School in Fergus. In addition to the MCS staff, teachers from other schools are invited to attend the course on Learning Theories and their Applications in a Reformed Classroom. Starting the summer holidays by means of



participating in a professional development opportunity is also the intent of the teachers in Coaldale, Alberta. To help them do so, Dr. Christine van Halen has been invited to present a follow-up to the Foundations of Reformed Education course offered in the summer of 2008.

Looking even further ahead to the next academic year we may note with gratitude that a number of applications for admission into one of the programs have been received. In addition, full time and sessional faculty have indicated their intent to return under the provision of James 4:15, and this allows us to plan for the 2010-2011 academic year. However, our efforts to appoint a fourth full time faculty have not yet seen the desired result. We encourage those who feel a desire to teach future teachers, and who have the academic and personal qualifications to do so, to contact us in the hope that an appointment may be made effective September 2011. We also covet the continued support of the Reformed educational community in this respect. May our Covenant LORD continue to establish the work of our hands to the praise of His glory.



# teaching church history

JUDY KINGMA

The teaching of church history has everything to do with our shared mandate as believers to tell the next generation about the great deeds of the Lord so that generations to come may set their hope and trust in God (Ps. 78). For that reason, church history belongs to what may be called the foundational subjects taught in Reformed schools. In order to equip teachers-to-be for the task of telling the coming generation, Covenant offers them, among other foundational courses, a three-year cycle of church history courses. Their content spans the centuries from Pentecost to the present day.

The first in the cycle of three courses is being offered this academic year. It deals, broadly speaking, with the history of the church of Jesus Christ during the apostolic age, the years of persecution, and the early and later Middle Ages. Selected topics taken from approximately 14 centuries of church history expose our teachers-to-be to both the content and the skills of teaching church history. Themes worded in the language of our confessions keep the focus of our study on the work of the victorious Head of the church, our Lord Jesus Christ. A few examples from our present course will illustrate my meaning.

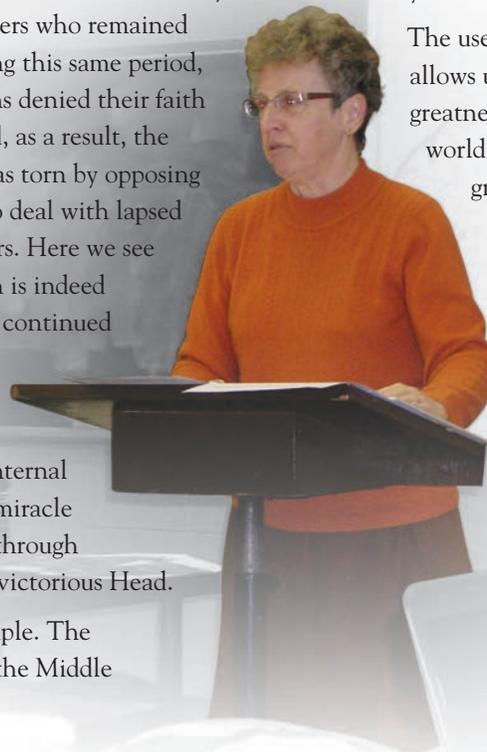
The overarching theme for the teaching of church history is taken from LD 21: The Son of God gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself a church by His Word and Spirit. From this perspective, we explore the context of persecutions, for example. The greatness of Christ's victory over Satan is all the more evident in the confession of specific martyrs such as Polycarp or Blandina when we know the context: Satan's war on the church

(Revelation 12), on the one hand, and human weakness and frailty, on the other. The reality of human weakness and sinfulness not only directs our eyes to the power of God's grace in the lives of those who confess Christ before men, but also to the wonder of the church's existence. I think now of a topic that may easily be overlooked if we focus only on those believers who remained steadfast. During this same period, many Christians denied their faith before men and, as a result, the early church was torn by opposing views of how to deal with lapsed church members. Here we see that the church is indeed God's work. Its continued existence in the face of persecution, apostasy, and internal disunity is the miracle of God's grace through the work of its victorious Head.

A second example. The church during the Middle

Ages was marked by deep deformation – in doctrine, in church government, in liturgy, in the lives of church members. A legitimate question to ask about this period may be: Where is the church of Jesus Christ during the Middle Ages? Our confession about Christ's Headship over the church compels us to look more carefully. The victorious Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth and He is, therefore, an eternal King who will always have subjects. And so we look, and we find believers, sometimes in strange places. We find an abbot hidden away in a monastery, for example. He comforts a dying monk with words that speak the same language of faith as our beloved LD 1 about our only comfort in life and in death. Even when the church itself no longer recognizes Christ as Head, He still gathers in the unity of faith.

The use of confessional themes allows us to catch glimpses of the greatness of Christ's work in this world. May our teachers-to-be grow in their love for Christ and His church of which they, by God's grace, confess themselves to be living members. May that same love drive them to tell the next generation about the love of God in Jesus Christ who, even now, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, a church chosen to everlasting life.



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Methods course, part of the Diploma of Education (Bachelor's degree required) one-year program. Such a presentation is a standard part of the AGM agenda, a part in which all faculty participate, by turns. It is also a very important part, since it deals with the heart and soul of what the College is all about, namely preparing candidates for the task of teaching covenant children the typical school curricula in the light of God's Word. Without such reminders, it is not hard to lose sight of that in the minutiae of running the business side of the College.

After some further committee reports and a first round on the Budget for 2010-2011, the meeting was wrapped up for the evening to be continued on Saturday morning.

After a refreshing night of rest, the delegates were once again seated around the tables by 9:00 A.M. on Saturday morning, still under the steady gaze of our intrepid observer. An institution such as the College, he found, was served by many different committees all of which took their turn to report to the meeting - each having its own significant role to play in creating the overall picture. Pride of place for this morning's session, however, went to a guest, Mr. W. Smouter, who came for a brief visit to inform the meeting about the topic of fund raising.

Mr. Smouter is a well-known figure in the Ontario church community and a man who knows his way around money, having spent the greater part of his career in the banking business and completing it at Redeemer University College, where he was heavily involved in fund raising activities. You may also remember him as the chairman of the committee charged with raising funds for the expansion of Guido de Brès High School quite some years ago now. While now long retired, a few months ago someone had the bright idea of tapping into that fund of knowledge, and the Board used the leverage of his grandson (a Board member) to do so. So it was that first

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a written submission was received with a number of ideas, and these ideas were discussed and expanded upon by Mr. Smouter at our meeting. Ah yes, thought our observer with a tiny smile, finally the subject of money - for no meeting of any of our educational institutions is ever complete without that ever needful topic. And generating new ideas for how to keep those funds flowing so that the College can continue to exist, and indeed even expand, is an ever present quest. We thank

Mr. Smouter for the ideas he put forward and the Board and its individual governors will certainly strive to use this input to expand the base of support for this institution.

With several pans of soup forming the core of a tasty and filling lunch, we reconvened once again to try to wrap up the day's agenda by 2:30 P.M., the appointed time.

The one major item still to be dealt with was the approval of the budget for the 2010-2011 school year. Often this is a rather hand-

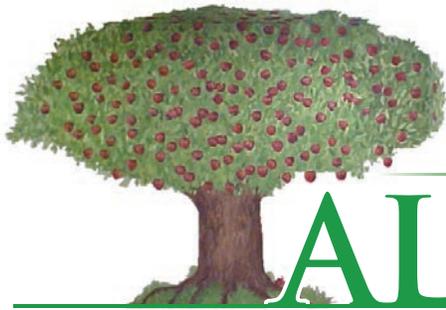


wringing process, especially since the proceeds coming in at this time of the year on the current budget tend to be rather slim. This year, however, things are looking a little more positive on that front and we are hopeful that we can finish the current year in the black.....and that makes looking at the future always a little more optimistic. One hastens to add two things, however: 1) that the Lord has always provided for our needs, even in times when the financial picture looked most dire, and 2) we are very appreciative of the growing support received from donors and contributors. We are not yet where we need to be, but the direction is a positive one.



The meeting was concluded with another trip around the tables, this time eliciting from each of the governors a brief report on local conditions. Then, the meeting concluded as it began, with thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for the gift of a Reformed institution for training teachers to help the parents of covenant children to raise those children in the fear of His Name. In all the challenges that face us, may we ever keep that goal in focus, and move forward in His strength, to keep that institution vibrant and flourishing.

Amidst much babbling and shaking of hands, the meeting broke up and the governors dispersed each to his/her destination. Wearily our tiny observer inserted itself back into the little crevice high in the wall, there to continue his hibernation until more hospitable temperatures once more draw him forth. In the meantime, it was an interesting interruption in his long slumber.



CCRTC

# ALUMNI NEWS

## HOW IT WAS AND HOW IT IS



### JASON HEEMSKERK

I saw a short video once, entitled, The Top Ten Things you do not Learn about in Teachers College. If I remember it correctly, alongside cute little quips like, “When they say they ‘Gotta Go!’, you need to let them!”, and “Disinfectant wipes are your new best friend!”, there was one which still resonates with me. It was, “The principal’s office is still scary!” Now that I sit in the office daily, the ‘scary’ nature of it is slightly different from what it was when I was 13. It is also different now from what it was when I first started teaching. (Not that I spent a lot of time there at either time.) The scariness is no longer the fear of the unknown. Now, it is respect for the work that so many people do to make it possible for parents to have their children educated in the fear of the Lord, coupled with the honour of being invited to help them in this task.

At the beginning of my career, I wrote a journal about my first day. In preparation for this article I read it for inspiration. The following sentence speaks to how prepared I was before I officially began

my teaching career. I wrote, “I am fully prepared for the day, and there is little that I have to do that could possibly go wrong.” This statement shows, of course, that I was naïve, overconfident and mistaken. Thankfully, the first day was followed by a second, a third and many, many more.

It was in the ‘many more’ that the value of being taught the importance of Reformed values in curriculum came to the fore. It was in the ‘many more’ that the exhilarating discussions I had with Dr. Oosterhoff, about world view in the classroom, gained relevance. It was in the ‘many more’ that the nuggets of practical knowledge dropped by Mr. Horsman

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proved themselves to be more valuable than gold. It was in the ‘many more’ that the process of telling entertaining and doctrinally sound Bible stories, taught by Rev. Agema, gained depth and meaning. Dr. van Halen’s wisdom in showing us how knowledge of Reformed doctrine is needed in evaluating both educational psychology and curriculum practices came to the surface through the many days that followed. (I am still not too sure about the

Apple Assignment we had to do, but Lord willing, that too will become clear before the decade I have been teaching becomes ‘many more.’)

Although there were things that I needed to learn on my own, things that no college could teach, I value the insights that I gained in Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College. The importance of teaching from a Reformed stance is crucial to our schools. We have our own identity in the field of education, an identity that sets us apart and makes us important. It is through the teachers trained at the college that this identity is more easily maintained. It is through

further contact with the college after you leave that the foundation they laid is strengthened.

There are various things that make up my personal ‘Top Ten List of Things that I did not Learn at Teachers College’; however, the importance of teaching with my feet firmly planted in the wisdom of Scripture and the confessions was not one of them.



## RACHEL TORENVLIET

“Congratulations!  
Today is your day.  
You’re off to Great Places!  
You’re off and away!  
You have brains in your head.  
You have feet in your shoes.  
You can steer yourself  
any direction you choose.”

Several years ago, this comical address from Dr. Seuss’s *Oh, The Places You’ll Go* was a small token of the parting words that sent us on our way. Were we ready? Time would tell.

Departing from Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College was a daunting, but exciting experience. Up until that point, our life as we knew it had been one of being the student. For the past year(s) at the College we had been equipped with the tools necessary to begin our new tasks as teachers, rather than students.

The College prepared us for our task by showing us what it means to be a Reformed teacher. From the in-depth study of God’s historical-redemptive plan to the behaviourist, cognitive, and constructivist theories of learning, the College strove to prepare us for the day when we would stand at the front of our own classroom.

Moving from the role of student to teacher has been an exciting change that brings challenges and discoveries each day. From my past four years as a teacher not one year, week, or day has been the same. Each child brings a new perspective, a new thought, and a new outlook. Life is busy. Long hours are part of the job. But the joys of the profession come with the smiles that greet you each day, the stories that are shared, the jokes that are cracked, and the learning that is achieved.

Diligently using God’s gift of knowledge and creativity is a characteristic we strive to instill in students, and plays a daily role in our lives as teachers too. To make sure that learning continues to be fun is part of the job - whether it is by creating interactive bulletin board displays, or playing Simon Says (the skeletal and muscular system versions!), or creating dioramas of life in Ancient Egypt, or teaching a class the technique of playing woodwind

and brass instruments. Students love to be inspired! Over the past years of my teaching career, at John Calvin Christian School in Burlington, I’ve been able to implement my university studies in various ways, including beginning and running a band for the Grade 7 & 8 music program.

Although Dr. Seuss’s writing does not include reference to God’s providence, on which we base each new day, we begin each day according to his description. We are off to great places! We will do exciting things! “Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long” (Psalm 25: 4&5).

## ANNETTE VANTIL

In May, 1994 I graduated from Teachers College. Since then I taught for five years at John Calvin School in Smithville, nine years at Timothy Christian School in Hamilton, studied for a year at Brock University, and am currently teaching at Covenant Christian School in Millgrove. My studies at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College certainly prepared me well to face the challenges and treasure the blessings of instructing our covenant youth. The Bible and our Christian confessions formed the foundation and the College laid the framework for teaching and assessing curriculum from a Reformed perspective. It provided both a theoretical understanding for why we need our own Reformed schools as well as the practical application of this perspective in what and how we teach. This basis has been supplemented over the years by the advice and wisdom of

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experienced colleagues, but still has at its root the reading and discussions we did at the College.

However, the benefits of Teachers College are

not restricted to the year of study. The College library remains a valuable place of resources for the classroom teacher. They have a wide variety of materials to supplement what is being taught (books that incorporate Math concepts with Literature, kits, videos, etc.). Their library also provides the teacher with a wider range of general resources than the typical staff library. It is certainly worth a visit.

The Teachers College staff are very helpful, insightful and supportive. They remain actively involved in the various school societies, and are an effective sounding board. They host and organize curriculum discussions and put time and energy into various committees that are of benefit to all our schools. The College remains a vibrant part of our broader community of schools and provides invaluable assistance. It certainly has been and continues to be a rich blessing for me as an individual and as a classroom teacher.

# from the finance committee

HELENA DEJONGE

As I sit down to write this report, March is well underway. This is significant for two reasons; the Annual General Meeting is over and February has passed, meaning we have reached the mid-point of the fiscal year. I am sure that elsewhere you will be given some details regarding the AGM, but as finance committee we'd like to share with you our financial situation.

When looking at past spring financial reports, I was struck with how similar the numbers were. Most showed approximately 60% of budgeted revenue being received and about 52% of expected expenses paid out, meaning that the college typically had a surplus after six months. It would have been a mistake, however, to quickly look at the tables and assume financial health, without reading the written reports. These reports often warn of tough times ahead (revenue decreases sharply in our last two quarters) and some accurately predict a deficit, and so I hope you take the time to read this write-up. Will this year be any different?

The answer to this is yes...and no. Once again we have collected well over 50% of our annual revenue. We actually have received 84% of our budgeted revenue at the six month mark. Indeed the Lord has richly provided! As in other years, this is because tuition is received in the first half of the year. However, revenue is

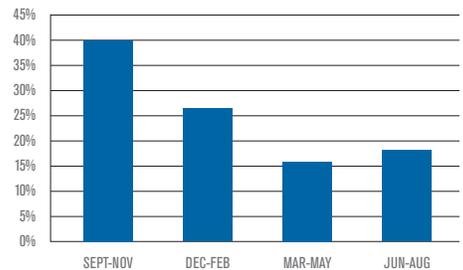
significantly higher this year for a number of reasons. All member schools were requested to pay their society fees prior to Dec. 31st and thankfully all have done so, with the result that 56% of expected society revenue has been collected to date. Also, December saw an exceptional and overwhelming amount of donations received. Perhaps many gave extra in light of the \$27,000 deficit from the previous year. Thank You!

Due to your generosity, we can be optimistic about meeting our budget. Yet, the fact remains that if we are to meet this year's budget and cover last year's deficit, over \$100,000 still needs to be received before the end of August. Since donations drop significantly in the last six months of operation this may be difficult. If we do collect this amount it will mean that we recovered from a significant deficit without having to issue an urgent appeal and it will hopefully lay a foundation for more consistent revenue from year to year. To help us achieve this goal, we ask that you consider signing up for pre-authorized payments, giving a donation from your income tax refund, or even remembering to send a donation before leaving for summer vacation! Below is a form.

In line with other reports, we once again ask that you remember all the needs of

the college in prayer. This is not just tradition or a nice way of ending a report, but when looking back we see that time and time again the Lord has heard our prayers and blessed the college. May He use you as a tool to assist the college with funds and prayer, and may the college continue to be used as a tool to assist in the instruction of His covenantal youth.

## AVERAGE % OF TOTAL REVENUE BY QUARTER



## Results at Mid-Year 2009/2010

Revenue	Actual (Sept-Feb)	Percent of Budget
Contributions/ Donations	\$226,078	81%
Society Revenue	\$47,760	56%
Student Tuition	\$112,298	121%
Miscellaneous	\$200	19%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$386,336</b>	<b>84%</b>
Expenses		
Remuneration-Teaching	\$149,643	52%
Fringe / Benefits	\$20,079	44%
Research Leave	\$3,750	50%
Library	\$11,863	55%
Practicum Teaching	\$5,318	53%
Building Expenses	\$15,313	45%
Administration	\$16,253	54%
Misc. / Programs	\$7,814	33%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$230,033</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Revenue Less Expenses</b>	<b>\$156,303</b>	

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.