

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

OCTOBER 2020













What a blessing to be able to begin a new academic year in-person! Staff, faculty, students, and the Chairman of the Board gathered at the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church in Hamilton in order to begin the 2020-2021 year.

Not surprisingly, one of the Orientation Agenda items was the reopening plan for Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC). Together we reviewed the specific expectations under the general heading of Respect - respect for self, for others, and for the College as an institution of higher learning. Needless to say that the students are quick learners who have been able to internalize and apply what it means to self-assess, sanitize, and distance, while the office makes it possible to track. All of this, however, formed only a small part of our orientation. Guided by this year's theme text "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psalm 46: 10), we entrust ourselves to a covenant God who cares for us in perfect faithfulness. We pray for a blessing on all our endeavours.

The 2020-2021 academic year sees 20 students distributed over two programs: 3 in the Two-Year Diploma of Education Program and 17 in the Three-Year Diploma of Teaching Program. These students are taught by a combination of full-time, part-time, adjunct, and sessional faculty. During the Fall Semester we

warmly welcome back, in alphabetical order, Rev. Douwe Agema, Dr. Ben Faber, Mr. Jack Huizenga, Mr. Keith Sikkema, Mrs. Catherine Vanderpol, Dr. Christine van Halen, and Mr. Menco Wieske. All of us are ably supported by Donna Van Huisstede, Jo-anne van Leeuwen, and Karen VanVeen in the office, and Eleanor Boeringa in the library. We are so blessed to have such a capable and cohesive team!

The Summer of 2020 was a very interesting summer that saw lots of diverse activities in and around the College. To name a few:

- 1. With much determination, two full-time faculty members continued to proceed on the path towards a doctoral degree. We thank them (and their respective families!) for their willingness to help the College grow in stature.
- 2. Professional learning also took place on the West Coast where a group of teachers engaged with each other around a course entitled *Reformed Worldview and Post-Christian Culture:*Faith Seeks Understanding. It was facilitated by Dr. Theodore Van Raalte.
- 3. A little closer to home, representatives of all aspects of CCRTC's operation were involved in the reviews conducted by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB). The reviews took place online over the course of four days and were part of the College's quest



to seek Ministerial Consent for granting a B.Ed. degree to those who successfully complete the Two-Year Program. The two expert panels who conducted the reviews spoke highly of the participation of Executive Committee members, faculty, administrative staff, stakeholders (in the persons of two school principals), students, and alumni. In the end, the review reports containing the panels' findings as well as recommendations were presented to the College for response and feedback, and then to the PEQAB Board for its recommendation to be presented to the Minister of Colleges and Universities. As we await the outcome of the Minister's final decision, we thank the LORD for providing us with everything we needed in order to bring this part of the process to a good conclusion. It brings us closer to the final step: Applying for accreditation by the Ontario College of Teachers. We continue to covet your prayerful support.

In conclusion, as summer fades and the rich hues of autumn gradually colour our surroundings, we entrust ourselves to the Triune God: "He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he." (Deut. 32:4). Changing seasons attest to God's faithfulness and remind us, also in uncertain times, that we may be still, and know that he is God!



We serve Reformed Christian schools by training the next generation of teachers and are about to enter an exciting period in Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College's existence.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING THE FACULTY?

If so, you are invited to contact us and explore the possibilities of becoming a

FULL-TIME FACULTY MEMBER

As someone interested in a faculty position you will

- demonstrate a deep love for Reformed education
- be willing to provide educational leadership at multiple levels
- display a healthy level of intellectual curiosity within biblical bounds (Prov. 1:5)

You will be a communicant member in good standing of a Canadian Reformed Church, or of a church with which the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches maintains ecclesiastical fellowship.

You will hold at least a Master's degree preferably in the area of education, are interested in obtaining a terminal degree, and have teaching experience in either elementary or secondary school settings.

Learn more about the CCRTC programs:

www.covenantteacherscollege.com

EXCITED AND INTERESTED? CONTACT:

Dr. Christine van Halen-Faber PRINCIPAL cvanhalen@covenantteacherscollege.com 905.385.0634



Allow me to introduce myself as the newly minted Chairman of the Board for Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC).

Personally, I have been married to Minny Poort, a teacher for more than three decades in Christian schools. We have four children and three grandchildren and belong to the Smithville Canadian Reformed Church where I have served several terms in office. Twenty years ago, I was involved in John Calvin School, Smithville, for a period of several years as the chairman of the expansion committee when Attercliffe Canadian Reformed Elementary School (ACRES) was started, then as vice chairman and chairman of the board. After that, I had a five year appointment on the Salary Committee for the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies. Professionally, I have worked more than thirty years in technical positions overseeing health and safety,

energy conservation, maintenance and project management for schools.

I have not been involved with the College for a long period of time, having been appointed at the February Annual General Meeting (AGM) this year. It has been an exciting, yet strange time to begin my role at CCRTC. It was a blessing to meet the Board of Governors at the AGM and it was striking to see that although all the Governors are spread out across Canada and Washington State, we share the common bond of faith. I could experience this immediately in the prayers and devotions at the AGM, and see the love of CCRTC and care for one another.

It was only two weeks after my official appointment that the province was closed due to COVID-19 and CCRTC also had to shutter its doors. It was immediately evident how adept and versatile the staff and volunteers were. Over March break, arrangements were immediately put in place to move the programs online. At the AGM we had spoken about offering programs online, not realizing that mere weeks later

this would become a necessity for CCRTC to continue with its instruction. God has truly blessed us with dedicated staff and volunteers who made this happen.

As most of you know, CCRTC has been working for several years to achieve accreditation to offer a teaching degree from the Minister of Colleges and Universities. The staff and volunteers have contributed a tremendous amount of time and effort to write and review the necessary materials. Many were called to attend the review meetings to speak on behalf of CCRTC. It is an amazing gift from God that so many past students, staff and many others who have been involved with CCRTC, could give a good account of the College to the government review committee. Thank you to all who gave of their time for this important work. What a tremendous blessing you have been in this process.

On Tuesday, September 8, 2020, I had the privilege to speak on behalf of the Board of Governors at the orientation morning with the students. This was my first time to meet the students in person and see the





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energy of students as they exuberantly started this academic year together with staff. It is truly a joy to see the students and staff back together in the College. Pray that God will bless the College with all that is needed to have CCRTC continue to operate on site unhindered this academic year. Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. Ps. 124:8.



BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2020-2021

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DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH:

ELEVEN YEARS LATER; BROUGHT TO LIGHT OR OUT OF SIGHT? LEN LODDER

In 2009, after my second Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC), I wrote an article for the Spring Newsletter entitled, A Diamond in The Rough. My premise then was that "it [CCRTC] truly is a diamond in the rough."

That it was waiting for discovery by the very people who are supporting Reformed schools in Canada and around the world. That the possibilities and scope of services are endless. Boards and teachers alike would benefit from its full discovery. It was my hope that many would consider how they could best help get this "diamond in the rough" cleaned up so that it would sparkle with all the brilliance that is intrinsic to it because of its "dyed-in-the-wool" Reformed foundation.

Is this article in 2020 going to be a repeat of 2009? Yes and no. Yes, in the foundational message that we have a diamond here that needs full discovery, brought into full light. No, in the sense that in the ensuing years we have made huge strides in articulating and working toward our goals. The Board of Governors recognizes without dispute that God has blessed our efforts! We continue to pray and work. We invite you to pray and work with us in realizing these goals.

THE DEFINITIVE SOURCE FOR REFORMED TEACHER TRAINING

If memory serves me correctly, it was at the AGM 2012 strategic planning session that the Board's vision was articulated, "Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College will be the definitive source for Reformed teacher training." Our purpose stated, "To supply our schools with teachers who are educated in Reformed foundations." With this vision and purpose in mind, we have diligently discussed their implication for the five

main pillars that hold up the structure, namely: faculty, financial stability, programs, partnerships, and operations. In the ensuing years, these discussions have become more and more focused...and exciting!

Two items that came up in AGM 2020 as proof that we are making progress are:

a) all Canadian Reformed Schools are members. Unfortunately, not all schools have representation in the form of a Governor at the College table. I cannot stress enough how important it would be to have one hundred percent representation. School boards are encouraged to double their efforts in finding a Governor for their schools. If you, the reader, have any interest at all in this, please let your local school board know. Distance is not an issue since many of us attend the meetings via video conferencing. This works very efficiently and is much more sustainable than my early days on the Board of Governors when I had to wait for the minutes to arrive by mail in order to be up-to-date. Now I can participate fully in every meeting.

b) We had a report at the AGM explaining that a delegation from Korea had been to the College and is seeking our help in establishing teacher training for schools they hope to set up there.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Full disclosure compels me to report honestly that we discussed whether a lack of acknowledging the importance of Reformed education is making it difficult



for us to get the kind of support we need to attain our vision and purpose.

Please do not get me wrong in this. Although one of the most difficult matters for CCRTC Governors each year is the matter of financial stability, we are very happy that so many people do support us and, as mentioned above, that 100 percent of the school boards in Canada and Washington State have opted to show support by being members.

One of the ways we hope to stir up more support is by pursuing accreditation. We are, of course, very thankful for the people who stepped up to help us financially in this pursuit. One of the annual concerns though, is the day-to-day operating budget. Would you consider giving a regular donation to CCRTC? The suggested amount is \$40/ month or \$480 per annum, but we would honestly accept any amount of regular contributions. It is very simple to set up a PAP, if that is what you prefer so that the Governors may more easily plan for things such as faculty recruitment and program development. I would love to tell you more about those plans but sadly, I am running out of space. We had a very productive time at our recent AGM and we would welcome YOU to join our endeavour prayerfully, and financially or, if possible/necessary, as a Governor!

I can only hope and pray that this little article will bring our "diamond in the rough" out into the light, into your sight.

Love it. Support it. Thank God for CCRTC!

2020-2021 CCRTC PERSONNEL LIST:

FULL-TIME FACULTY

C. van Halen-Faber, PRINCIPAL, BA; M.ED.; PHD

J. Huizenga, B.SC.; B.ED.; M.ED.; OCT

M. Wieske, DIP. ED.; MA

ADJUNCT FACULTY

D. G. J. Agema, M. DIV.

B. Faber, BA (HONS); D.PHIL.

K. Sikkema, DUTCH TEACHING CERTIFICATE; BA; M.ED.

SESSIONAL INSTRUCTORS

C. Vanderpol, BA.SC. (HONS); M.ED.

E. VanMiddelkoop, BA; B.ED.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

E. Boeringa,
LIBRARY TECHNICIAN

D. Van Huisstede, ADMINISTRATOR, FINANCIAL AID OFFICER

J. van Leeuwen,
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT,
FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATOR

K. VanVeen



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In addition to the two fulltime pre-service teacher training programs, CCRTC offers an in-service professional development opportunity for practising teachers. Successful completion of six courses results in the CCRTC-Certificate of Reformed Education (C-CREd).

Typically, the courses in this program are designed as an intense one week on-site experience consisting of lectures, readings, discussions, and presentations. Participants will then complete the course requirements by submitting an exit paper in which they connect the course contents to their own classroom practice.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the

One unique aspect was that in this course, teachers were at two campuses: At Credo Christian High School in Langley, BC, and at Cornerstone Christian School in Lynden, WA, - yet connected by faith and professionalism while experiencing the blessings of technology.

From the course description, the intent and purpose of the course become very clear: "This course equips Christian teachers to make sense of the current cultural moment in the West, in which identity politics, critical theory, and the sexual revolution converge for a potent worldview that is increasingly becoming normative. Teachers who can analyze some of these influences

upon themselves and their students will be better equipped to respond biblically."

Although participants represented a wide range of prior theoretical and practical knowledge, under Dr. Van Raalte's skilful guidance and tutelage all were able to make personally relevant connections to their teaching practice. From anecdotal responses and the more formal feedback gleaned from the course evaluations it is clear that this course was well-received by the participants.

It is our prayer that over time, CCRTC can expand its C-CREd course offerings in various locations. Schools that are interested in hosting a course are encouraged to contact the College.





The Qoheleth-Teacher reminds us that "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens" (Eccl. 3:1) and every so often we are reminded of that truth when a faculty member at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC) retires from full-time teaching.

Earlier this year, Mr. Keith Sikkema made such a decision to retire. This decision was duly noted at the online assembly in May and was commemorated by colleagues and staff at a carefully conducted social event in August. At both occasions, we expressed gratitude for Keith's faithful service as a full-time faculty member at the College during the past seven years. However, many more years of service in Reformed Christian education preceded these final years.

Mr. Sikkema prepared himself well for teaching. He started his educational peregrine trek a long time ago by obtaining a teaching certificate at the "Albertus Zijlstra" Reformed Teachers College in Groningen, The Netherlands. After emigrating to Canada he then obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography and Management, and completed his formal education with a Master of Education degree in Organizational and Administrative Studies at Brock University. His Master's degree studies included a thesis entitled, Home schooling in view of John Calvin: a study in education and communion of saints.

As is the case with many teachers who engage in formal studies, Keith held a full-time position throughout, at schools in Chatham, Indonesia, Smithville, Grand Rapids, and Laurel. His teaching experience spans a wide array of responsibilities in a wide array of settings, ranging from that of a classroom teacher to a Principal in both small and larger schools. Very unique to the experience were the six years spent at the Reformed International School in Sentani, Papua (Irian Jaya) Indonesia where the teaching task also included being a hostel-parent. Judging by Mr. Sikkema's stories, the many experiences in this setting made a deep impression.

In 2013, Keith entered the final phase of his teaching career when he accepted the appointment as a full-time faculty member at CCRTC. Over the course of his years at the College, Mr. Sikkema left his mark in a number of ways. Just to name a few, we think of his love for teaching Church History, for practising narration, and for exploring curriculum theory and development. We also think of other ways in which he added to the fabric of CCRTC, most notably in his role as safety officer. Lastly, we point to his role as recruitment officer and his desire to encourage prospective students to consider the teaching profession and to look at CCRTC as their study destination. In it all, his connection with the students-asteacher-candidates was genuine and much appreciated.

Most importantly, as we mark his retirement we will fondly remember Mr. Keith Sikkema as a dedicated teacher, faithful in his calling to "tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD" (Ps. 78:4). We thank him for that. It is our prayer that Keith may enjoy many years of good health, together with his wife Coby and their children and grandchildren.

But wait, . . . Mr. Sikkema has graciously agreed to continue to serve the College as a part-time instructor. We are blessed to still have him in our midst for a little while longer. And so, this is merely a partial goodbye!





"We live in unprecedented times" is a phrase we have heard repeatedly over the course of the past year. The restrictions and uncertainties that come with these unprecedented times led the College to make the difficult decision to cancel the formal graduation.

10 Covenant C

Nevertheless, we found an opportunity to mark the academic achievements of the Class of '20 in a very special way by combining a celebration and a reunion on October 9. Not surprisingly, after 239 days of not having seen each other, it turned out to be a very special afternoon for graduates, faculty, and staff. The Diploma of Teaching was conferred on seven graduands, two of whom graduated in absentia.

It was good to experience the bond of faith while reminiscing about the past three years. The Class of '20 acknowledged the LORD's providential care in their lives. "We often worried about where we would end up teaching or if we were cut out for the task. However, we were often reminded at the College that God had a plan for us and was directing our footsteps. I think of Romans 8:28, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." This could not be more true. God has led us each to a teaching position in five different schools." (Valedictory Address)

The second part of the afternoon's agenda was devoted to sharing first experiences and doing so in light of CCRTC's teacher education programs. How are the graduates doing? Did they feel well-prepared? Do they have recommendations and suggestions for

improvement? For the faculty these annual 'reunions' are invaluable. This one was no exception. It was a delight to hear these first year teachers speak so professionally about their work and their preparedness for the teaching task. In their own words, "God has graciously blessed us all throughout our years at the College and now in our task as teachers of His covenant children. All the glory goes to Him! I think I can speak for all of us when I say that going to a Reformed Christian College was one of the greatest blessings. We started each day with morning devotions, which was always a time of great reflection and also many laughs. We filled our little school with our voices bringing praise to God. Our lectures, our assignments and our placements were always Christ-centered, instilling in us all a Reformed perspective on teaching and learning. We recognize that we often failed and fell short but we rejoice in knowing that our Saviour took those failures away with His blood." (Valedictory Address)

As we now part ways, it is our prayer that these seven CCRTC alumni will continue to teach with much joy and confidence. May they remind themselves of their graduation text: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Col. 3:17).





















INTRODUCING THE 'CLASS OF 2020'

Natalie Breukelman (GR. 5/6 AT HOPE REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, PARIS, ON), Adrianna Byers (GR. 3 AT MT. CHEAM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BC), Katharine deJong (GR. 6B AT MARANATHA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, FERGUS, ON), Tyneesha Petter (GR. 5 AT DUFFERIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CARMAN, MB), Alexandra VanSydenborgh (gr. 6a at maranatha christian school, fergus, on), Karen Veldhuizen (GR. 2 AT MT. CHEAM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BC), and Desirae Vellema (GR. 5 AT GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, MILLGROVE, ON).



ADMISSIONS SEPTEMBER 2021

The Board of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College in Hamilton, Ontario, invites applications from prospective students for the 2021-2022 academic year.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

For the Two-Year Diploma of Education Program: a suitable university degree For the Three-Year Diploma of Teaching Program: a grade 12 diploma with university entrance equivalence

Prospective candidates are invited to contact the College for more information and/or to obtain an application package.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 1. 2021

Those who plan to seek admission in the year 2022-2023 are also encouraged to contact the College as soon as possible.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:

COVENANT CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE 410 Crerar Drive Hamilton, ON L9A 5K3 905.385.0634 Fax: 905.385.8409

www.covenantteacherscollege.com

from the treasurer

DAN WITTEN

Wow! I have begun to realize how fast the year has slipped by since joining Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College

(CCRTC). It appears we were just dealing with the shifting to online learning and now we have students back in the classroom in what we consider the *new normal*. We pray for the students and faculty in these uncertain times.

It was a blessing to see the community's continued support of CCRTC. This year's preliminary financial statements show that this strong support base has led to CCRTC meeting and exceeding its financial expectations. During what is generally a slow time of summer, the Finance and Fundraising Committee was still highly active, overseeing the financial stability of the College. Indeed, we can see God's providential hand in the financial well-being of CCRTC.

I would once again like to encourage anyone who has a serving heart, to offer up their time to help the Finance and Fundraising Committee. We are currently looking to fill two positions in this Committee. With the recent shift to online meetings, the time requirements of the positions have lessened. If you are interested or looking for more information, please contact me at treasurer@covenantteacherscollege.com.

We continue to pray earnestly for the well-being of CCRTC and are grateful for receiving the ongoing support of the community.

Yours in Christ

Dan Witten

CCRTC FALL

CALL CAMPAIGN

We can't wait to get in touch with some of you!

Have a look at the information in your church mail slot or your inbox and then wait for our call sometime between November 1 - November 13.

If you don't get a call this time around, no worries. We'll catch you later.

Looking forward to our conversation!



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

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

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.

- □ \$40/Month Withdrawn on the:
 - ☐ 15th of the month ☐ 30th of the month
- \$480/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.