



CELEBRATING  
**40** YEARS  
OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

 **Covenant**  
CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

PSALM 78:4



CCRTC NEWS  
**SPRING 2022**



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

### “Spring is in the air!”

The days are getting longer, the sun seems to be stronger, daffodils and tulips are peeking their heads above the soil, robins have returned and are happily playing in puddles, a shimmer of green can be seen in budding trees and shrubs, and the list could go on. All are welcome signs that Spring is in the air. Once again we are reminded that our faithful God is true to his Word – always.

Within the walls of 410 Crerar Drive in Hamilton, ON we also experience signs that Spring is in the air: Final practicum placements are completed, students are getting a little restless, as-yet-unfilled teaching positions remain posted, and the words *final exams* and *assignment due dates* are used more frequently and with greater urgency. Yes, the 2021-2022 academic year is gradually drawing to a close.

It is my pleasure to draw your attention to some highlights that mark the final phase of the year.

Probably the number one highlight is that after two years marked by COVID-19 restrictions it seems like the pandemic has waned and along with it comes a gradual return to an even more normal in-person teaching and learning environment. Very practically, it means lugging some furniture around in order to restore the classrooms and the student lounge to their intended, respective set-ups. We praise God for his care over us and pray for an extra measure of understanding, generosity, grace, and outreach to one

another so rifts may be closed and hurts healed.

A second highlight is that after two years we are looking forward to offering a special theme week to the students in the first and second year of the Three-year Diploma of Teaching program. These weeks are intended to deepen and broaden the knowledge base of future teachers. This year’s focus will be on *Remembering the Holocaust*. In addition to exploring and presenting a topic of their choice, students will be visiting a local Hamilton synagogue, and they will listen to stories of survival told by a daughter of a holocaust survivor. In addition, Dr. Jannes Smith of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary will address us on *Israel in Scripture and Today*. At the time of writing, this event is still in the future. By the time you read this, it will be in the past. Regardless, I am sure that the students’ learning about this important topic will be displayed beautifully on a large scroll fashioned by Mr. Keith Sikkema.

A third highlight points us to the reality of life-after-finishing a preparation for teaching program of studies. The “Class of ‘22” has completed the final practicum placement and looks forward to finishing the year on a strong note. Teacher candidates have prepared job applications, sustained job interviews, and were offered and have accepted teaching positions. With this highlight comes a lowlight: Many schools are still seeking to fill positions for next year. As a Reformed Christian educational community we pray that the Lord will

provide for these schools. We applaud the Teach with Us Canada initiative to organize a National Strategy Meeting to attract/retain teachers for Reformed schools. Given that the shortage of teachers will only increase in the next 3-5 years, we hope that representatives from all schools will participate in this important event on April 8.

A final highlight is the unwavering work of the Board’s committees. As Principal, I have the privilege of attending many committee meetings and experiencing first-hand how each committee fulfills its mandate in order to make the College function effectively. To this end, all committees are important and as such I should not really show any favouritism. But I will make an exception for the CCRTC 40th Anniversary Committee which has worked tirelessly on planning events during a year of much uncertainty. Their meetings are always upbeat, creative, and productive. I encourage you to stay tuned to what they have in store for you – whether in print or in person.

And that brings me back to the beginning, celebrating the goodness of our Covenant God. We see it in the changing of the seasons, we experience it in our personal lives, and we also may be comforted and sustained by it in the work at the College. Indeed, many times and at many occasions we have quoted our theme text for the year, “Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.” (Hebrews 10:23) By faith we know it to be true. *Soli Deo Gloria!*



## BIBLE SURVEY 1 AND 2 REV. DOUWE AGEMA

Do you remember Bible stories your teacher told you in elementary school?

I certainly do. I remember, for example, my grade 3 teacher telling us about Goliath and David. I remember the mark on the wall of our classroom indicating how tall Goliath was. For many of us, these Bible stories of the early years in elementary school stay with us. Bible lessons can leave a deep impression on students. This should not surprise us. How often do we not read in the Bible that the stories of the past have to be told and retold? The yearly feasts gave opportunity to such retelling, as did the many stones (monuments) that could be seen in the land. In his wisdom, our God chose to reveal himself by means of recorded historical events and tasked parents and teachers to retell them. In this way he is pleased to reveal his greatness and power as well as his justice and mercy. In this way we also come to know ourselves and are instructed in how to serve our Covenant LORD.

Bible History is an essential part of Reformed education. At Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC), we want to prepare prospective teachers for this important task. This is certainly the objective in the courses I teach: Bible Survey 1 and 2. We survey all of Bible History. Although we focus mainly on the so-called historical parts of the Bible, we also pay attention to such areas as the Psalms, prophets and New Testament letters, in order to see how we can gain information from them

about specific histories. The courses are a combination of giving attention to specific books of the Bible, and focussing on the overall themes revealed in the Bible. Take, for example, the book of Numbers. It records the people of God travelling from Mount Sinai to the Promised Land. It does not record all the events, but selects histories that tell us why one generation had to die in the wilderness and how the LORD prepared a new generation to enter the land. But this book is also part of a larger picture: God's work of redemption which started after we fell into sin, leads to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and will be fully realized on the New Earth. Other passages in the Bible, such as Hebrews 3 and 4, help us to understand the travels in the wilderness within the whole of God's plan, and how we have to work with them.

These histories have to be retold. Compare this retelling to a building. A building is a structure made up of many components and they are put together into a whole, according to the blueprint. In these courses we pay attention to the many components used for the building. We call them building blocks. They come in many shapes and sizes, and draw our attention to important details and connections such as: **The geography of Palestine.** Where are the towns located? What does the landscape of the Judean desert look like? Where is Mount Carmel? What is the climate of Palestine? What is the importance of rainfall? **The nations surrounding Israel and their history.** The LORD also ruled the other nations

It is my prayer that through these courses, prospective teachers are equipped to tell the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD and his might, so that they set their hope in God (Ps. 78:4-8).

and used them at times to punish Israel. Where is Nineveh and what do we know about the Assyrians or the Egyptians? **Customs and ceremonies which Israel were taught to observe.** How did the sacrificial system function in Israel? What was the meaning of the annual feasts? What did the tabernacle or temple look like? What is the importance of the cities of refuge? **Connections with other parts of the Bible.** Is a history also mentioned elsewhere in the Bible and what do we learn from it? **Connections with the doctrine as we have summarized it in our confessions.** What do we learn in a particular history about our sin, our redemption, and the call to be thankful?

It is my prayer that through these courses, prospective teachers are equipped to tell the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD and his might, so that they set their hope in God (Ps. 78:4-8).



# CELEBRATING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IN 40 YEARS: THE ALUMNI SPEAK

HENRIETTA GROENEVELD

Greetings,

We are thankful to celebrate the 40th milestone year of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC)! The College values that teachers must be equipped to tell the next generation of God's love and faithfulness. The school days at CCRTC have made a lasting impression on our alumni and via a survey they have shared memories that demonstrate this faithfulness.

The College continues to prepare its students for intentional, God-centered instruction in the classroom setting. Graduates feel they were taught more about God and his covenant through their daily classes at CCRTC, gaining confidence on how to reflect his goodness in their own lessons. One teacher noted "the Reformed underpinnings for instruction is indispensable to our role as teachers". The majority of alumni emphasize the special camaraderie between faculty and students in a smaller setting as a blessing for learning at CCRTC. One person reflected what many others wrote: "The friendships formed between students and the faculty is something I'll always treasure. There were many competitive games of ping-pong at lunch time, hikes

together, and hot lunches shared weekly. We learned together, worked together, laughed together, ate together, and at times cried together." Faculty encouraged individuals to articulate what they believed and why they believed it; and taught how to use that in teaching. With this in mind alumni are helping raise up faithful children in our supporting schools today.

In the 40 years of operation, CCRTC taught professional skills that have been unforgettable for alumni in their teaching career. Alumni emphasized lesson planning as a critical skill they developed in CCRTC. Practicing telling stories in one class also helped teachers in their teaching lessons in subjects like Bible and Church History. Another distinguishing skill taught at the College was "reflective practice". In this, alumni had to consider their personal approach to teaching, and to re-evaluate their methods if something went wrong. Many alumni recounted learning a big personal lesson when they made a mistake, and that they in fact grew from it! These sometimes provided laughs at CCRTC - one person recalled a failed science experiment that left the College smelling like moth balls! In all these learning curves, each class emphasized that students reflect God's glory as they work with children and future colleagues. The

practicums at local schools were hugely beneficial for students putting these lessons to practice. One of the alumni, referring to a College assignment, noted, "My Statement of Faith and Statement of Reformed Education have become all the more real to me as I enter the teaching profession and see the importance of remembering why we do what we do."

When our children are sent to school in the morning, they are greeted by teachers who have a sincere desire to faithfully connect with their students. Many alumni echoed that the most enjoyable aspect of teaching is connecting with students and watching them grow in knowledge. In the words of a survey respondent, "Teachers feel the privilege of speaking into the lives of the students, helping them view their world in the light of Christ's work." Many teachers mention their excitement when students have an "aha" or "lightbulb" moment. One described the importance of teaching the "whole child", which is mind, body, and spirit. The result of such teaching is seeing students pray and talk about who the Lord is and what he has done for his people. How beautifully God has blessed his future generation through the work of the College and faculty! The beauty of our Reformed community is that there are many opportunities for connecting, be it teaching in the

# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

school together or going to church with one another. Alumni have found they have been able to easily network with one another between meetings or events. Teachers' conventions are always a good time to reconnect. Several noted they keep up with fellow graduates, sharing different teaching experiences and giving advice via social media. In addition, they found it a blessing to relate with one another both in challenges and sharing the joys in their teaching.

Teachers tend to remain active in their community! A large portion of our alumni spend time substitute teaching in our schools after full-time employment. Many alumni included that they were members of their local Education Committees, volunteering in their schools, and helping with fundraising as well. Through this they promote CCRTC as a college that fully equips students to help parents raise their children. It's truly a blessing that a career as a teacher instills a desire to help our schools thrive for this generation and the next.

**We are so grateful to remain under the umbrella of God's faithfulness.**

It was a treasure to receive this feedback from the alumni. It is clear from these first-hand experiences that God always provides the means to grow his kingdom. He uses faithful individuals to praise his name at CCRTC and beyond.

Sincerely,

The 40th Anniversary Committee of  
CCRTC

## ALUMNI QUOTES

### PHRASES ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIFIC COLLEGE INSTRUCTORS

“ I always remember **Mr. Tony Vanderven** reading children's books to us in such a way that his passion was passed on to us. ”

“ “What are you going to do? Run and hide or get involved!” - **Dr. Art Witten.** ”

“ “Don't reinvent the wheel” - **Dr. Art Witten** ”

“ “It's all good” - **Dr. Christine van Halen** ”

“ **Miss Judy Kingma** would often say this phrase in her prayers, “You, God, are faithful. You do what you say you will do.” ”

“ I have a visual image of **Mr. Bill Horsman** rolling up a pencil in his tie while lecturing. ”

“ The instructors were dependable. Their doors were always open to students even if the matter wasn't about school. ”

“ I have a visual image of **Dr. Freda Oosterhoff** lecturing, her dropping chalk (or pen) over edge of table and her crawling under table to retrieve it while not missing a beat in her church history lecture. ”

“ The students will learn in spite of you” - **Dr. Christine van Halen** ”



## annual general meeting 2022 MARY DEBOER

In the academic life of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC), time is counted in terms of semesters, practicum sessions, and exams. In the governing of the College, time is marked by annual general meetings. These meetings are the watershed event each year: a time when the past year is reflected on, achievements given thanks for, and short and long-term goals set. For a second year the meeting had to be held online. Governors representing all the member schools across Canada and Lynden, Washington, could meet on February 25th and 26th and enjoy each other's company; even online there was a spirit of camaraderie.

The meeting started on a high note. The Principal, Christine van Halen-Faber, gave a presentation celebrating God's faithfulness and that CCRTC could commemorate 40 years of operation. "We looked back to look ahead." The College started in 1981 with two faculty members: the first principal, Mr. Tony VanderVen, and the first lecturer, Mr. William Horsman. Soon after they were joined by Mr Art Witten, followed by Christine van Halen-Faber, the current Principal, Donna van Huisstede as the Administrator, and Eleanor Boeringa

as the Librarian. The original two have been called home by their Lord, and the College is still benefitting from the years of experience of the last three, along with other faculty members and staff. There was actually one year in the late '90's when there were no students; thankfully, only one year. Since that time CCRTC has provided 279 teachers for our schools! What a blessing for the schools! Most of those graduates still use their training for the benefit of our schools, whether as part-time, full-time, or supply teachers, educational assistants, board members, committee members, or P.T.A. members. The work of the College grows ever more important since there is such a shortage of Reformed teachers for our schools as they grow. The Lord's faithfulness is the theme for this special anniversary year, and it gives us "strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow."

On the Saturday we could celebrate the Lord's faithfulness to the most recent Doctor in the faculty: Dr. Jack Huizenga, who obtained his doctorate in the fall of 2021. Dr. Huizenga gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining his six-year journey to obtain his degree, culminating in a thesis entitled, "Looking in the Mirror of Authenticity: A Self-Study of Teacher Education Practice". Authenticity with respect to teacher education involves creating a learning experience that corresponds to

the real world and being true to who we are in the Lord. Teaching authentically means being mindful of the whole person being taught, being true to the subject matter, and accepting a responsibility to others. The presentation was insightful, and Dr. Huizenga was thanked for the years and hours he worked to reach this milestone.

The balance of the meeting was spent interacting with reports from the various committees in which they outlined their main activities of the past year and their goals for the coming year(s). A five-year plan for the entire Board was unveiled with specific yearly goals in the five main areas: Program, Faculty, Financial Stability, Operations, and Partnerships. This plan was adopted, and the various committees will have new specific targets to meet.

All in all, much was accomplished in a short time. Everyone could sign off with a renewed sense of purpose, and a stronger sense of all the blessings the Lord has bestowed on CCRTC.

### MARK THE DATE

Help celebrate the  
Class of '22!

**DATE:**  
May 27, 2022

**LOCATION:**  
Cornerstone Church,  
Hamilton ON

# W.A.T.C.H. REPRESENTATIVES 2021-2022

## CLASSIS CENTRAL ONTARIO

Burlington Ebenezer ..... Grace Hulleman  
Burlington Fellowship ..... Anjelynn Helder  
Burlington Waterdown ..... Susanne Hutten  
Flamborough ..... Brenda Bartels  
Ottawa ..... Elizabeth Smith  
Toronto ..... Vacant

## CLASSIS NIAGARA

Attercliffe ..... Diane Feenstra  
Dunnville ..... Diana Kelly  
Grassie ..... Vacant  
Grimsby ..... Vacant  
Lincoln ..... Adria Stulp  
Spring Creek ..... Teresa Schulenberg  
Smithville ..... Beth Stel  
Niagara South ..... Vacant

## 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 SCHOOL BUDGET  
Owen Sound ..... Glenda Kapteyn

## CLASSIS ONTARIO WEST

Ancaster ..... Chandra Vanderboom  
Blessings ..... Deb Alkema  
Chatham ..... Jennifer Vanderveen  
Hamilton Cornerstone ..... Vacant  
Hamilton Providence ..... Monica Riemer  
Kerwood ..... Mary Lenting  
London ..... Madelyn Poort

## CLASSIS MANITOBA

Carman East ..... Vacant  
Carman West ..... Vacant  
Winnipeg Grace ..... Sarah Welch  
Winnipeg Redeemer ..... Erica Nienhuis

## CLASSIS ALBERTA

Barrhead ..... Vacant  
Calgary ..... Vacant  
Coaldale ..... Erin Becker  
Edmonton Immanuel ..... Vacant  
Edmonton Providence ..... Vacant  
Neerlandia ..... Vacant  
St. Albert ..... Vacant  
Taber ..... Vacant

## CLASSIS PACIFIC EAST

Abbotsford ..... Vacant  
Aldergrove ..... Linda Vane  
Chilliwack ..... Vacant  
Cloverdale ..... Rachel Vandersluis  
Houston ..... Arlene Leffers  
Langley ..... Vacant  
Lynden ..... Debbie Johnson  
Nooksack Valley ..... Debby Lodder  
Smithers ..... Hetty Vandergaag  
Surrey ..... Michelle Faber  
Vernon ..... Vacant  
Willoughby Heights ..... Yvonne Jacobi  
Yarrow ..... Vacant



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## CERTIFICATE OF REFORMED EDUCATION Summer 2022

**THE REFORMED CHRISTIAN TEACHER:  
LOOKING IN THE MIRROR OF AUTHENTICITY**



**COURSE FACILITATOR:** Dr. Jack Huizenga  
**DATES:** July 4-8, 2022  
**LOCATION:** Credo Christian High School, Langley, BC

Please contact  
[covenant@covenantteacherscollege.com](mailto:covenant@covenantteacherscollege.com)  
for more information.



# from the treasurer

DAN WITTEN

On February 25th and 26th, Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC) was blessed to hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM). We were once again attached to our computer screens for a second year in a row for this event. While we are thankful for the technology we can use, there is no doubt some disappointment in not being able to share a conversation over a cup of coffee in person. Despite all this, the passion for CCRTC can be witnessed through our Governors and their willingness to set aside

time on a weekend to plan the future of CCRTC.

At this AGM we approved the budget for the upcoming year. This process has evolved over the years. In the past, the Finance Committee generated the budget and presented it to the Executive Committee for approval. We now have the administrative staff far more involved in the initial process of crafting the budget. It is wonderful to witness the fiscal responsibility that lives within CCRTC. The donations that are received are used to the utmost benefit of the College. What a joy to share that a hypothetical budget item has now become a

reality with Mark den Hollander becoming a member of the faculty at CCRTC. We pray that the Lord watches over Mark and his family with their plans of moving to Ontario.

As is noticed everywhere, the cost of living continues to rise and this is also reflected in the finances required to operate the College. The Lord has continued to bless CCRTC with financial stability in these uncertain times and we ask that you keep CCRTC in your prayers as it continues the important task of Reformed teacher training.

Yours in Christ,  
Dan Witten



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](https://covenantteacherscollege.com/donate.html)

- Yes! I would like to support CCRTC!**
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  - Monthly by pre-authorized automatic withdrawal

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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 understand that I can terminate this agreement at any time.

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- \$480/Year** - Withdrawn on \_\_\_\_\_ each year

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

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