



Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

OCTOBER 2018



CCRTC NEWS FALL 2018

www.covenantteacherscollege.com





from the PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE VAN HELEN-FABER

With deep gratitude to our gracious God who has kept the students, faculty, staff, as well as board and committee members safe throughout the summer break and granted us a time of relaxation, we started the 38th year of operation of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College on September 4.

We did so by reflecting on the theme text for this year, “In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared... to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (1 Peter 3:15). These words of the apostle Peter are a powerful reminder that future teachers, current instructors, and anyone who is connected to Reformed Christian education generally, and with CCRTC specifically, ought to be able to attest to the hope that is within us. Within and beyond the walls of 410 Crerar Drive, our very conduct ought to make it very clear to anyone that we are hope-filled people whose hearts are full of Christ, and whose words and actions are shaped by the work of his Holy Spirit.

As we look forward to a new year of teaching and learning to the honour and praise of God, we also may look back to a summer filled with education-related activities. The Coaldale Christian School organized a conference for its school personnel and invited Mr. Jack Huizenga to be the facilitator around the theme of *Authenticity for Reformed Education*, a topic that resonates well with his doctoral studies. Mr. Keith Sikkema was a keynote speaker on the CARE curriculum day in August and addressed the challenging and relevant topic of *Relationships with Indigenous Peoples*. Dr. Christine van Halen, Mrs. Donna Van Huisstede, and Mrs. Jo-anne van Leeuwen moved

full steam ahead with the preparation of the accreditation application. The rookie CCRTC lecturer, Mr. Menco Wieske, immersed himself not only in handing over the reins of administrative leadership at Cornerstone Christian School, but also in taking up his teaching task at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College.

During the 2018-2019 academic year we are blessed with the expert contributions of the part-time instructors as we welcome back Rev. Douwe Agema (*Survey of Old and New Testament and Bible History and Reformed Doctrine*), Mme Teresa Boisvert (*French as a Second Language*), Dr. Ben Faber (*Perspectives on Literature*), Miss Judy Kingma (*Children’s Literature and Language Arts – Reading*), Mrs. Stephanie Sikma (*Survey of English Literature*), and Mr. Tim Wildeboer (*Physical Education and Health*). In due time you, the reader, will meet each of these instructors on the pages of our newsletters.

So, you may ask, what is it that keeps us going year after year? Some years ago, the vision of the college was articulated as CCRTC: *The definitive source for Reformed teacher training*. Today, that vision still holds. The college’s key objective is the training of teachers for Reformed Christian schools. An important component of the vision is obtaining full accreditation, and this continues to be a primary focus for all who are directly involved with the college. At the start of another year we can report that

“ tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD – PSALM 78:4



all evidential support documentation (well over 1000 pages!) has now been developed, and that the preparation of the application itself is progressing well. We gratefully acknowledge the letters of endorsement received from member school boards, alumni, and politicians. With the newly-elected Ontario provincial government finding its feet, our next step under the excellent government relations guidance of Pathway Group, will be to (re-) establish positive relationships with Ministry staff and with anyone who will be involved in the process. We know that this entire project rests firmly in the providential care of our heavenly Father, and we fervently solicit your prayers as we enter into the final stages prior to submitting the application. May God's favour rest on this work also, and may we accept the ultimate outcome as coming from his Fatherly hand.

Now that we are well into our respective teaching and learning tasks of the 2018-2019 academic year we count on your support so that the college indeed may be the definitive source for Reformed teacher training. Please stand firmly next to us as we teach God's covenant children and "tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD" (Ps. 78:4).



YEAR 1



YEAR 2



YEAR 3



from the CHAIRMAN **RICHARD FEENSTRA**

How the summer seems to fly by and here we are, fall time again. At first glance summer seems like a slower time of year; students dispersed, the building relatively quiet, the number of regular meetings reduced, and teachers hard to find.

Yet what most of us do not see is how hard at work the staff remained. One or two travelled the country to lead seminars, and our new instructor completed his duties as principal, set up his successor, and then transitioned to be briefed and ready for new courses to lead at CCRTC. Our principal herself has not slowed down in the least over the last two years in preparing accreditation papers. Staff has also been submerged in this same process along with accomplishing the regular duties of a new academic year about to begin. The list can go on, but you get the idea of the summer life of the college employees. As a Reformed community at large, we have so much to be thankful for in this training center and all those involved.

I would like to reflect a little more on that Reformed community. Perhaps it starts with what it is to be Reformed. Last year we could celebrate 500 hundred years since the Reformation began. The truth of God's Word was brought to light once again and simply put, God's people reformed to lead lives of thankfulness and service to him. As community we were blessed to see our teachers college along with the theological seminary promote the celebration of this milestone. This year we can remember 400 years since the statements of doctrine adopted by the international Reformed Synod of Dort were summarized in the Canons of Dort. All these milestones repeatedly show God's faithfulness. For us today it begins each week again with the faithful preaching of God's Word. Article

Three of the Canons of Dort speaks of the preaching of the gospel. The theological seminary has for many years now been calling for more men to consider the ministry. The need is great, with many pastors coming close to the age of retirement and more and more churches coming into existence. Will some of you young men consider this calling?

So, what does this have to do with a teachers college you might ask? Are we not a Reformed community? When one part needs help, do we not support one another? More than that, how do we as parents remain faithful to God without the preaching of his Word? How can our children come to faith and how can teachers train our children without being grounded in the preaching themselves? Finally, as the need for ministers grows so does the need for teachers. We continue to hear of more and more schools expanding across Canada, class sizes growing and splitting in two. Teachers are being asked back out of retirement and others are asked to teach part-time so they, together with two or three others, might fill the void. All this added to a teacher base that is aging and approaching retirement. There is a real and growing need in our Reformed community for teachers, and dare I say, especially male teachers. Teaching the next generation is a noble task of great importance. To those of you in high school or perhaps college or university I ask you to seriously consider teaching as your career. Perhaps you parents or teachers can encourage your children to look at this profession. Once you have



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decided to pursue a career in teaching in a Reformed Christian school, it is not so difficult to decide on CCRTC as your definitive source for Reformed teacher training. May we as Christian communities continue to grow and work together to the praise and glory of God's name.



INTRODU DR. BEN F

Hello! I have been asked to tell readers of the Newsletter a little about myself and what I do at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College. My name is Ben Faber. I am married to Rita (née Klos, Class of 1985). We have five adult children and two adorable grandchildren, both under the age of two.

In the first half of our married life, Rita and I lived in England, British Columbia, and New Brunswick. So, yes, our children have UK, BC, and NB birth certificates. We moved to Ontario in 2003 when I took a full-time position in the English department at Redeemer University College in Ancaster. Moving to Hamilton seemed like a homecoming for me: I attended school here (Timothy, Guido, McMaster), was a member of Cornerstone Church for almost twenty years, and have always loved the industrial grit of the city.

Even as an undergraduate student at McMaster I was drawn to the literature of the 16th and 17th centuries, probably because it reflects richly the profound cultural shifts that Europe was experiencing. Actually, I think that Dr. Oosterhoff's high school classes on European history and Reformed Religion had already earlier started me down this path. For my doctoral studies at Oxford, I focussed on the role that literature plays in the social and political changes in England around the time of Oliver Cromwell. My teaching and research have always remained in the general vicinity of the Renaissance in England. If anything, my study of the

poems, plays, and prose writings of that time period has deepened my conviction that literature is never neutral. Those three transcendentals of *truth*, *beauty*, and *goodness* are always entwined in some way or other in literature, also today.

Since 2007, I have taught about one course per year at CCRTC in the "Academic and Professional Studies" suite of courses. These have included the two English literature surveys, The History of Ideas, Foundations of Reformed Identity: Worldview and Apologetics, and Perspectives on Literature. (You can find descriptions of these on the CCRTC website under "Programs and Courses: Course Outlines".) At the core of each of these courses is the belief that the life of the mind, although never separate from the body and soul, must never be neglected. As imaginative and articulate creatures, we respond to our Creator with our reason, affections, and will—all three of which have been redeemed in Christ and are being sanctified by his Spirit for the glory of the Father. Thus, the literature and philosophy courses that I am privileged to teach at the college echo with the words of the creation mandate and our covenant obligation

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“ My hope, of course, is that also they will share in their classrooms something of my love of literature and my enthusiasm for discerning ever more clearly *truth, beauty, and goodness* wherever they may be found.

in relation to culture. A Reformed biblical perspective on literature, both appreciative and critical, is worth passing on to the teacher candidates at the college. My hope, of course, is that also they will share in their classrooms something of my love of literature and my enthusiasm for discerning ever more clearly *truth, beauty, and goodness* wherever they may be found.

OUR DEDICATED STAFF



Full Time Faculty

C. van Halen-Faber, Principal, BA; M.Ed.; PhD
J. Huizenga, B.Sc.; B.Ed.; M.Ed.; OCT
K. Sikkema, Dutch Teaching Certificate; BA; M.Ed.
M. Wieske, Dip. Ed.; MA



Adjunct Faculty

D. G. J. Agema, M. Div.
T. Boisvert, BA
B. Faber, BA (Hons); D.Phil.
J. Kingma, OTC; BA (Hons); M.Ed.; OCT



Sessional Instructors

S. Sikma, BA (Hons); MA
C. Van Eerden, B.Ed., BA
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ORIENTATION DAY

from the treasurer **NATHAN HELDER**

As you read this report, we are in the midst of completing the year-end financial statements. The past year has been difficult since we did not meet our budget. The college was short approximately \$55,000. The amount of donations and contributions was 18% less than last year. Having said this, we are pleased with the increase from last year of about 7% in the number of donations made using the Pre-Authorized Payment option.

Over the past year the Finance and Fundraising Committee has been very busy. The committee met approximately five times and updated policies, completed assembling the relevant financial information regarding the accreditation application, ensured that the financial reporting has been accurate, and has assisted the governors by creating a *donation appeal letter for businesses*. Please take the time to review this letter and consider CCRTC in your business donations. If your business has not received this letter, please contact the college at covenant@covenantteacherscollege.com and we will be happy to send you one.

We appeal to all readers of the newsletter to consider seriously how you can support the important cause of Reformed teacher training.

Let us place our trust in our God as we move forward this year.

Yours in Christ.

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