



# Covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS COLLEGE

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

APRIL 2019



CCRTC NEWS

# SPRING 2019

[www.covenantteacherscollege.com](http://www.covenantteacherscollege.com)





## from the PRINCIPAL CHRISTINE VAN HELEN-FABER

An Australian friend once reminded me how special it is to live in Canada where the four seasons are so distinctly present. It is true. But it is even more special when also in the changing seasons we recognize the LORD's faithfulness in the covenant he made with his creation and with us his children. Now that the winter semester is quickly entering spring, the activities at the college take on a special sense of urgency as the academic year steadily draws to a close.

**“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.” – GEN 8:22**

We rejoice with the nine students who form the “Class of 2019”: Each one was able to apply for, and accept a full-time teaching position within a very short span of only a few weeks. At the same time, we pray for those schools that have not yet been able to fill pending vacancies, and recognize that a shortage of teachers is very real. Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College joins the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies in finding ways to encourage young people to enter the teaching profession. But we need your help! Parents, you know your children well. Please encourage your sons and daughters to consider becoming a teacher and playing a role in telling the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of our God. Teachers, you know your students well. Foster a love for teaching (and learning) in those who show an aptitude for this wonderful and important profession, and point them towards CCRTC as a study destination.

With gratitude we can report that the students at CCRTC have successfully completed the final-for-the-year practicum placements. This time, several students travelled to Alberta and Manitoba schools to practise their skills, while the remaining students were placed in schools in Ontario. The importance of the practicum portion of the college's programs cannot be stressed enough. It is in real classrooms,

under the guidance of experienced teachers, that theory and practice begin to connect. We express our appreciation to all associate teachers and their students, and principals who make this possible.

The first and second year students enjoyed a special theme week. This year, the focus question was, “Is foreign mission still relevant?” The topic was chosen with a view to getting our students to think about the role of the school in helping children understand the importance of spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth. One of the blessings of having students from a number of different Reformed Christian churches attend the college is that these churches all support foreign mission in some form. It was therefore not difficult to fill a week with guest speakers and group presentations on a wide variety of mission fields. We pray that this endeavour will have helped our students prepare for this special aspect of Reformed education.

Looking beyond the walls of the college there are several other professional development activities that support CCRTC's vision to be the definitive source for Reformed teacher training. For example, this year's learning day for Kindergarten teachers focused on “Exploring the World of Numbers - Teaching and Learning Mathematics.” The annual event is always a highlight on the college's calendar, for it is hard to imagine a group of teachers more enthusiastic and talkative than our kindergarten colleagues.

There are also events organized by the college that involve teachers from across Canada. In May the college will co-host a conference with the Reformed Curriculum Development Committee (RCDC) of Western Canada. The theme for the conference is “*Climate Change and Biblical Earth Stewardship*”, and teachers from Lynden WA, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario hope to spend some days in Hamilton learning about this important topic. The intent is that through various presentations and interactions the conference attendees will be equipped to return to their respective schools in order to inform their colleagues.

In early July, Mr. Keith Sikkema will be facilitating an in-service course for teachers in the Fraser Valley. This course, too, will deal with current topics that pervade the school curricula of all provinces. Working together as colleagues in a professional development setting will strengthen our collective understanding of challenging topics and how to approach them through the lens of Scripture.

Lastly, the many efforts towards preparing the accreditation application are reaching a point where the end is in sight. We pray for God’s continued blessings on this work also, and give him all thanks and praise for granting the endurance necessary to complete the task. May it stand to the praise of his glory!



**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-Aaryn Nicholson  
 Lincoln-Adria Stulp  
 Spring Creek-Theresa Heemskerck  
 Smithville-Beth Stel

**CLASSIS NORTHERN ONTARIO**

Brampton-Gertie Vanluik  
 Elora-Jackie Deboer  
 Fergus North-Amy Lodder  
 Fergus Maranatha-Natasha Huijgen  
 Grand Valley-Petra Jonker  
 Guelph Emmanuel-Robin Westrik  
 Guelph Living Word-Henrietta Groeneveld  
 Orangeville-ON SCHOOL BUDGET  
 Owen Sound-Glenda Kapteyn

**CLASSIS ONTARIO WEST**

Ancaster-Chandra Vanderboom  
 Blessings-Deb Alkema  
 Chatham-Jennifer Vanderveen  
 Glanbrook-Vacant  
 Hamilton Cornerstone-Val Alkema

Hamilton Providence-Monica Riemer  
 Kerwood-Mary Lenting  
 London-Michelle Temple

**CLASSIS MANITOBA**

Carman East-Vacant  
 Carmen 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**

Abbotstford-Vacant  
 Aldergrove-Lisa Vandervan  
 Chilliwack-Vacant  
 Cloverdale-Rachel Vandersluis  
 Houston-Arlene Leffers  
 Langley-Vacant  
 Lynden-Debbie Lodder/Stephanie Bareman  
 Smithers-Hetty Vandergaag  
 Surrey-Michelle Faber  
 Vernon-Nancy Meerstra  
 Willoughby Heights-Yvonne Jacobi  
 Yarrow-Vacant



Are you interested in joining CCRTC as a Sessional Instructor? Available openings for 2019-2020 include

**French as a Second Language  
 Language Arts**

A brief description of these courses may be found under the heading “Programs and Courses” at: [covenantteacherscollege.com](http://covenantteacherscollege.com)

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Dr. Christine van Halen-Faber PRINCIPAL  
 at [cvanhalen@covenantteacherscollege.com](mailto:cvanhalen@covenantteacherscollege.com)  
 (905) 385-0634 [office]





## from the CHAIRMAN **RICHARD FEENSTRA**

To be the definitive source for Reformed teacher training. This is the vision of the college. Is the concept even possible or realistic? Is this a worthwhile endeavour? What purpose does it have?

Mission statements, pillars, and visions are becoming objects of conversation more frequently it seems in Reformed circles. Is it because millennials are becoming more influential and are known to desire a purpose or place in life? Perhaps there is an interest in defining for the next generation who we are and what we do at a higher level. What is Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College and its place in our Reformed circles today?

On March 1st and 2nd 2019, we could meet as governors to discuss vision, goals, daily operations, and three other big issues. We have twenty-seven supporting school societies (100% participation), across Canada including one in Lynden Washington. At this annual event, sixteen governors met with the executive, administrative staff, and principal. Three governors were unable to join us and eight school societies currently have no governor to represent them. We pray in due time these vacancies can also be filled with active and energetic participants.

The topic no doubt everyone is wondering about is accreditation. The whole process has become far greater a task than anyone

could possibly have realized. With a new government in place, new politicians had to be met to ensure necessary political support. Preparing the application itself became very tedious particularly for our principal who, though she has help, must continue with regular duties as well. We are very close to submission at last, and once filed the process should be answered after about eighteen months of review.

We were also able to talk about finances for the college. Last year we saw our first major loss in many years to the tune of \$55,000.00. We recognize that the extremely successful accreditation fundraising campaign no doubt diverted some of our regular donations. At the same time, we ask you to prayerfully consider donating to the regular budget so that we do not begin a trend in the wrong direction. That said, we are also changing our fundraising strategies a little to be more consistent and hopefully more effective.

The third topic discussed identified the shortage of teachers and our role in addressing these concerns. Last year we could see five students graduate and D.V. this year we hope to have nine, all of whom all have landed jobs for the next academic year. Every school in every Reformed community, not just the Canadian Reformed, across the country is facing shortages. Many of us as parents likely do not even realize this need. Education committees are doing a great job of finding teachers for classes but too often they are not full-time.

As part of the regular program review cycle we will be considering the future of the three-year program which has served (and continues to serve) Ontario schools well. As we seek accreditation for the two-year post-university degree program it is clear there is no quick fix to training teachers. To become a certified teacher requires planning and dedication.

We can make many plans and hold different visions, but we must acknowledge firstly that God governs all things. This too, was something we could reflect on in meditation at the Annual General Meeting. All things will conform to his plan alone. Secondly, we must work in subservience to the government and its policy bodies to achieve the goal of accreditation to better serve all of Canada. Thirdly, we come to you seeking not only regular financial support but also for your recognition and understanding of our society. Yes, we need ministers, missionaries, elders, deacons, college and theological professors, board and committee members. But we also need teachers. Parents desire to fulfil baptismal vows to raise children in the fear of God and embrace our schools to assist in this task. Millennials, you teenagers and young people, do you want to make a difference in this life? We have identified areas of great need in our Reformed circles. Every position holds immense value to society. Who is next to answer the call? Encourage one another to be a hand and foot so that together we might bring glory to God.



# TEACHING NARRATION AT CCRTC

KEITH SIKKEMA

Among the course clusters in the Diploma of Teaching program, Teaching Studies (courses DT 601-606) bridges educational theory and classroom practice, with a focus on developing skills in the areas of teaching, planning, technology, and classroom management. Narration is one skill introduced in DT 601 (first year), focusing on Bible stories.

After honing this skill in three practicums, students revisit the topic in DT 604 (second year), with more depth and higher expectations. They must still tell Bible stories, but also develop narration skills in Church History and other subject areas. Story-telling skills are a vital fit for our students.

This fit is nestled in the CCRTC motto to tell the coming generation. (Ps 78:4) This Scriptural imperative is God's instruction

for parents and teachers: When sons ask their fathers what the meaning is of the law and various monuments, they must tell of God's glorious deeds. (Ex 13:13-15, Deut 6:20, Josh 4; Prov 4:1) Jesus presented many teaching parables; at Pentecost, Peter told of Jesus' task on earth, explaining its significance; and Stephen related the Old Testament story of God's mighty works. (Acts 2, 7) Both Peter and Stephen upheld the theme of Deut 6:4ff, *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children...* This teaching was a telling task about Yahweh who loved them and made a covenant with them, so he might also be known, loved, feared, and honoured by his children. (cf. Prov 9:10)

The fit is also good because telling goes beyond relaying facts or rules. Facts reach the head; stories reach the heart, and stick (as in 2 Sam 12). I once memorized German declensions but remember few. Of themselves, facts may be dull—but

well-told stories engage and delight; they are experienced as an enthralling movie before our eyes; they arouse emotions and touch the affective domain; they also can evoke deep understanding even of abstract concepts. I vividly remember my Grade 4 teacher's story-telling ritual, sitting down on a student desk, making us front-seat witnesses to the demise (in 1588) of the "invincible" Spanish *Armada*, and arousing our delight when one massive galleon after another was ship-wrecked, by God's sovereign breath. (Too bad some limped back to Spain, but God's glorious purpose prevailed!) Inevitably, stories appeal to our imagination, help us remember, and assist in making sense of things beyond us. They are a powerful tool for good teachers.

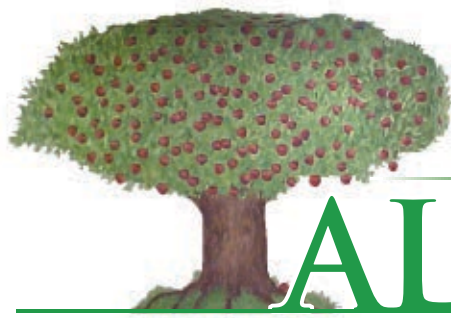
Teachers cannot snuggle up with their students like parents would, and, even when done well, *reading* stories easily leaves the book as a barrier between the teacher and the student, between the learner and the message. Teachers must learn to *tell*. It is well that CCRTC has increased the time devoted to this.

You are cordially invited to  
the **graduation celebration**  
of the Class of 2019.

*Please reserve the date and watch for additional details in your church bulletin.*

When: Friday May 24, 2019  
8:15 p.m.

Where: Cornerstone Canadian Reformed  
Church, HAMILTON, ON



CCRTC

# ALUMNI NEWS

how it was and how it is

## John Van Iperen

CLASS OF 2000

I attended Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College in the Fall of 1999 with five other students in the Diploma of Education program. The college proved to be a vibrant place filled with the different characters enrolled in the program. Upon graduating, I took up a teaching position in grade four in John Calvin School in Smithville, Ontario. After three years of teaching, I left the profession to pursue one of my other interests: sales. My experience in the school system was a great asset in the world of student planners and character development programs. Eventually I found myself on the school board of ACRES, where my own children attended, and here my knowledge of education and experience with people and relationships was again put to good use. In using my skills in many different areas (catechism teacher, CCRTC governor, choir director, LCRSS), God slowly pointed me back towards the field of education. With a brand-new school being put up “in my backyard”, I applied to Bellstone Christian School where I became the new grade five/six teacher,

band director, and vice-principal. What a pleasure to be again directly involved in the education of God’s covenant children!

My career has been one of many changes, and God again pointed his compass in a slightly different direction. Last September, I took up another new role, this time as principal at Cornerstone Christian School in Guelph. This has been quite a change for our family as we pulled up our Niagara roots and have settled in Guelph. We are thankful to again be a part of a welcoming Reformed community, just in a different location. In the many roles that I have taken on I have used my education at CCRTC to articulate what Reformed education is, and how we make decisions based on that vision. The educational foundation that was provided at CCRTC has proven a solid asset for my life professionally and personally. May the seeds sown at the college so many years ago continue to grow, spread, and flourish in my new role.

## Francine Van Iperen (née Homan)

CLASS OF 2001

I attended CCRTC in 2000 after completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in French and Music. The college was a pleasant change in atmosphere from the secular halls of university. Upon graduating, I married a very handsome graduate from the previous year and followed him to my first teaching position at John Calvin School in Smithville. There I became one of the grade three teachers and also taught grade seven French. In

due time, I left the position to take up another new position as mother in our growing family. We ended up moving to Caistorville, and our children attended ACRES (Attercliffe) and Guido de Brès HS (Hamilton). My teacher training was put to use in raising our six beautiful covenant blessings from the LORD, but also in my special interest in music as I continued to teach piano lessons and eventually became the choir director of the Niagara “Voice of Praise”. Three years ago, I decided to go back into teaching when JCS(Smithville) needed a second part-time Kindergarten teacher. Moving to Guelph has given me a year away from the classroom, but I look forward to teaching Kindergarten again in September, this time at Hope Reformed Christian School in St. George.

Coming back into teaching after being a parent for many years has put a whole new perspective on my view of teachers. When I walk into my children’s classroom and hear the teacher putting each subject into a Christian perspective, teaching the Bible stories from a redemptive-historical view, teaching the students their role in God’s covenant, I see and hear the work of the parents and church coming together so beautifully in the classroom. This is where Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College excels, putting Christ-centered teaching into the heart of its teacher training, opening their students’ eyes to the world views around us and to the extent of today’s secularism. As a parent, I would like to thank CCRTC for striving to produce Christ-centered teachers who view each of their students as one of God’s precious covenant children.







# INTERVIEW WITH MENCO WIESKE

## Could you please introduce yourself to our readers?

Living in Guelph, Ontario, I am a member of Living Word Canadian Reformed Church. I am married to Janice Oosterhoff - we recently celebrated our 23rd anniversary. We have been blessed with five children of our own and also have one adopted son as part of our family. Besides my role as a father and husband, and my work at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College, I also keep busy with serving on council. Some of my hobbies are puzzling (especially world maps), renovating, and long-distance running.

## What did your career path look like that led you to the college?

Interestingly, I have not been a teacher my whole life, and although I come from a teaching family, I was pretty sure that teaching would not be my choice of career. However, after I moved to Canada it took a while to get my feet on the ground. As we were raising our older children and became more aware of the amazing gift we have in our Reformed schools, I discovered my passion for Reformed education and went back to school to become a teacher myself. Before I took the position at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College, I worked at two different schools. The first school I taught in was Ebenezer Christian School in Chatham as the grade five and six teacher. After that I became the

principal and grade seven and eight teacher at Cornerstone Christian School in Guelph. These positions have been very powerful in shaping my love for, and understanding of, the importance of Reformed education.

## As the first alumni of the college to return as faculty, how does it feel to be on the other side of the desk?

It is great! I love the idea of now being instrumental in preparing others for the work that I love doing – teaching! It is amazing how good it feels to be able to teach from experience and to be able to convey a passion for what it means to be a Reformed teacher.

## What does a typical day or week involve? What has been the biggest challenge of your new role? What aspect do you enjoy the most?

Because all the courses I teach are new to me, I have to spend quite a bit of time mastering the content. We teach from Monday to Thursday, so Fridays are days that allow me to prepare for the next week. There is one thing I would like to highlight, which is the fact that we start each day doing devotions together with the whole college. It is amazing to have a job that allows you to be in an environment where serving the Lord is front-and-centre. I recognize that as a treasure and I am very thankful for the opportunity to work here.

## Which teacher(s) in your past impacted you most?

I would have to say that it was Meneer Arend Guinnink, the grade six teacher at the Bouwsteen in Drachten. He had a way of teaching Bible that made me experience a very strong connection to the people of the Old Testament. In retrospect, it really made me realize that I am part of that same covenant. I hope to have that same effect on the students whom I am allowed to teach.

## Is there a “stand-out” moment from the past year that you can share with us?

That would have to be the time when I taught a unit on differentiated instruction and asked the third-year students to present a lesson on a specific aspect of that approach to education. It was amazing what they came up with and I was very proud of how articulate and professional they sounded. I am excited about being part of a team that helps students get to that point.

## Any words of advice for those considering the teaching profession?

Do it! It is a very rewarding profession and, in our schools, we need people who want to serve God by helping parents raise the next generation; you know why? Psalm 78 says it very well: So they may grow up knowing his holy name and fear the Lord.

# from the finance and fundraising committee

DAN WITTEN

With thankfulness to the LORD, Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College continues to be blessed financially. We can report that we are meeting our budgeted revenue and most of the expenses are in line with the budget.

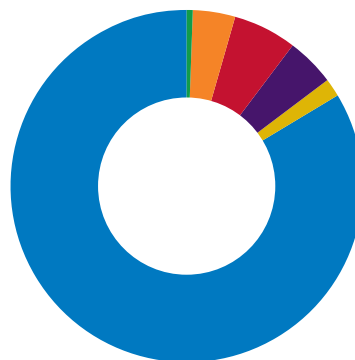
However, over the past few months we have seen a slight dip in overall donation revenues. Together we will need to make a concerted effort to ensure that the current fiscal year will end in the black. Can you help us meet this goal?

As you know, CCRTC's revenue originates from four different areas: Tuition, member school society donations, member school fees based on a per-student rate, and individual donations. By this time, you will have received your donation receipt. Thank you for your continued support.

While the task of training new Reformed teachers continues, the matter of obtaining accreditation is still pre-eminent in the minds of the many individuals directly involved with the college. Your support is still vital to this submission.

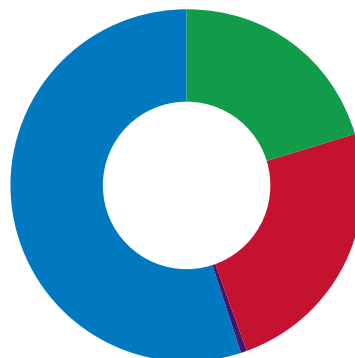
At the recent Annual General Meeting in March, the budget for 2019-2020 was approved and the recommended contribution level of \$40/month maintained. There are different ways in which you can easily make a donation to CCRTC: Via your local CCRTC representative/PAP/mail a cheque/e-transfer.

Once again, we sincerely thank you and we hope that we may count on your continued support throughout the spring and summer of 2019.



## CCRTC 2018-2019 EXPENSES (ACTUALS)

- Misc \$2,618
- Admin \$14,326
- Building \$22,285
- Programs \$15,936
- Library Department \$6,494
- Payroll \$312,644



## CCRTC 2018-2019 INCOME (ACTUALS)

- Member School Society Revenue \$89,488
- Student Tuition \$105,459
- Other \$2,257
- Contributions/Donations \$238,823

Charts valid as of March 2019

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

✂ Please detach and use the postage paid envelope enclosed or mail to: CCRTC • 410 Crerar Drive • Hamilton, ON • L9A 5K3

### Yes! I would like to support 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 want to be a regular donor to Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College and allow automatic donations from my bank account as indicated below. I agree with the conditions in the application and 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.