



*with the faces. Covenant's graduates are just too many, and the rows too uneven, to allow for easy identification. For them we have therefore simply listed the graduates in alphabetical order. (Note: Redlands has no graduates this year.)*

*To all of you graduates, of all of our schools, we express our hearty congratulations, and wish you the Lord's continued care and guidance as you leave one or another of our various schools.*

*For an added attraction on our bulletin board this time we have been given the manuscript of the graduation speech delivered by the valedictorian of Grand Rapids Covenant's class of 1988. Miss Barb Bergman earned the honor by virtue of her unexcelled academic performance in grades 9 through 12. The maturation of which she speaks in her valedictory address is not however limited to the intellectual, nor to the intellectual and the physical. She includes in it most emphatically the spiritual. That's evident already from the title she chose. She understands well the purpose of education, namely, to equip the child of God for a life of service — service to Christ, in the way of serving the brethren for His sake. Our schools have evidently not forgotten "the basics."*

## Training for Service

by Barb Bergman

Parents, teachers, friends, and fellow students. On behalf of the senior class of 1988, it is my privilege to speak to you on this important occasion. For those of us who are graduating tonight, this is truly a momentous event.

God has known and called His people from the beginning of time. From their very birth He prepares them for their life's calling. God trains His people through their experiences in life. Their parents train them to be Christians in the home. At

church, young people are instructed through the preaching of the Word, catechism, and societies. Teachers train these young people through the studying of God's creation at school.

Certainly our training for service in God's Kingdom does not end with our graduation tonight. Still, in a certain way it can be said that our high school years have been the finishing touches for our formal training. Just as the disciples of Christ were

prepared for their service as apostles and ministers, so also can we, the graduating class of 1988, be viewed not just as an ordinary group of young people, but as servants of God who have completed their training for service and are now going out on our separate missions in life.

Throughout our three brief years at Covenant, we as graduates have learned a lot.

We first came as sophomores in September of 1985. We came naively, knowing little about what was ahead and how God would use us in the future. We were immature, just coming from junior high; and we acted the part.

We were dependent on others: our friends, our parents, our teachers and our God. But, as typical sophomores, we didn't realize this; we thought we were tough because now we were in high school.

Gradually, with the aid of teachers and parents we made it through our first year. Then we were juniors.

As juniors we made a little more progress toward maturity; we realized how we had tended toward foolishness as sophomores. We also gained some valuable knowledge of God and of His creation. This was the basis for further learning.

As juniors, for the first time, we began to wonder about the future. What were we to do with

our lives? Were we to become electricians? mechanics? teachers? ministers? doctors? Maybe we would end up working on an assembly line in a factory. How were we to know?

We did the best we could. We chose the elective courses that interested us, we prayed, we talked to others and gained advice. Throughout all this we began to learn about ourselves as Christians and what service to God was all about.

About this time our junior year ended. We had matured and gained insight. Now we were seniors.

As seniors many of us began to work toward definite goals we had set for ourselves.

Our training had led us to the point that we had to become independent. We had to get ready to go out and face the world. We could no longer lean on others for support. We would now have to do things for ourselves.

Added to this we had yet another responsibility. Besides trying to figure out our own lives we had to give senior leadership. We had to set examples for our classmates and underclassmen.

In order to face the world we first had to be able to face our peers and stand up before them as servants of God.

As we look back today on the three years gone by, we realize many things that before passed by

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unnoticed. Unknowingly, we matured. Without realizing it we grew both spiritually and mentally. We gained insight and knowledge. We acquired new friends and interests. We became more responsible and independent. Before we knew it our high school years were ended. Now we are ready to graduate.

You, as parents, teachers, and supporters have helped put us where we are today. You have continually encouraged us throughout these years of growth. You have helped us when we needed a hand, you have given us advice (even when we didn't ask for it). By God's grace and according to His counsel, you have guided us in the way that we should go.

And now you are finished helping us. We must now strike out on our own. Following your example and remembering the things you have told us, we must go our separate ways on the missions God has prepared for each of us.

Some of us will continue our schooling and go on to college. Others may already know what they will do in life. Some of us may earn great honors and degrees. One of our classmates,

Rosie Rau, has already fulfilled her life's calling and has gone to heaven to be with her eternal Father. All things are in God's hand and determined by His will.

Wherever we go we know that God will never let us stray from His hand. And whatever we do, we do so as servants of Christ our Lord. This is a comfort to us as we move along.

But, our leaving school not only changes *our* lives, it changes the lives of others we leave behind. Our leaving is a challenge to you who remain.

You as parents must continue to instruct young people in the home and send them to Christian schools. Teachers, keep on using the Scripture as a basis for teaching in the classroom. Friends, continue to support the cause of Christian education. And students, strive to help one another and walk as servants of Christ. Pray to God and He will guide you.

Now, as we must say our final good-bye, let us all remember the words of our class text, that, in whatever we do and wherever we go, "God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death." ■■■