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## *Editorial*

# The Protestant Reformed Teachers Institute Sponsors and Publishes PERSPECTIVES IN COVENANT EDUCATION

by Agatha Lubbers

The Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute is an organization of professional educators. The P.R.T.I. has had a continued existence since April 2, 1956, a fact which is recorded by the minutes of the organizational meeting of the P.R.T.I. Two decades ago a dedicated group of teachers from the two Grand Rapids schools (Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School and Adams Street Protestant Reformed Christian School) met at the First Protestant Reformed Church and formally organized themselves as the P.R.T.I. The minutes of the meeting held on April 2, 1956, indicate that the precise reason for the meeting "stems from a meeting held between the faculties and boards of the Adams Street and Hope P.R.C. Schools on March 29, 1956."

On June 14, 1956, the proposed constitution of the P.R.T.I. was formally approved. Eight teachers were present that evening to adopt the constitution. Of those eight teachers four are currently employed as P.R. teachers and are members of the Institute. Miss Ruth Dykstra teaches at Adams Street P.R.C. School. Mr. Fred Hanko, who presided at the meeting, and Miss Winifred Koole now teach at Hope P.R.C. School. Miss Agatha Lubbers teaches at Covenant Christian High School, Grand Rapids. We extol the faithfulness of God, who preserves us in the way of the truth, and we are thankful to God that today many men and women have been added to the ranks of those who are dedicated to instructing the seed of the Covenant in

Protestant Reformed Christian Schools.

**Soli Deo Gloria!**

The basis of the P.R.T.I. is stated in the constitution adopted that June evening twenty years ago. This basis has remained unchanged until the present time, and we pray God that He will continue to preserve us in the truth of this basis which is stated as follows:

The basis of this organization is the Word of God as interpreted by the Three Forms of Unity (the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordrecht,) and as these are applied in the educational principles of the Protestant Reformed Christian Schools.

The purpose of the P.R.T.I. has also remained unchanged during the two decades of the existence of this organization. The constitution, as originally adopted, states the purpose of the P.R.T.I. as follows:

The purpose of this organization is:

1. To study materials related to the field of education in conjunction with the Word of God in order that we teachers may be better qualified to teach from a Protestant Reformed viewpoint.

2. To create a medium through which we may produce materials of a specific Protestant Reformed nature to be used in our own schools and thereby make our schools more distinctive.

3. To create a means through which we teachers may work towards unity and understanding among our Protestant Reformed Christian Schools.

Requirements for membership in the P.R.T.I. are stated in Article IV of the Constitution and have likewise remained unchanged. The article states the following:

Membership shall be limited to Protestant Reformed persons who are either teachers or prospective teachers.

Since that day of small beginnings, which the Scriptures tell us not to despise, the P.R.T.I. has grown. At this time there are approximately thirty teachers from the three Grand Rapids, Michigan, schools (Adams Street P.R.C. School, Hope P.R.C. School, and Covenant C.H. School) and the P.R.C. School of South Holland, Illinois, who actively participate in the meetings of the institute four times each academic year. In addition the P.R.T.I. sponsors annually, in the fall, the Convention of Protestant Reformed educators. The 20th annual Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute convention was held October 10 and 11, 1974, at Hope P.R.C. School. Teachers from the Protestant Reformed Christian School of Doon, Iowa, from the Free Christian School of Edgerton, Minnesota, from the Protestant Reformed Christian School of Loveland, Colorado, and from the Plymouth Christian School of Grand Rapids, joined the member teachers from the three Grand Rapids schools and the South Holland, Illinois, school.

It was during one of the business meetings of this 20th P.R.T.I. Convention that a motion passed to have the president of the Institute, Mr. Darrel Huisken (teacher at Hope P.R.C.S.), appoint a committee to study the matter of the publication of a Protestant Reformed educational journal. A committee consisting of Mr. James Huizinga, chairman, Charles Bult, Calvin Kalsbeek, Harry Langerak, and Ignatio Quenga, did the initial work which resulted in the decision of January 24, 1975, to publish the periodical, **Perspectives in Covenant Education**.

The proposals of the study committee were approved and adopted with a few minor changes. The grounds for the

production of an educational journal were stated as follows in the proposal of the study committee:

1. We have a considerable number of people in our ranks who are capable of making significant written contributions.

2. We have previously prepared manuscripts that could be profitably published.

3. We have no magazine at the present time in our Protestant Reformed community that is devoted exclusively to the development of Protestant Reformed education.

4. Professional responsibility demands that we undertake the production of such a journal.

**Perspectives in Covenant Education** is described in the decision of the P.R.T.I. by the following five statements:

**Perspectives in Covenant Education** shall be:

1. a magazine produced and controlled by the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute.

2. a magazine whose pages are open to all teachers, parents, and friends of Protestant Reformed education.

3. a magazine that encourages a degree of parental participation in the areas of planning and actual writing.

4. a magazine intended to have a broad base of subscription.

5. a magazine devoted to development in the academic areas and to the discussion of more general subjects such as: teaching methods, discipline problems, and the relationship between the home and the school.

The purpose for **Perspectives in Covenant Education** is specifically stated

in the decision of the P.R.T.I. This statement of purpose is as follows:

**Perspectives in Covenant Education** is a journal regulated and published semi-annually, in September and March, by the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute. The purpose of this magazine, in most general terms, is to advance the cause of distinctively Christian education as it is conceived in the Protestant Reformed community. More specifically, the magazine is intended to serve as an encouragement and an inducement toward individual scholarship, and medium for the development of distinctive principles and methods of teaching. The journal is meant to be a vehicle of communication: a vehicle of communication, not only within the profession, but within the Protestant Reformed community and within the Christian community in general.

The editorial policy of **Perspectives in Covenant Education** has also been established by the P.R.T.I. This editorial policy is the following:

**Perspectives in Covenant Education** exists for the purpose of furthering the cause of Protestant Reformed Christian education. This principle therefore regulates the entire contents of the journal. **Perspectives in Covenant Education** will publish any article written by a teacher, parent, or friend of Protestant Reformed education, provided the article is in harmony with the stated purpose of the magazine. **Perspectives in Covenant Education** will publish articles whether theoretical or practical. All manuscripts must be signed and all authors are solely responsible for the contents of their articles.

The editorial staff of **Perspectives**

consists of three teachers and two parents. Since Mr. Jon Huisken has returned to the ranks of those presently employed by Protestant Reformed Christian schools (He and his wife Joanne are teaching at the Redlands, California P.R.C. School.), Dr. Dwight Monsma of Grand Rapids is the lone parent on the editorial staff. In addition those who collaborate with the undersigned are Mr. James Huizinga, department of English at Covenant C.H.S., and Mr. Calvin Kalsbeek, teacher of the sixth grade at Adams Street P.R.C. School. This editorial staff supervises all aspects of the production of the journal; however, contributors to the journal are solely responsible for the contents of their article. Therefore the editorial staff seeks manuscripts which positively develop Reformed Christian educational ideas which will assist the teacher and give positive directives to both teacher and parent in our Protestant Reformed community, and also the broader Reformed community.

Considerable thought was given to the naming of the journal. Teachers were asked to submit possible titles for the journal. From an aggregate of approximately twelve titles the name **Perspectives in Covenant Education** was chosen. Because the magazine is designed to be a forum for both parents and teachers, the title is sufficiently inclusive to include both parents and teachers. We believe that all instruction of Covenant children is controlled and regulated by the parents, and therefore we wish to have parents included in the studies and writings of the professional educators employed by Christian parents. The journal is designed to be medium whereby teachers can talk to other teachers and parents. It is also intended to be a means whereby parents can speak to teachers and other parents.

The P.R.T.I. has been in existence for two decades. One of the purposes stated in the constitution adopted by this

organization was that "this organization should be a medium through which we Protestant Reformed Christian teachers could produce materials of a specifically Protestant Reformed nature to be used in our own schools and thereby make our schools more distinctive." Because of a generous monetary grant from the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools and because the Institute has substantially increased each member's annual dues, this introductory and promotional issue of **Perspectives in Covenant Education** could be published.

This periodical cannot exist, however, without the generous support of dedicated parents and without a faithful list of subscribers. The P.R.T.I. asks therefore that you become a supporter of this important cause and that you subscribe to this journal which we plan, D.V., to publish semi-annually in September and March.

It is certainly significant that **Perspectives in Covenant Education** is published by the P.R.T.I. at a time when the members of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America commemorate fifty years of the Covenant faithfulness of Jehovah God. From the loins of the people of God in this denomination of churches have come men and women who have matured in the faith and truth of the Scriptures. They are the second and third generation in the church and to them the torch of leadership has been passed. This too is an indication of God's Covenant faithfulness. Jehovah God fulfills the promise given to believers and to their seed.

Employing the Word of God, i.e., the Scriptures, and its orthodox interpretation in the Reformed Confessions these educators, who have dedicated their lives to the education of the seed of the covenant, can give leadership and inspiration in this important work of teaching the youth.

We pray God for direction and

faithfulness in this important endeavor.

"Except Jehovah build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except Jehovah keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain." Psalm 127:1.



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## *Mini Course '75 and . . . . .*

by Mr. Calvin Kalsbeek

Mr. Calvin Kalsbeek teaches sixth grade at Adams Street Protestant Reformed Christian School.

Had you wandered into the Protestant Reformed Seminary Building on August 8, 9, 11 or 12, you might have been surprised to see Protestant Reformed teachers from as far away as Loveland, Colorado or as near as Grand Rapids, Michigan. If you had taken time to look the crowd over carefully, you might have been further surprised to see Protestant Reformed ministers and other visitors from near and far.

It would be natural to wonder about the why and wherefore of such a

diversified gathering, so I'll tell you: they came to be fed. Now you and I both know that people will travel rather great distances to go to their favorite restaurant but not hundreds or thousands of miles! Yet some of these people did, and I'm sure they didn't return home disappointed.

Actually, those present during all four of the above mentioned dates received five scrumptious meals. I believe, however, that most of us would still think it a little absurd to travel such distances for even five meals! A peek at the menu might be the key to understanding the motivation for such seemingly inappropriate behavior.

### **Mini-Course '75:**

Sponsor: Federation of Protestant Reformed School Societies  
Instructor: Rev. David Engelsma

### **Lecture titles and tid-bits:**

1. The Covenantal Basis of Reformed Christian Education (Aug. 8)
  - The root of the entire endeavor: God's Covenant with believers and their children.
  - An examination of other bases of Christian education, e.g. evangelism, dissatisfaction with public schools, social reform, etc.
2. Scripture in the School (Aug. 9, 8 A.M.)
  - The basic place of Scripture is not that of a formal subject but of a foundation of every subject.
  - Is the Word of God the authority for those in the camp of the AACCS?