




# CONTENDER

## GLOBALISM

At the moment you are reading a truly international publication. This magazine contains articles from all over the world, from Australia, Canada and South Africa. Isn't it incredible that this is possible?!



When our grandparents (or distant relatives, if you are still living in the Netherlands) moved from the Netherlands, they did not expect to have a lot of contact with those they left behind. The first migrants travelled by ship to, what seemed at that stage, the end of the world. Yet today, with advanced technology, people refer to the world as a "global village." The mass media enables us to see what is happening in other parts of the world. With email we can communicate with people all over the world at the click of a mouse. Transport has also improved to such an extent, that we can fly by aeroplane to any place in the world, within 30 hours. Compare that to the original few months on a ship, travelling from The Netherlands to Australia!

Yes, globalisation has definitely taken place. As Christians we may enjoy from the benefits that it brings. We may make use of the email networks to communicate and, among other things, create an international publication, such

as the one you are now reading.

On the other hand, globalisation has also brought secularisation all over the world. Actually, globalisation is not such a new phenomenon. Think of the tower of Babel. Those people also wanted to create a global village (or was that city?) called Babel. Mankind wanted to unite against our God. In order to stop them God confused their languages. During the time of the Roman Empire, Greek was introduced as the world language. Mankind once again wished to unite against God. But isn't it incredible how God used this situation to rapidly spread His Word throughout the world?! Today English is promoted as the world language. Once again the world wishes to unite against God. Let us, however, not be frightened by this, but let us make use of this opportunity to spread God's Word throughout the world. Let us also unite, as children of God in this world and support one another. Let us "spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24).

■ Willemien Kleyn

APRIL 2001 Vol 6 Number 3

### In this edition

Guest Editorial - Globalism

*Willemien Kleyn*.....1

Editors Note

*Mick ten-Haaf*.....2

South Africa - Profile

*Rinus Kamphuis*.....2

Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke.....3

Congress

*Jamie van Burgel*.....5

Easter - Poem

*Willemien Kleyn*.....5

Canadian Reformed Churches Synod

*Chris deBoer*.....6

A Mari Usque ad mare.....7

MAGAZINE FOR THE YOUTH OF THE  
FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA

What you are holding in your hands is not very fancy. It doesn't have fancy signatures or fancy scrolling. It doesn't have glossy paper and didn't cost you anything but there is something regal about it. More than a few thousand years ago a promise was made, a very important promise made by none other than the King of Kings to His servant Abraham. "I have made you a father of many nations." Abraham who had not yet received any children, was the father of not just one nation, but of many nations! What you hold in your hands is another confirmation of that promise. In this edition and the one following, if the Lord wills it, you will read articles by many people from some of those nations. They have written about the churches to which they belong and provided us with a little insight into their lives. In the following edition we will read of some of the mission activities which these churches support or are planning. See, the Promise lives on and the Lord con-

tinues to provide the means for its fulfilment.

A royal covenant made many years ago which is still being upheld. Surely that adds a new lustre to what you hold!

A little housekeeping note. The Contender is a magazine intended for the younger members of the Free Reformed Churches. The editors would like appropriate contributions from that group. No topic is too lowly or too lofty and letters to the editor would be appreciated. If you've read a book which you think meets the aim of the Contender, we would appreciate your input. If you would like to say something, but think that you haven't the skills, contact one of the editors who will be happy to listen or help. Happy reading.

■ Mick ten-Haaf

# ***SOUTH AFRICA***

## A World in One Country

South Africa is a nation of spectacular natural beauty and cultural diversity. It is located, as one might expect, on the southern tip of Africa.

It is one of the most geographically varied countries of the African continent, comprising territory that ranges from the rolling, fertile plains of the highveld and the wide open savannah of the Northern Province to the Kalahari desert and the peaks of the Drakensberg Mountains.

A beautiful coastline surrounds most of South Africa's 1.2 million-sq. km., with the warm Indian Ocean at its eastern and southern side and the cold Atlantic Ocean at its west.

South Africa also possesses some of the world's most renowned wildlife reserves, the Kruger- and the Kalahari Gemsbok National Parks. These parks are renowned for their abundance of wildlife, including the so-called Big Five, namely the lion, elephant, leopard, rhino and buffalo.

The country has a comfortable climate throughout the year, although temperatures vary considerably across its various regions and environments.

South Africa has a multiracial population of approximately forty three million inhabitants. The population is three-quarters black (African) and

about 15% white (European), with the remaining 10% comprised of people of mixed descent (white, Malayan, and black) and people of Asian (mostly Indian) descent.

The African majority is composed of many different ethnic groups, the largest of which are Zulu, Xhosa and Tswana. The white (European) part of the population speaks mainly Afrikaans (a language similar to Dutch) and English. They are mostly descendants of Dutch, French, German and British settlers, who settled in South Africa from about 1652.

Until recently, the country's racial divisions were harshly enforced as part of the government's official Apartheid policy. Although the government began to dismantle Apartheid in 1989 after prolonged resistance, protest, and international economic sanctions, racial inequality still remains pronounced in South Africa.

Economically, South Africa has the most advanced economy on the African continent and is therefore also the wealthiest country on the continent. Because of that South Africa is sometimes also described as the gateway to Africa.

The Economy is, however, still very reliant on South Africa's wealth in minerals such as gold, diamonds, platinum, coal and iron ore and the

export of these primary industry products. The manufacturing sector of the economy is growing and the services sector comprises the biggest share of the overall economic activity. South Africa has good infrastructure supporting the economy, with good and reliable roads and reasonable telecommunication networks.

South Africa is not a country without complex socio-economic problems. One of the main concerns is the high HIV/AIDS infection rate estimated at 10%-35% of the total population. Other problems include high unemployment rates and low economic growth.

The three capital cities of South Africa are Pretoria, Capetown and Bloemfontein. Pretoria is the administrative capital, Capetown the executive capital and Bloemfontein the judicial capital. Johannesburg, the largest city in South Africa, is the economic centre of South Africa, mainly as a result of its rich supply of gold and diamonds.

The above is just a brief introduction to South Africa. I hope it will serve to give some idea of the environment in which the Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid Afrika fulfil their Biblical and evangelical responsibilities.

■ Rinus Kamphuis

# Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke

Hi there, from the best and warmest part in the world, South Africa!

God works in mysterious ways. Who would ever have guessed that Australians, Canadians, Hollanders and South Africans would have something in common?! Our cultures differ and we have only recently opened our eyes to discover that people in other countries believe in the same God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

This doesn't make us only friends but brothers and sisters!

Currently the Vrye Gereformeerde bond of churches in South Africa consists of 5 congregations. A sixth congregation, Springs, has applied to join our bond of churches. We are, therefore, a growing bond of churches!

But allow us to make use of this opportunity to introduce our congregations to you:

VGK Pretoria  
*Erika Ros*

Hi there! I am Erika Ros. I'm 23 years old and am a member of the VGK Pretoria. I would like to introduce this congregation to you.

The VGK Pretoria is the oldest congregation and celebrated its 50th anniversary last year.

Our congregation has about 80 young people (aged 16-26). There are 4 youth Biblestudy clubs (3 meet on Tuesday evenings and one on Sunday mornings after the church service). We regularly organise fundraising activities, in order to raise funds for our yearly youth-congress. Our fundraising activities include washing car windows on street corners. A couple of years ago a youth choir and a student club were established.

Approximately half of our young people continue with their studies when they leave school. Many go overseas (especially to the

Netherlands) for a year to au pair or do other work - most return, although we have already "lost" quite a few.

Generally speaking, it can be said that the youth make a positive contribution to the congregation, through, among others, their involvement in evangelism, missionary activities, and the annual fair. Some of the popular hobbies of our youth include hiking, biking and mountain climbing. Recently a group even went to do some bridge-jumping! I think we can be thankful to God for such a nice bunch of youth!

Please feel free to contact one of the following people if you intend to come our way:

Wilma Lubbinge  
28ste Laan 892  
RIETFONTEIN 0084  
Tel: +27 12 331 0093  
Email: hilko@lantic.net

Gerrit Kamphuis  
24ste Laan 919  
RIETFONTEIN 0084  
Mobile: +27 82785 6247

VGK Kaapstad

The Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk in Capetown (Kaapstad) was instituted on the 2nd of March 1952. At the time there were about 20 members. God works with His church. At the beginning of 2000 there were about 357 members, of whom 216 were confessing and 141 were baptised members.

Rev. E. Viljoen serves as pastor of our congregation. Previously he was pastor at Vanderbijlpark, of the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk Oosterlig. After he had been expelled as pastor, he joined the Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke. Once the orientation and examination process was completed, we called him to become our pastor. He was ordained on 27 August 1994. Since then he has proclaimed the gospel in our congregation.

In addition to our congregation, there is also a missionary congrega-

tion in Belhar. The missionary serving for the VGK Kaapstad, Dr. J.A. Breytenbach, works there. A congregation has not yet been instituted in Belhar. Approximately 76 members attend the services, of whom 45 are confessing and 31 baptised members.

In our congregation there are various clubs and committees, among which also our Youthclub "Rehobot." We thank the Lord for the congregation life that we may enjoy!

Contact persons:

Peter Raimond  
Sarel Cillierstraat 14  
Oakdale  
BELLVILLE 7530  
Tel: +27 21 948 8423

Lieneke Eefting  
Assegaaibosstraat 2  
Amandelrug  
KUILSRIVIER 7580  
Tel: +27 21 903 5211  
Email: lieneke@xsinet.co.za

VGK Johannesburg  
*Eunice Boessenkool*

Our congregation is based in Johannesburg and was established in 1957. Our first pastor, Rev. W. Boessenkool (now retired) still lives here among us. Our church-grounds have shifted twice in recent years. The first move was from Auckland Park to a school hall and recently to a plot with a shed on it. We transformed the shed into a church and the sheep on the plot were exchanged for Christians with the Lord as Shepherd!

The congregation consists of 114 members and hopes to grow bigger in the years to come. We have 3 youth groups. There is a senior youth group for youth aged 24+, which consists of 9 members. Then there is the second group with 10 members, aged 16-23. The older group consists mainly of young working people, while the

second group mostly of students. The third group discusses the covenant and other topics that flow out of the meetings.

We have two church services every Sundays at 9:30 am and 5:30 pm. Currently we don't have our own pastor, but we are working hard on that and hope to find one soon.

The activities of the second youth group this year will include:

1. Finding our own meeting room and making the room as comfortable as possible.
2. Organising a camp where we can invite friends to see what our religion is all about.
3. Meeting every second week to talk about topics that influence our lives as Christians.

We enjoy having contact with Pretoria and Cape Town's youth groups and would also like to have contact with youth groups all over the world.

So keep us posted, we would love to hear from you soon!

The contact persons for the groups are as follows:

First and Third groups  
Dirk Bijker  
Lucas Bullweg 1  
DISCOVERY 1709  
Tel: +27 11 763 2660  
Email: dbijker@supfurn.co.za

Second group  
Talita Boessenkool  
Postnet suite 8  
Privaatsak X11  
HONEYDEW 2040  
Tel: +27 11 795 1361  
Email: b\_talita@hotmail.com

VGK Bethal  
*Arnoud van den Bout*

VGK Bethal is a congregation that came into existence after it separated from the Nederduits Gereformeerde bond of churches in 1995. By the end of 2000, the congregation consisted of 97 members to which two more families have been added since then.

Initially our congregation had a huge struggle to radiate the correct image to the direct surroundings, because many rumours had spread about the separation.

Reverend Pieter Nel is an inspiring preacher and a small but active consistory supports him. Briefly, the congregational activities consist of Biblestudy, catechism classes, youthclubs, fundraising activities and women aid projects.

The church is reasonably far away from the congregations in Gauteng. Bethal is approximately 170 km south-east from Pretoria. In summary, ours is a small, hospitable congregation, struggling against worldly influences in a lovely town in Mpumalanga.

Contact persons:  
Rev. Pieter Nel  
Du Plooy Straat 80  
BETHAL 2310  
Tel: +27 17 647 6693  
Email: rufusnel@cis.co.za

Arnoud van den Bout - Jeugleier  
Tel: +27 17 819 7542

VGK Pretoria-Maranata  
*Frans Hagg and Cora Visser*

Our congregation was established on 6 July 1997, after the Pretoria congregation became too large for effective functioning. The church consists of 328 members, of whom 201 are confessing and 127 are baptised members. We would like to tell you a little bit more about the youth 16 years and older.

The youth consist largely of pupils and poor students, interspersed with a few rich working youth. Together they form a bunch of friendly and interesting people.

Various activities are undertaken by the youth members. We would like to proceed by giving you a weekly program of the average youth member.

On Sundays we all go twice to

church and half of the youth attend the Sunday evening youth-club at the home of the introducer. After club, the youth join the Pretoria youth at a coffee social.

On Tuesday evenings the other half of the youth gather at the church, where they discuss the Bible and other relevant topics in order to enrich and grow in their life of faith.

On Wednesdays, there are catechism classes in the afternoon and evening. The youth choir "Adoramus" now exists a year and consists of approximately 20 enthusiastic youth members, who spend their Wednesday evenings singing.

In addition to the above, the youth are also involved in other activities, including Bible and literature distribution, especially in African languages. This is an activity organised by the evangelism committee.

This year our congregation will be organising the traditional youth congress, which is held at the end of each year. The congress consists of 5 days of workshops about our faith and various social activities. This year we plan to hold the Congress from Tuesday 18 till Saturday 22 December. The topic is "Children of God in Africa." It promises to be a great congress! We hope to see you there!!

Feel free to contact us for further information:

Frans Hagg  
Lawsonlaan 1334  
WAVERLEY 0186  
Tel: +27 12 332 2946  
Email: fhagg@student.up.ac.za

Cora Visser  
Dunwoodielaan 1380  
WAVERLEY 0186  
Tel: +27 12 332 2948  
Email: jrvisser@global.co.za

# Albany Congress 2001

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Ps 133:1)

What a blessing it is for youth in Christ's church to have the opportunity to gather together in fellowship and unity discussing God's Word and having a good time together. Yes, congress is a blessing. We as children of God can travel to Albany, listen and discuss a thought provoking paper, and have fun and joyful communion together.

Albany Congress 2001 started on Friday night where we gathered at the Narrikup Hall for the official opening of Congress. This was a night of much food and laughter. Saturday morning we gathered at the church for our speaker Mr. John Plug to address us on the topic of our "Freedom to obey Joyfully." Br Plug explained what we were freed from. After the fall into sin, man may think he has freedom because he follows his own wants and desires but actually he lost his freedom and becomes a slave to Satan. Original sin still exists and we are all tainted by evil. Daily we increase our sin. The

Law teaches us that, but it cannot save us, rather it daily condemns us. However the Seed of the woman, Christ, has come. In Him we must put our trust. Then we are freed from the power of the law and sin. That is our freedom: free from slavery to sin. So we now can obey the Law, joyfully, out of thankfulness.

Discussion points were provided to assist the group discussion afterwards. These included topics such as 'contentment in the Lord - what is it?', 'what it means to be a child of Christ', 'the dangers that lead us away from Christ' and 'what are our main problems in our life of service and obedience'.

After attending worship services in Albany on Sunday, the youth gathered in the Ambulance hall for sermon discussion followed by social activities. Physical outdoor activities with a pizza brunch on Monday prepared those who had to travel far, for their journey home.

To see everyone, whether seated in the hall Friday night having an abundance of food, at the

barbeques and brunches or receiving the spiritual food on Sunday, interacting with people they haven't seen in years (or people they have never seen) is a joy to experience. We may be thankful that the Lord has given us so much as youth, most of us having never known what it feels like to be deprived of anything we need. And to have the opportunity to have interaction with other children of God is something to be grateful for. Relationships, also boy-girl relationships, are formed in an environment where there is unity of Faith. Congress' and conferences are activities not replacing but complementary to the youth activities in each individual church.

As it says in Psalm 119:63 "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" As youth, as covenant children, we are 'companions' of each other. May it be that our interaction at camps and congresses remains edifying and that these meetings continue to be used and seen as a blessing.

■ Jamie van Burgel

---

## Easter

Why was Christ crucified?  
Why was it that He died?  
Was it not for you and me -  
From sins to set us free?

Why did He have to suffer such immeasurable pain?  
Was it not for our eternal gain?  
Why did He have to descend into the grave?  
Was it not so that He us from sins could save?

Yes, it is the fall into sin -  
That is where all our problems begin.  
For when Adam and Eve fell,  
They, and all their children, were condemned to Hell.

But God the Father creating a rescue plan,  
Sent His Son to earth to become a man.  
And thus Christ came to suffer in our place.  
And become the advocate for our case.

Very humble and lowly was His birth,  
And full of sufferings was His life on earth.  
On the cross His sufferings became worse.  
For then, He took up the full weight of our curse.

But through His blood, which He poured,  
Our status, as God's children, was restored.  
It was this blood that for us paid,  
And the Father's anger stayed.

And now, let us the Lord's Supper celebrate,  
While His Second Coming, we eagerly await.  
For then we shall, forever free,  
Live with Christ, in all eternity.

■ Willemien Kleyn

# *Canadian Reformed Churches Synod*

In the year 2000 A.D. and following, a number of Canadian Reformed Churches have been celebrating their 50th anniversary as instituted churches. This of course is great reason for rejoicing for all those belonging to the federation. In these 50 years many important issues have been discussed at numerous synods and this upcoming synod promises to be a turning point for our churches.

One of the main topics of discussion that is on almost every single agenda of a General Synod is Church unity. Indeed, Church unity is a very important issue for those who confess the uniformity of the Church. We confess in article 28 of the Belgic Confession that “All and everyone is obliged to join [the Church] and unite with it, maintaining the unity of the Church”. As such we seek to maintain the unity of the Church by seeking out other confessed churches that seem to have the marks of the True Church and examine such confessed churches to see if the marks are alive and well in them. If they are, then we seek to unite in a sister-church relationship.

One of the longest church-unity discussions we, as a federation have been having, has been with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In 1995 the Synod declared that there were no impediments to further unity. In 1998, Synod unanimously reversed the 1995 decision by suggesting that there are still two issues that prevent unity and they are: Confessional membership and the Fencing of the Lord’s Table. We have confessional membership because all members, before coming to the Lord’s Table, are asked, “Do you wholeheartedly believe the doctrine of the Word of God, summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian Church?” (Form for the Public Profession of Faith). So, we confess the Word of God, but not just any personal interpretation but as summarized in the Three forms of Unity and as is taught in the True Church. This year’s Synod will have to decide if the unanimous decision of 1998 should stand or if the 1995 decision was right.

The Synod will also be discussing unity with the United Reformed Churches. This federation separated from the Christian Reformed Churches (GKN-Synodical) in 1990. As such, we have a very similar history and are aiming to unite. The hope is to have a sister-church relationship with them after this year’s Synod and then to have full federative unity in the year of our Lord, 2004. There is of course the importance of examining the United Reformed

Churches to ensure that we won’t lose what we suffered for during the Liberation of 1944 and what we have gained since. A third church with which our Synod is discussing unity is the Reformed Church of the United States.

In 1999 this federation had its 253rd Synod. Their members seem to come from Russian-German descent. They were at one time a very large federation of churches but as a result of deformation many churches in their federation have departed from the truth of God’s Word. In their desire to maintain the truth of God’s Word they also are seeking unity with churches that seem to have the marks of the True Church. One of the main topics we will be discussing with them is their observance of the Lord’s Day. At this time, they only have one service per Sunday.

In addition to a few more church-unity talks, the upcoming Synod must also deal with women voting. This has been dealt with during the early 1980’s but has resurfaced because of the Synodical decision of our sister-church in the Netherlands. The debate is really around whether or not voting is an act of authority or of having a ‘voice in Church’. In 1 Cor. 14:33-34 we read (and I suggest you look up the context as well), “As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says” (RSV). This discussion can quite easily lead to a discussion between God-given command over-and-against the culture during the time of writing.

Although there are other issues at this upcoming Synod such as appeals of previous decisions, we pray that our heavenly Father will watch over the members of this important Synod. May they strive to maintain the True unity of God’s Church and not compromise the truth of God’s Word. I believe it would not be easy to be a member of a Synod and we pray that our heavenly Father also give strength to all the members that they may not be shy in speaking what we confess as the truth of God’s Word. In Church-unity discussions the greatest thing on the line is the purity of God’s Church. It is not a simple decision that will not alter our federation’s Church life but will be a blessing or a curse for the Church in the years to come. May God bless our Synod and may His wisdom be always present and may it be the prevailing decision in all Synodical decisions over-and-against human desire and pride.

■ Chris deBoer

# CANADA

## A Mari Usque Ad Mare

The Latin words that grace the Canadian coat of arms translate "From Sea to Sea". The words, chosen from Psalm 72:8, aptly describe the vastness of our country; from the Pacific Ocean on the west coast, to the Atlantic Ocean in the east, with nearly 10 million square kilometers of land and water between.

To truly appreciate the boundless variations in geography that exist in Canada, one would need to spend volumes of writing on the topic. Understand, then, that I could never hope to describe such beauty in a simple article! After a brief overview, I will describe the regions in which most of our Canadian churches reside. For a much more comprehensive composition, and to use an interactive map of Canada, visit: [http://142.206.72.65/04/04\\_000\\_e.htm](http://142.206.72.65/04/04_000_e.htm)

Canada consists of ten provinces and three northern territories. Water makes up about one-tenth of the country; forests extensively cover the country. Great mountains tower over the western portion (approximately one-tenth of the country), while lower mountain ranges can be found in the east. Natural resources are abundant in Canada; forests, minerals, farmland and fishing are all utilized. Vegetation and climate differences are extensive and differ greatly from region to region. In short, Canada is a land of rugged beauty, vast dimensions, and varying terrain.


The western-most province in Canada is British Columbia. It consists of about 10% of Canada's land mass, and is covered in immense mountain ranges. The vegetation consists typically of firs, hemlock, and alder. Fishing and logging are two big industries in BC, with agriculture and tourism also making up a significant proportion of the income. The Lower Mainland, where most of our churches are situated, has an average temperature of nine degrees celsius, with a mean temperature of 15° in summer, and 3.5° in winter. It is characterized by mild winters, warm summers, and a lot of precipitation ~ up to 2000 millimetres per annum! However, wet days are forgotten when the sun shines and the mountains are visible...God's creation at its finest! The population in the Lower Mainland (including Vancouver) is 1 810 000. Other noteworthy

features in the valley include the great Fraser River, and its close proximity to the USA, the Pacific Ocean, and mountains, which allow such activities as hiking, skiing, climbing, camping, exploring, sailing, scuba diving and any other outdoor adventure. Churches in the Lower Mainland include Surrey, Willoughby Heights, Cloverdale, Aldergrove, Abbotsford, Langley, Yarrow, and Chilliwack. Other churches in British Columbia include those in Vernon (central BC), Houston, and Smithers (northern BC).

The province to the immediate east of British Columbia is Alberta. Canadian Reformed Churches exist in six different locations in the province, with two churches in Edmonton, and one in Neerlandia, Barrhead, Calgary, Taber and Coaldale. The province is characterized by receding mountains and foothills in the west, forests in the north, and plains (prairies) covering the rest of the province. Although temperatures and vegetation vary a great deal from north to south, the average temperature of central Alberta is approximately zero degrees celsius, with a mean summer temperature of 15° and winter temperature of -15° (the winters are not for the faint-hearted!). Annual precipitation is about 500 millimetres. Due to its more northern proximity, winters are longer and colder, and much of the precipitation comes in the form of snow. The forests consist of both coniferous and deciduous trees, with pine, balsam, aspen and birch dominating. Much of the province is devoted to farmland and agriculture, as the soil and topography of the land is conducive to such work.

The geography of the two provinces to the east of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, are similar to that of Alberta. While we have no churches in Saskatchewan, we have four in Manitoba, two each in Carman and Winnipeg. The climate is somewhat similar to that of Alberta (cold winters, but warmer summers); there are no mountains visible, but rather flat prairie land as far as the eye can see. Agriculture is the main activity. The prairies (made up of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) vary hugely in geography from British Columbia, but excel in their own beauty.

To the east of Manitoba is Ontario. It consists



of nearly 11% of Canada's land mass. More than 15% of the province is covered with water, as Ontario boasts five of the bigger freshwater lakes in the world, the Great Lakes. Most of our churches reside in the southern neck of the province around these lakes, where agriculture and farming make up about 65% of the area, and the other 35% is urbanized. The population in the area is nearly four million people. The vegetation is typically mixed, with beech, maple, walnut and hickory dominating. The average temperature is eight degrees celsius, with a mean summer temperature of 18° and a winter temperature of -3°. The region is characterized by hot, humid summers and long, cold winters; annual precipitation falls at about 800 millimeters, with most of this coming in the form of snow. Most of the region is fairly flat, although northern Ontario is more rugged and hilly. We have many churches in Ontario, located in Burlington (three), Flamborough, Ottawa (in eastern Ontario), Toronto, Brampton, Elora, Fergus, Grand Valley, Guelph, Orangeville, Owen Sound, Ancaster, Attercliffe, Chatham, Hamilton, Kerwood, Lincoln, London, Rockway, and Smithville.

This immense country is both rugged and developed, old and new, untouched and exploited, but incredibly beautiful in its vastness. There is much to experience and enjoy, and I encourage you to see for yourself! To see Canada at a glance, visit

The Contender cover page is one inspired by a most biblical prophecy as well as incorporating an also well known piece of Australian flora: The Gum Tree.

Based on Isaiah 11:1 "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." The design reflects God's continued care for his people; also his people in Australia.

■ Russel Bergsma

[http://142.206.72.65/04/04\\_000.e.htm](http://142.206.72.65/04/04_000.e.htm), and to discover more about the country, go to Statistics Canada at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/>.



# CONTENDER

#### Aim:

Romans 12:2 teaches all of God's people:

*"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

This magazine will encourage its readers to earnestly contend for the faith, and to think and act Biblically, in the good traditions of the Church of all ages. Its basis is God's word, as the Church confesses in the Three Forms of Unity. It is intended for the younger members of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, and is produced in co-operation with the Una Sancta. Subscription to the Contender is automatic with subscription to the Una Sancta.

It is not meant to be exclusively for unmarried members who still attend the Youth Bible Study Clubs, but for all those who fit within the loose parameters of the 16 to 30 years of age.

#### Editorial Board

Mick ten-Haaf  
Matt Schiebaan  
Royce Vermeulen  
Sean Wagenaar

Hans van der Jagt  
Kristy Gunnink  
Andrew van Burgel

#### Editorial Address

14 Wangoola Tce Mount Nasura 6112  
[tenhaam@frsa.asn.au](mailto:tenhaam@frsa.asn.au)

The deadline for all material to be used in the next issue is May 15.