

# Perspective

News from the graduate school with a difference.

Vol. 26, No. 3

June 1992

## Institute Receives Government Grant

Jim Leach

April 1st this year brought the Institute more "treats" than "tricks." On that day, we learned that the Canadian government had awarded a substantial research grant to the Institute through the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). Since I served as the writing arm of the committee that drafted the proposal, I've been given the opportunity to share a few details with *Perspective* readers.

ICS will receive almost \$60,000 over the next three years to help fund a multi-year examination of Pluralism by our Interdisciplinary Seminar. Though this grant is not the first that members of the Institute have received, it is our most extensive grant to date. (Speaking as a junior member, I am particularly pleased since much of this money will pay student research assistants!)

From the government's perspective, I believe this will be money well spent. Canada can boast of a culture enriched by a broad diversity on many levels. Yet without some widely acceptable orchestration of this plurality, culture as a whole threatens to fragment. Disintegration has become a more acute possibility as more undeniable problems have emerged in the liberal framework the West has traditionally used to integrate its culture.

The Institute proposed to devote our entire research staff to three years of deep-going philosophical reflection on these important matters. The government accepted our proposal and granted the seminar monies through a special research initiative created to spur investigation of applied ethics. Though it is fortunate that ICS can supply a distinctly Christian input to contemporary crises, the topic Pluralism emerged quite naturally from the seminar's past two years of research into Creation Order.

Additional excitement was generated when individual grants were also awarded to Richard Middleton, a Ph.D. student in philosophical theology, and to Senior Member Calvin Seerveld.

The positive feedback from the grant reviewers, the encouragement which comes with this type of recognition, and the additional funds which these grants bring to our projects were indeed a surprising blessing and an unexpected treat.

□

Jim Leach is a Junior Member in Philosophical Aesthetics.

1992  
Anniversary Year  
of the  
Institute for Christian Studies



# Perspective

**Purpose:** To bring news about the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) to its supporting constituency.

**Editor:** Reinder J. Klein  
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Robert VanderVennen,  
Harry Fernhout

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## In this issue...

Lots of news, all of it encouraging!

1. A generous grant recognizes and encourages the Inter-disciplinary Seminar. Jim Leach's front-page story and Harry Fernhout's column (this page) cover this exciting news.
2. The Anniversary Campaign moves into a higher gear (p. 5).
3. The Ontario Family Conference is a GO for the August long weekend. Don't miss the story on p.5.
4. A 25th anniversary photo displays the entire faculty and staff of ICS together on the steps of 229 College Street (across).

The "Rooted in Faith... Growing in Service" thanksgiving year continues!

RJK



## From the President's Pen

by Harry Fernhout

*The rule of Christ covers the whole world.  
To follow this Lord is  
to serve him everywhere,  
without fitting in,  
as light in the darkness,  
as salt in a spoiling world.*

from *Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony*

The two sentences in this quotation highlight the creative tension in the daily life of Christians. We live between Christ's ascension and his eventual return. We confess Christ as Lord of the whole world, and we seek to act accordingly. Yet we are keenly aware that, in this in-between time, other principalities and powers hold sway over much of creation. In these circumstances our calling is to not "fit in," but to live as salt and light in the world.

We experience this creative tension not only in our individual or family lives, but in Christian institutions as well. In the twenty-five year story of the Institute for Christian Studies the challenge of being "in the world but not of it" is a consistent theme. The opening of the Institute in 1967 was rooted in the strong conviction that the rule of Christ covers the world of scholarship. Our founders recognized that graduate-level studies in the university represent an important frontier in human learning about our world. They were determined to stake a claim on this frontier in the name of the Renewer of learning.

In the 1960's the spirit which dominated the academic world had very little room for a place like the Institute. Scholarship at the university was very self-assured, confident in the objectivity and neutrality of human reason. The very idea of an institution in which religious beliefs guided responsible scholarship was regarded as ludicrous and hopelessly out of date.

Because of this atmosphere, in the early days of the Institute both professors and students had a keen sense of not "fitting in." They were aware of the sharp divide between scholarship founded on Christian principles and scholarship which denied having a religious starting point. Consequently the dominant theme at ICS, repeated tirelessly in classes and public lectures,

was that all scholarship is committed scholarship, that everybody has beliefs which shape their views.

*In such a society this Christian voice must be heard, for if pluralism cannot be justified from within the religious tradition which shaped modern culture, then "genuinely pluralistic modern societies must rest on incoherent moral foundations"*

But the Institute soon faced the other side of the creative tension of Christian life in an in-between time. To function as a place of academic salt and light, the Institute had to find its niche in the academic. Taking pot shots at the academic world from the outside is too easy. To properly bear witness to the Lordship of Christ over human knowledge the Institute had to build a reputation as a place of bona fide scholarship. And its graduates had to attain credentials (degrees) which would be widely recognized and accepted, just as Christian pastors, teachers and counsellors require proper certification.

The Institute's quest for a degree-granting charter reflects this quest to find a niche in the academic world. In my office I have a couple of files stuffed with letters addressed to Ontario Premier William Davis in 1982. The letters are from respected scholars from universities across Canada, the U.S. and Europe. Each of the authors asserts that the Institute has a solid academic reputation, and that the Ontario government ought to recognize this by conferring a degree-granting charter on ICS.

In 1983 the Institute received such a charter. We celebrated this accomplishment, because it created room for ICS to be in the academic world as salt and light even though it was not of the world.

Recently we experienced another interesting episode in this creative tension. Prodded by the ICS Senate (the board which oversees our academic affairs), in the fall of 1991 the ICS faculty made a concerted effort to apply for research funds from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), a federal government agency. (See our front page story by Jim Leach.) In the past a couple of ICS faculty members had received small grants for sabbatical expenses. This time we did things differently. The faculty applied as a team for funding for a project on the theme of pluralism. And we asked for an amount of money far greater than previous applications.

I can honestly say that our expectations for the success of this application were not high. After all, we are amateurs at writing grant applications, and we aren't a recognized member of "the club" of universities which rely heavily on SSHRC funding. Shortly after we submitted the application I even received a call from an officer at SSHRC who hinted that in light of budgetary cut-backs institutions like ICS were considered ineligible for funding.

Imagine our surprise and delight when we received notice that our pluralism project (as well as a separate grant proposal from Cal Seerveld) had been approved for funding! Quite unexpectedly a grant application which came from ICS

as an institution (rather than from an individual scholar) had gained approval!

Even more encouraging are the reasons for this approval. ICS has received copies of the comments submitted by two scholars who reviewed our proposal for the project on pluralism. Two features stand out in these reviews. First, the reviewers make very favourable comments about the academic competence of the research team. On the basis of personal and indirect experience, they are confident that ICS scholarship is "rigorous and of high quality." That is, of course, the kind of comment which warms a president's heart.

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*ICS claims to be "the graduate school with a difference". The fact that we are a **graduate** school testifies to the fact that we are in the world. Our **difference** proclaims that we are not of the world.*

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More interesting, however, are the reviewer's comments on the Christian identity of the Institute. The reviewers clearly sense the 'creative tension' in which ICS lives. The first reviewer notes that many contemporary scholars may dismiss the proposal to explore the theme of pluralism from a Christian point of view as "preposterous." "How could a group of scholars committed to a

*Continued on page 4*

## A brief description of the Institute's Proposal to the SSHRC

*"We propose to research a viable framework for addressing matters of applied ethics within the context of a pluralist culture. We will investigate principles and approaches whereby legitimate inter-group concerns can be resolved without merely imposing a reduced common denominator scheme on all parties."*

## Reviewer Comments on the Institute's successful application for a Strategic Research Grant

*"This proposal goes to the heart of current debates seeking to shape the future of Canadian confederation. It does so in a way that both demonstrates a sensitivity to the history of Canadian scholarly discussions of the subject and the wider scholarly debates both historical and contemporary that have shaped and continue to shape modern political thought."*

*"The scholarly competence of the team is impressive... The scholarly merit of the proposal is similarly impressive, and it is clear that a substantial contribution to knowledge is likely."*



A rare photo of the entire ICS academic and administrative staff — on the steps of 229 College Street. "In the world but not of it."

Photo: D.L. Klein



## President's Pen *cont'd from page 3.*

particular moral outlook shed light on the questions of pluralism and its significance in a modern secular society?" The reviewer concludes, however, that in such a society this Christian voice must be heard, for if pluralism cannot be justified from within the religious tradition which shaped modern culture, then "genuinely pluralistic modern societies must rest on incoherent moral foundations."

The second reviewer's comments are even more to the point. This reviewer also recognizes that our grant application comes from a particular community, here labelled "Dutch Calvinist." (I trust that Paul Marshall and Brian Walsh will be pleased with the discovery that they are Dutch Calvinist!) The reviewer emphasizes, however, that a grant application from a particular community should not be denied simply because it is "contrary to the liberal-individual ideology which is dominant within academia. Indeed, the issue of 'bias' would probably not even be raised if all the members of a team shared the dominant ideology!"

This is a truly remarkable statement. It reflects something of the changed spirit in the academic world today. These reviewers are clearly able to recognize that scholarship always has its biases, and that scholarship rooted in religious convictions has a legitimate voice. They recognize that ICS marches to a different beat, and yet they want to make room for this beat in the academic orchestra.

What a marvellous opportunity to work as salt and light in an academic world where we still don't really "fit in." We are grateful to God for this measure of recognition that a place like ICS can be a legitimate part of the academic world while maintaining its spiritual uniqueness. This is truly an amazing blessing.

ICS claims to be "the graduate school with a difference." The fact that we are a *graduate school* testifies to the fact that we are *in the world*. Our *difference* proclaims that we are not of the world. This is the creative tension we enjoy from day to day. May our new SSHRCC grant stimulate us to be creatively busy with the tension in our pluralism project.

☐

## BC South Conference Postponed

Instead of its traditional Labour Day Family Conference at Cultus Lake, the BC South Chapter Board is planning a one-day conference on **November 7** with Senior Member Jim Olthuis as the keynote speaker.

☐

## Art Exhibitions at the Institute

Andrea Bush

A determined opening night crowd battled the February 4th snowstorm to see the jewel-like constructions of Lynn McIlvrde Evans at ICS, also exhibited at the Aird Gallery throughout February.

When she ran out of canvas during her last year in the York University BFA program, Lynn began painting and chiselling on small wood panels. She's developed this format prolifically in the six years since.

Lynn cites as important influences the geometrical Mennonite and Amish quilts, medieval illuminated manuscripts, and the *naif* landscapes and religious



Photo: R.J. Klein

*One of the teapots of Lynn McIlvrde Evans*

paintings of Canadian Ukrainian-Catholic painter William Kurelek. Many have felt her works look Central or South American. They are small, recessed, painted right to the outside edges of the layered frames, often in unmixed primary and secondary colours, especially red and blue. These are colours of dramatic conflict or contrast in primitive and folk art. Formal drama suits Lynn's themes, involving the greatest contrasts: a heart against its own sin, a single Christian woman against oceans of churchly male prejudice, the fiery, purifying Spirit of God and the fragile, earthly human vessel (or symbolic teapot!) that holds Him; angels and homespun shepherds; God and the human baby He becomes. In this world, all things are possible — except that its unity in God should disintegrate. This wholeness is visually established by repetitive patterning of each frame, creating a single world of

order for the forms and figures within, however dramatic the action. Space isn't rendered in the Renaissance perspective oriented towards the individual viewer — what we moderns consider "realism." Lynn's living creatures all occupy one space.

But neither is this a 20th century "non-objective" indeterminate universe open to any hermeneutic; it's one ordained and loved in its recognizable particulars. Lynn uses bits of the familiar world, ranging from 2500 year old Scripture to 19th century hymnals to this year's newspapers, merging her cosmos into our shared one. And the very smallness of the pictures, recessed into their frames, draws us near, into an accessible God-blessed reality.

Significantly, there are paintings of Christian women, famous and anonymous, all in or on deep water. There's Amanda Smith, a 19th century "holiness" evangelist, in the midst of a tossing ocean where floating stones with malevolent faces menace her. But fire blazes from her head and mouth. Catherine Booth, co-founder of the Salvation Army, walks on water, bits of recipe bobbing in the waves. (Catherine told her mother when she began preaching that she felt more comfortable in the pulpit than in the kitchen, says Lynn.) In "Church Lady Drowning in Patriarchy" a nude woman sinks under the print of hymns excluding her, like "Rise Up O Men of God." This quiet *defi* to the church is beautifully humorous.

I too was privileged to have a show at the new ICS facility this year. These oil paintings covered the last ten years of my career, beginning near the time when as a new Christian I began to review the world via painting. These were all executed in western Europe and the northeast U.S. while I wandered, working day jobs. Early pictures like "Paris Soir" or "Homesick for Herkimer" were sombre-hued meditations on solitary figures or silent city night scenes, much indebted to the American painter Edward Hopper. I was preoccupied with the architecture of God's world — its trees seeming to dance or gesture, electrically charged skies, people's ordinary houses. These all were rendered in increasingly free and colourful thick impasto, with which the surface of the painting itself is expressive and intriguing. In this way I responded as ardently as I could to the beautiful, intricate variety of God's voice in creation.

☐



## Niagara Moves to Ancaster: News about the Ontario Family Conference

**PANIC:** Panic struck the ICS community earlier this spring when word got around that Miller's Creek — the camping location for most conferees — had been closed by the Niagara Parks Commission.

**FRUSTRATION:** The folks at Niagara Christian College were sympathetic to our plight, but couldn't accommodate many more campers than they've had in the past.

**RELIEF:** So, we're delighted to announce that this year's conference will be held July 31 through August 3, at the Hamilton District Christian High School in Ancaster, Ontario.

**SATISFACTION:** There's a LARGE gymnasium, plenty of meeting space, lots of classrooms, space for a nursery, sports fields, a cafeteria, lots of camping places — for both tents and trailers.

Atmosphere? Well, we always bring that with us when we arrive! And dormitory accommodation is available on the Redeemer campus.

**COMMITMENT:** Don't miss this conference. The topic is "Aspects of Contemporary Culture" with keynote speaker Bill Romanowski. Entertainment and inspiration will be provided by **Ken Medema**.

**CELEBRATION:** This is a special conference for the Institute, as it celebrates 25 years of being **ROOTED IN FAITH**. Participate with us as we launch the next 25 years of **GROWING IN SERVICE**.

P.S. If you're an instrumentalist, and can read music, please come prepared to join in a specially-composed hymn of praise during the Sunday evening worship service. P

## Don't Miss Ken Medema in Concert

**Hamilton District Christian  
High School, Ancaster, Ontario  
Saturday, August 1, 1992  
— 7:30 pm**

<b>Tickets:</b>	<b>With Family Conference</b>	<b>By mail or at door</b>
Adults	\$ 6.	\$12.
Under 16	\$ 4.	\$ 6.
Family	\$20.	---

Family Conference participants are guaranteed seats if they order tickets with their conference registration. The remainder are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Individual tickets can be ordered through ICS at (416) 979-2331. P



Photo courtesy: Brian Patch Music

### Alumni Action

**GEORGE N. PIERSON**

Congratulations are in order for George Pierson, who on March 25 received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the Catholic University of America, after successfully defending his dissertation entitled "*Geist and Leben in the Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer*." George was a student at ICS from 1980 to 1982; his thesis topic was in many ways an extension of interests developed here with Al Wolters during his junior member days.

George feels a strong debt to ICS, claiming that the foundation that was laid here was "absolutely invaluable" to his later studies and secondly because all his ICS credits were accepted toward his Ph.D. by CUA.

George is currently Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois. His wife Ginny is Director of Publications at Trinity, and they have two school-age daughters.

## Update on the Anniversary Campaign

### Cause for Rejoicing

To date, ICS has received nearly \$900,000 in gifts and pledges toward the \$2.5 million target of its Anniversary Campaign. The funds raised over the 5-year pledge period will finance faculty expansion, scholarships and bursaries, a student services position and enhanced library offerings.

### "Under New Management"

On May 4 the Campaign Committee said farewell to John Mavrak of CCS, who had served as Campaign Director for the past year. John Meiboom and Ross Mortimer will now share the role of animator and facilitator as the fund-raising program continues to approach its targets.

### Full Speed Ahead

The campaign effort is expanding through ever-widening concentric circles. In Toronto, work is almost completed. In Kitchener/Waterloo, Brantford, Drayton and Cambridge, regional committees — having been handed the torch — are organizing fund-raising in their areas. Next to start will be Hamilton, Chatham, St. Catharines and Kingston.

Please consider prayerfully the needs of the ICS when you are asked to participate in our future.



# Keeping Up With the Faculty

## BOB SWEETMAN

On April 2, Bob delivered a lecture for the First Year Program at the Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies in Toronto. The subject of his presentation was "Why did Meister Eckhart write in the Vernacular?"

In May he presented two papers at the 27th International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University:

- on the 8th, for the Aquinas sessions — "St. Thomas on Miracles";
- and on the 9th, for the Society for the History of the Low Countries — "Purgatory in the Collected Works of Thomas of Cantimpré."

## HENDRIK HART

On May 1 Henk accepted the Ph.D. thesis of junior member Carroll Guen-Hart.

A symposium on *Search for Community in a Withering Tradition*, by Kai Nielsen and Henk Hart, was

held on May 25; it was jointly sponsored by the CPA and the SCP.

From May 24 through 27 Henk and Carroll Guen-Hart were at the Learned Societies.

On June 12 Henk will be functioning as promoter at the Vrije Universiteit for the Ph.D. thesis of John Kok from Dordt College.

## JAMES OLTHUIS

Jim attended the Vrieze Philosophy Conference at Trinity Christian College from March 12 through 14.

The theme of the conference was "Ethics in the Reformed Tradition." Jim's paper was entitled "An Ethics of Co-Responsibility and Compassion."

On March 21 he conducted a workshop on "Fostering Mutuality in Marriage and Friendship" in Denver, Colorado, for the Frontline Chapter of Christians for Biblical Equality. P

## Ruth Memorial Fund

The Institute is delighted to have received a bequest — the Ruth Memorial Fund — which will enhance its ability to explore, discuss and promote aesthetics and the arts. This opportunity has been provided by Mrs. S. R. Neuerburg Huber, the mother of Ines Seerveld. The annual proceeds of the bequest will be used to sponsor lectures in aesthetics and/or arts conferences at the Institute.

With the agreement of the Seervelds, an arrangement has been made by which the gift will be "invested" in the Institute. On an annual basis ICS will make the interest earned available for the lectures/conferences. P

## Western Supporters Celebrate 25th Anniversary

On Friday evening, March 8, sixty ICS supporters celebrated the Institute's twenty-fifth milestone with an Anniversary Banquet in the Langley Christian Reformed Church.

President Fernhout travelled to Vancouver for the occasion, and delivered the after-dinner address.

The Institute extends its thanks to the British Columbia Chapter Board for organizing this enjoyable event! P

## Waking Up the Neighbours

Over 130 registrants gathered at the ICS last March 30 and 31 to find out how they could revitalize their relationship with their "neighbours" — today's young people. The keynote speaker was **Dr. Bill Romanowski**, Assistant Professor of Communication Arts & Sciences at Calvin College. Other "neighbourhood guides" included Don Posterski and Terry Thomas.

Renewing the participant's vision of how to relate to, understand and participate in the popular culture was the aim of the conference; without that vision, how can we help our young people cope with a culture that so powerfully informs their lives today?

This event was a lively introduction to the addresses and workshops at the **1992 Ontario Family Conference** being planned for the August Civic Holiday weekend (see page 5). P



Photo: F.J. Klein

Attentive conferees listening to Calvin's Prof. Romanowski.


## Walsh's New Book Calls Us to a Subversive Faith

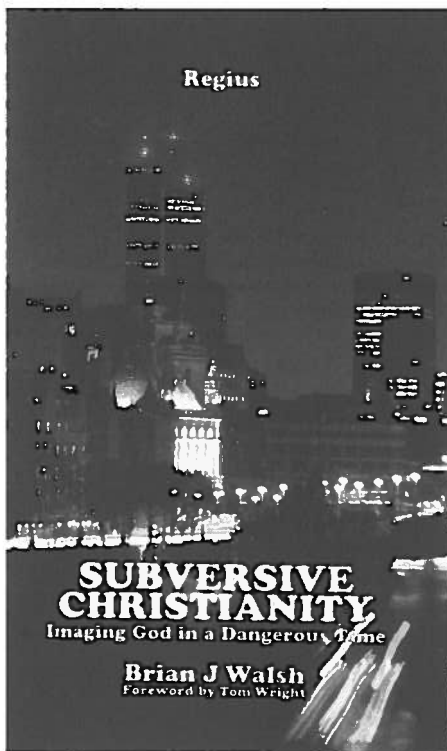
Dr. Robert E. VanderVennen

ICS Senior Member Brian Walsh has just had published a striking new book which is a wake-up call to know the world we are living in and to subvert it by faithfully being obedient to God's will.

The book is titled *Subversive Christianity: Imaging God in a dangerous time* and is published by British publisher Regius Press. You can buy it from ICS for \$10.95 (please see the order form on the back page).

Walsh says that we are like the Old Testament Jews living in Babylon. The world is all turned upside down. Spiritual conflict is at the heart of society. Telling the biblical creation story is subversive today, just as it was in Babylon. For nobodies to believe that they are created in the image of God gives them status that no secular society is willing to give.

Walsh uses the lyrics of Bruce Cockburn's songs to destroy the argument of Francis Fukuyama's widely-read essay "The End of History." He teams up with Jeremiah to come through with prophetic power in a small book that is exciting, energizing and graphic. 



## Film-maker Rozema Visits ICS


In connection with studying FilmTheory in Philosophical Aesthetics, Cal Seerveld invited Prof. Pieter Pereboom (University of Western Ontario) in for a November lecture to those studying aesthetics. In the evening — to everyone's delight — film director Patricia Rozema came for a couple of hours of discussion on her film-making (*I Heard the Mermaids Singing* and *White Room*). 



Photo: ICS Files

Film-maker Rozema and ICS Junior Member Greg Linnell discuss Film Theory.

## Teachers!

### Summer Course at ICS

*"Teaching the Elementary Language Arts: Theory and Practice in Christian Perspective"*

at ICS — July 13 - 28

Dr. Robert Bruinsma,  
Associate Professor of  
Education, The King's  
College, Edmonton

Cost: \$400. for credit;  
\$350. to audit

To register: (416) 979-2331

### Mini-Conference

*"The Schools We Don't  
Deserve"*

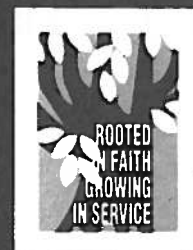
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the work of the Calvin  
Center for Christian  
Scholarship.

John Knox Christian School  
82 McLaughlin Road South  
Brampton, Ontario

July 29, 1992 (prior to the  
ICS International Conference  
in Toronto)

Harro Van Brummelen,  
Gloria Goris Stronks, Peter  
De Boer, Robert Koole,  
Steve Vryhof

Cost (before July 1):  
\$15; including lunch



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You could deposit your savings with Christian Stewardship Services at 6 or 7% (or even lower if you like). CSS is still investing in solid investments at 10.25% and will give the difference, minus some administrative fee, to ICS for its operating budget. Each year ICS already receives over \$10,000 donated by CSS from plans such as this.

Inquire from CSS, in strict confidence, how you too can help support ICS in this way.  
Contact:

CSS  
455 Spadina Ave., #210  
Toronto, ON M5S 2G8



## Plan to Celebrate

Mark September 20 on your calendar, and plan to attend the ICS Service of Celebration at 7:00 pm, Convocation Hall, University of Toronto.

## ICS Books for Good Summer Reflection

### Fresh from the Publisher

Subversive Christianity  
Brian Walsh \$10.95

Langdon Gilkey: Theologian for a Culture in Decline  
Brian Walsh \$24.95

Bringing into Captivity Every Thought  
J. Klapwijk and others, eds. \$24.50

Church and Canadian Culture  
Robert E. VanderVennen, ed. \$23.50

### Current and Excellent

Search for Community in a Withering Tradition  
Kai Nielsen and Hendrik Hart \$22.95

The Future: Our Choice or God's Gift?  
Egbert Schuurman \$6.00

Norm and Context in the Social Sciences  
Sander Griffioen and Jan Verhoogt, eds. \$25.95

Setting Our Sights by the Morning Star  
Hendrik Hart \$13.95

Christianity and the Classics  
Wendy Helleman, ed. \$16.95

### Old Books at Old Prices

Balaam's Apocalyptic Prophecies  
Calvin Seerveld \$3.95

Discovery of the Church  
ICS Staff \$2.00

Hope for the Family  
ICS Staff \$2.00

Relation of the Bible to Learning  
H. Evan Runner \$5.95

Six Days: poems by Canadian Christian authors  
Harry Houtman, ed. \$2.50

Will All the King's Men...  
ICS Staff \$3.50

Subtotal \$

Add 10% for mailing (min.\$1.00) \$

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