

Perspective

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES
Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship

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25th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

"The AACCS knows that in the continuing present crisis of our world it must bring home to the hearts and minds of this student generation the claim which the revelation of God in Jesus Christ makes upon the whole scientific and scholarly enterprise... The carrying on of this mission is what drives us on; it involves... the reformational character of our work."

From PLACE AND TASK OF AN
INSTITUTE OF REFORMED SCIENTIFIC STUDY,
Toronto, 1965

Perspective

Newsletter of the Association for
the Advancement of Christian
Scholarship

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AACS 25th Anniversary issue

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Foreword

James Joose
President,
Board of Trustees

I count it a privilege to introduce this commemorative issue of Perspective with a brief foreword on the occasion of our twenty-fifth anniversary. It hardly seems possible that a quarter century spans this time of silver anniversary celebration and our "founding fathers'" planning and organizational meetings in homes and church basements. Reflection serves as a reminder that the unpretentious home/church basement settings did not deter the Holy Spirit's Word ministry from causing old and young together to dream grandiose dreams and see beautiful visions. These dreams and visions led not only to the organization of the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies but also to the hammering out and formulation of by-laws as follows:

The purpose of the association shall be to undertake or promote whatever activities it shall deem conducive to the development of scripturally directed learning and scholarly enterprise, and particularly to establish, control and develop a Christian university, and in these ways to equip men and women to bring the Word of God in all its power to bear upon the whole of life.

The fire and wind force of that Word-inspired dream took hold quickly and moved powerfully, though the beginnings may seem primitive to some twenty-five years later. Unionville's ex-farmyard indeed compares poorly with a well equipped university, and a few days of lectures annually do not provide a thorough post-graduate education. Nevertheless, those lectures and discussions at the feet of Dooyeweerd, Reid, Rookmaaker, Runner, Van Riessen, Vollenhoven, Zuidema and others of their calibre made profound and lasting impression upon most of the conferees. It was, I believe, in God's providential

care an indispensable foundation laying period for the life of the association.

A foreword, I realize, must not become an historical overview. My purpose, however, is to remember that it is God's faithful working out of Joel's prophecy about Kingdom dreams and visions that gives us occasion for anniversary celebration at this time. That faithfulness made possible conferences similar to the above throughout the land but the dream was bigger than conferences and campus ministries. An Institute for Christian Studies was born and the concept of a Christian university remained strong. Only a decade ago a spokesman for the Association responded to a question during an interview as follows:

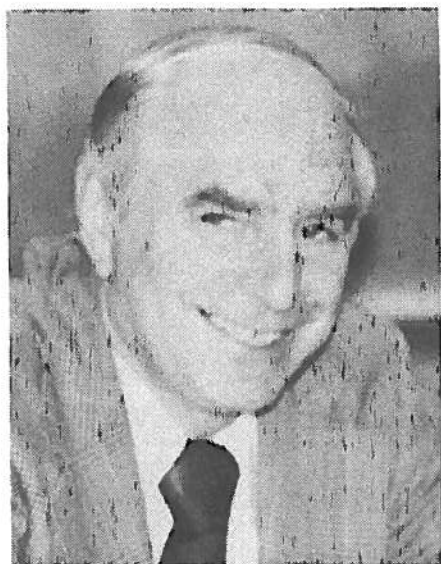
The Institute hopes to expand to approximately 20 professors and 200 to 300 students by 1980. At that time, or later, we hope it will be possible for the ICS to become a university.

True, that has not been realized at this time of our twenty-fifth anniversary. We were led through difficult times in the 70s. Who of us fully understands all that has taken place? We were humbled but our God remained faithful. Consequently we've matured somewhat and the dream has not been lost. God be praised!, we have reason to celebrate.

The late Dr. Abraham Kuyper entitled one of his little books of meditations, *Celebrate Your Festivals*. In his foreword he reminds his readers that they may not forget the balance of the sentence he borrowed from Nahum's prophecy, "... and fulfill your vows." I should like to end on that note. Let us celebrate joyfully, continue to dream God's dream for the AACS and rededicate ourselves to its holy and blessed ministry. I trust this issue of Perspective may enrich you with such blessings.

The beginning: An act of faith

by Casper C. Vanderiet



(Top) James Jooose, President, Board of Trustees.

(Above) Henry Venema.

"These were men and women who came to the new world with a vision of the Kingdom of Christ."

In the years following the Second World War a considerable number of people in the Netherlands became restless. They did not agree with political and economic developments in their country or they hoped that another country might offer a brighter future for their families. Many thousands migrated to Canada, remembering that it was mainly the Canadian Army that liberated their homeland.

Among these Dutch immigrants was a disproportionately high number of Reformed Christians. These were men and women who came to the new world with a vision of the Kingdom of Christ. By the year 1956 more than a hundred Reformed churches of different stripes were established in Canada by these immigrants.

Vision and Trust

Although they wanted to integrate into Canadian society as soon as possible, these Calvinists were not blind to the fact that within Canadian society, in the fields of education, labour, culture, politics and other spheres of life, an ongoing secularization was taking place. Therefore, after they had settled themselves and formed churches, these people considered the building of Christian schools most urgent.

When other actions demanded so much attention, it seemed somewhat unrealistic to talk about the establishment of a Christian university. And yet, it was this idea that brought four men from the Toronto area together during October, 1955, and the following months. These men had a vision. They realized that any action to proclaim the kingship of Jesus Christ in its particular area of life would be seriously handicapped by lack of leadership. Their conclusion was that a free university, based on Calvinistic principles, was mandatory.

Later, in an interview, the Reverend Francois Guillaume had the following to say about the meetings that took place: "We prayed every time for guidance. We always closed with thanksgiving; the Lord was really in our midst. We did it through him. The first time we just agreed, the four of us... 'We have to do it. This must be done.' And the people had not even settled as yet. The local Christian school had not opened yet. There was still a big void."

Fear God and Keep His Commands

In retrospect, we can only be grateful that there was this unique beginning. Mind you, the Association started with fewer than sixty members. But for those who were present at the meeting of June 16, 1956, it seemed great. It was marvelous in their eyes. Hebrews 11:1 says: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." That assurance and conviction was in the minds of those establishing the ARSS. Therefore, we may call the happenings on June 16, 1956, an act of faith.

Pastor Guillaume concluded that meeting with a brief meditation on the words of Ecclesiastes 12: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for that is the whole duty of man." "These words are the key to a truly Christian life and must be followed in all attempts for higher education," he told the gathering. "In this spirit we may return home and in this way we must walk."

Now that we have walked as far as 1981, let us pledge to keep the faith. And as we support the AACS and its Institute let us follow the rule of Ecclesiastes 12: "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

The founding years: 1955-1959

A BOLD BEGINNING

by Bert Witvoet

2

Most beginnings are small and unimpressive. The beginning of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship is no exception. Many beginnings are awkward and even funny. The beginning of the AACS, known at that time as the ARSS (Association for Reformed Scientific Studies), was somewhat awkward and funny. How can an organization escape being that with such evocative initials? A few beginnings are dramatic and of great portent. The AACS had such a beginning. And it had that beginning 25 years ago.

Faith, fear and fumbling

It was the year of our Lord 1956 and the place of our Lord Toronto, Canada. For the founders of the AACS it was a time of great determination and of precipitous haste. It was a time of faith that the King would lead and of fear that the wrong people might influence the direction. It was a time of great vision of a Calvinistic university not hamstrung by ecclesiastical divisions, and it was a time of safeguarding the purity of constitution by relying on church creeds. Yet, above all, it was a time of zeal to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

And God added such things to their efforts as were needed to flourish. He used the imperfect instrumentation of a small band of faithful and courageous people, most of them recent immigrants from The Netherlands, and moved in mysterious ways his wonders to perform, so that 25 years later the kind of things can be said of the AACS and its Institute for Christian Studies that one may read about in this celebrative anniversary issue of Perspective.

Not that everything about the AACS is kingdom of heaven calibre. If God moves in mysterious ways,



(Above) An early photograph of the founding fathers of the AACS, from left to right, Henry Venema, Casper VandeRiet, Peter Speelman and Francois Guillaume.

(Below) A group of participants in the first AACS conference, held in Unionville, September 1, 2, 3, 1959.

his own people sometimes move in obscure and wayward ways or don't move at all. But shall we stare ourselves blind at the power of sin and miss seeing the splendour of divine grace stirring the flame of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship.

Four kinds of meeting

The beginning is characterized by four stages of development – four kinds of meeting. There were first the informal get-togethers of four men from the Toronto area, starting in October of 1955. These men, pastors Francois Guillaume and Henry A. Venema and businessmen Peter Speelman and Casper Vanderiet, came to the conclusion that a free university based on Calvinistic principles was needed on the North American continent. They met during the fall and winter of 1955-1956 to lay the groundwork for a constitution. Calvinistic Dutchmen never set out to sea without a constitution as chart and compass.

The circle of eight

On May 28, 1956, a meeting was held at the home of pastor Henry Venema, 39 Clearbrooke Circle, Rexdale, Ontario, to which eight men were invited: the original four plus pastors A.B.C. Hofland, Alvin H. Venema and Maarten Vrieze and businessman Peter Nienhuis. The brothers expressed agreement on two articles of the preliminary constitution and decided that they would be "the temporary committee under the leadership of the grace of God, to establish the preliminary-constitution-intended association for the establishment of Calvinistic Scientific Studies."

Another motion was accepted that read: "The Committee decides to invite a certain number of persons who they believe agree with articles 1 and 2 of the preliminary constitu-

"It was a time of great vision of a Calvinistic University not hamstrung by ecclesiastical divisions."

tion; these are to come together for the purpose of establishing an Association for Calvinistic Scientific Studies." The eight people at this meeting completed a list of 56 persons who would be invited to attend a meeting on June 16.

The circle of sixty

The third stage took shape when this meeting took place on June 16, 1956, at the Annette Christian Reformed Church of Toronto. Of the 56 that were invited some 40 attended. Of these, 39 became members while 19 others not at the meeting had informed the committee that they wanted to become members as well, bringing the total to about 60. It may be noted with interest that three pastors from Western Canada who had attended Synod in Grand Rapids, Michigan, dropped in unexpectedly. It is this event in the Annette Church that in effect gave birth to the AACS. The gestation period had been nine months. The baby apparently was due.

The public viewing

The public viewing of the baby took place at a meeting held on November 3, 1956, in the Davisville Auditorium, Eglinton and Yonge Streets, Toronto. This was the first public meeting of the organization—stage four.

The meeting featured a speech by Professor Ned Stonehouse from Westminster Theological Seminary entitled "Why a Christian University?" A telegram of good wishes was received from the Reformed Fellowship, an organization which now frowns upon much of the

work done by AACS.

The discussion that got briefly started in the morning and that was postponed till the afternoon revealed some of the tensions that would dog the tracks of the organization for many years. According to Remkes Kooistra, one of the three men from the West and now campus minister at the University of Waterloo, there were three discernible groups at that meeting. There were the American home missionaries, the Groen Van Prinsterer entourage from Grand Rapids, Michigan, led by Professor H. Evan Runner and the Dutch immigrants living in Ontario.

Too soon and too exclusive

A few of the home missionaries, notably Ehlers and Persennaire, objected to the haste of the attempt and the lack of adequate preparation and study. "It must be remembered," says Remkes Kooistra, "that Dordt College had just been started in Iowa, and Trinity College in Chicago was being planned. Consequently, the Christian Reformed establishment which favoured Grand Rapids and its college and seminary was apprehensive about local efforts to start institutions of higher learning." The Groen Van Prinsterer delegation was strongly in favour of the proceedings. But several voices from the Dutch immigrant section questioned the method of organization used by the early organizers. Why that June 16 meeting with a select group of people?

Reverend John Gritter, home missionary and man of peace, proposed the following motion:

"The meeting accepts the assurance of the board members that in sending out the invitations to the June meeting the provisional committee did not mean to select certain persons of particular tendency to the exclusion of others. The meeting urges those who have expressed their objections on that score to rest in the declaration. Adopted."

The adoption of this motion may have seemed misleading, even hypocritical, to some. However, a close look at the list of people invited to the June 16 meeting will bear out that the approximately sixty who were invited represented a broad range of attitudes within the Reformed constituency.

"We shall need leaders"

And so, the first public meeting had been held and several more people joined in and helped the growth of a fledgling association that, according to treasurer Peter Nienhuis, did not yet have a strong financial basis. But there was a strong atmosphere of excitement and hope.

That hope was well expressed in the opening words of Chairman of the June 16 meeting, Peter Speelman. He said, "Our leading motif has been, that if in the future we are going to contribute to this land, and above all to the kingdom of God, we who have been brought up in Calvinistic homes, who desire to hold fast to the traditions of the Reformed confessions, regardless of church denomination, we shall need leaders, men of science who will allow the light of God's Word to shine upon all problems of our modern and increasingly complicated life...We heartily hope that our God and Christ, in whose name we have begun this gathering, may so direct that what transpires here today may tend to the greater glory of his ineffable Name."

Years of planning

This first period, from 1955 to 1959, was a relatively quiet period. One of the early chairmen referred to the work done as ditch digging. None of the board members had ever been involved in the development of an institute for higher learning. It was a period characterized by smoke filled rooms (in the 50s the hazards of smoking had not yet reached the level of importance of such constitutional matters as the retirement schedule of curators and the membership fee of \$25.00 per annum) and late evening discussions about promotion, financing, incoming mail, membership meetings and, above all, the Constitution.

Constitution and Educational Creed

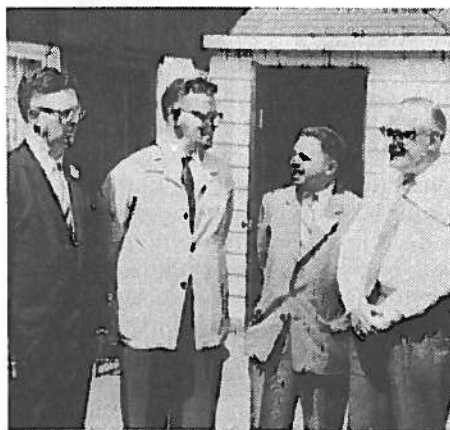
The first constitution, drawn up by the original founders and revised by the Board, was approved by the membership on February 20, 1957. This constitution declared in Article 3 that "the basis of the Society in all its activities is the infallible, all sufficient and only authoritative Word of God, according to the interpretation of the Reformed Confessions."

When in the following year Professor Herman Dooyeweerd visited Canada and was a guest at the board meeting of October 17, this Article 3 of the Constitution was looked at again. Professor Dooyeweerd advised that "the organization should not be bound to the confessions of the church, but only to the Scriptures." His advice was well received and eventually followed in a revised constitution. It was this thinking based on the "sphere sovereignty" principle that eventually lead to the formation of an Educational Creed. But that belongs to the second period.

Western Canada

It must also be noted that already in the early period Western Canada played an important role in shaping the structures of the AACCS. At the first general meeting of June 16, 1956, a Western Canada Committee was appointed. At the board meeting of October 1, 1956, a letter from Bastiaan Nederlof, Chairman of the Western Canada Committee, expressed the desire of the West to cooperate with the East, but he urged that the Board be increased with members from the West. This suggestion was implemented at various stages, and the Western Canada Committee was asked for reports to help shape the thinking and programs of the Association. The Alberta Reports of 1959 and 1960 contained several principles and suggestions which were later included in a revised constitution.

And so the years of founding and planning rolled by, and the membership grew very slowly. But the minutes of the Board Meeting of June 3, 1957, tell us that "Reverend Van Andel is very optimistic, stating that we should not expect large numbers. We should be glad for every member we obtain."

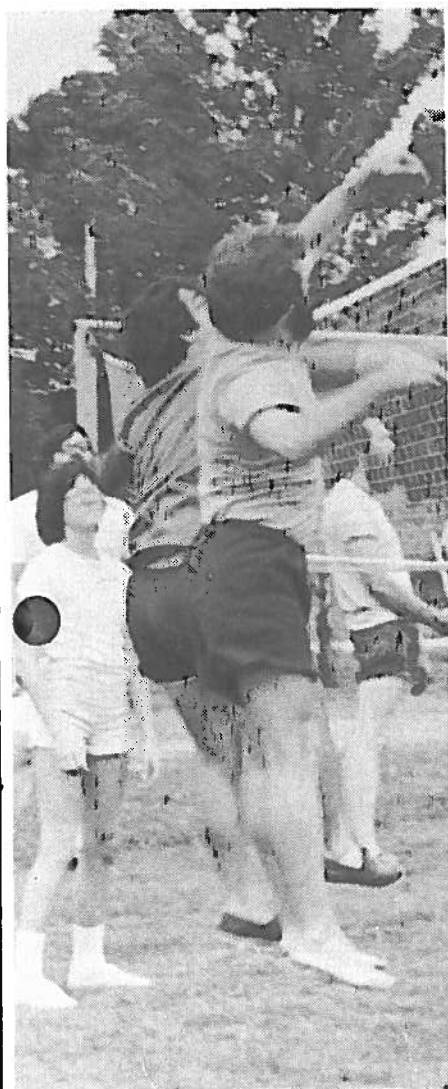


An illustrious quartet gathered in Unionville in 1961, from left to right, Runner, Van Riessen, Rooknaaker and Duyvené De Wit

The conference years: 1959-1967

LIFE IS ENTHUSIASM

by Bert Witvoet



The second phase in the history of the AACS lies between the early founding years and the opening of the Institute for Christian Studies. This period of time is characterized by a steady growth in membership to nearly 2000, the beginning of educational activities and publications as well as the incorporation of the ARSS under the new name of ICS with a new constitution. The early years of trench digging evolved into years of basement building.

Study conferences

The Study Conferences began September 1, 2 and 3, 1959, at Unionville, Ontario. That's 22 years ago. The aim of these conferences was to provide some substitute for the lack of a Reformed institute of higher learning in Canada. These conferences were of great blessing to undergraduates, post graduates and others who attended them, even if some of the lectures were too technical or too difficult. There was a spirit of enthusiasm and most caught at least a glimpse of what scripturally directed learning was or could be.

Closely connected to the Study Conferences were the Lecture Tours during the years 1959-1964. Scholars from the Netherlands, like Professor H. van Riessen and Professor S.U. Zuidema, would travel during September throughout Eastern and Western Canada as well as to some cities in the United States.

From 1962 on annual conferences were held in Western Canada as well as in the United States. And from 1964 on teachers conferences were begun in cooperation with the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.

Publications

Gradually the Association felt the need to reach out through publications as well. In the early years existing publications, especially *Calvinist Contact*, were frequently used to communicate with the Reformed constituency. In May, 1960, it was decided to start with a newsletter called *Quarterly*. This modest publication was replaced by the *ARSS Monthly Bulletin* in September, 1963. The lectures of the Study Conferences were edited and published in book form as *Christian Perspectives*. Moreover, brochures, pamphlets, study outlines and other literature were issued to promote Reformed scholarly thinking.

Executive Director

As the activities of the association extended and an increase in membership became an urgent necessity, the appointment of a salaried worker could no longer be avoided. Therefore, the trustees in their meeting of November 13, 1963, appointed their secretary Dr. P.G. Schrotenboer as Executive Director effective as of January 1, 1964. He was to be assisted by a secretary. Dr. Schrotenboer was Executive Director until the end of 1966, when Dr. Henk Hart assumed this function for a short interval. April of 1967 saw Mr. John Olthuis, an Edmonton, Alberta, lawyer, assume the Executive Directorship.

When Olthuis filled his new position, the Association had just changed its name and constitution. The Committee on Constitutional Changes had worked for several years on drafts and revisions. The most visible change was the name change from The Association for Reformed Scientific Studies to The Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship, done to prevent misunderstanding in the Anglo-Saxon world regarding the words "Reformed" and "Scientific" (and to get away from having people pronounce ARSS in an uncomplimentary way).

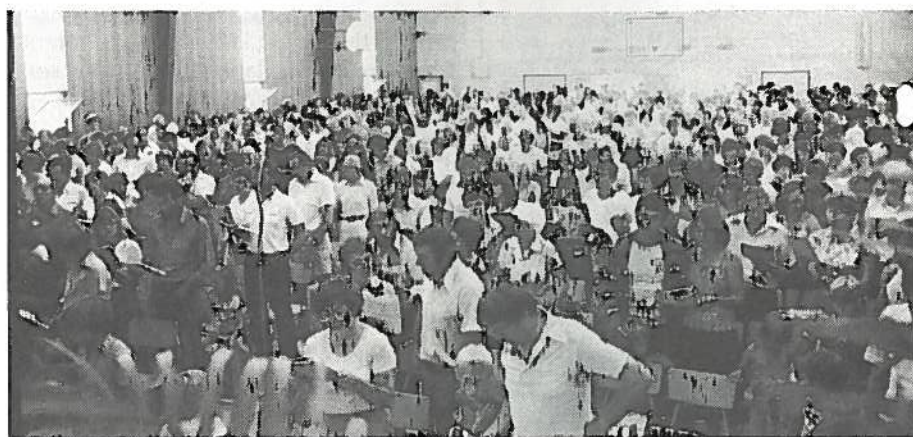
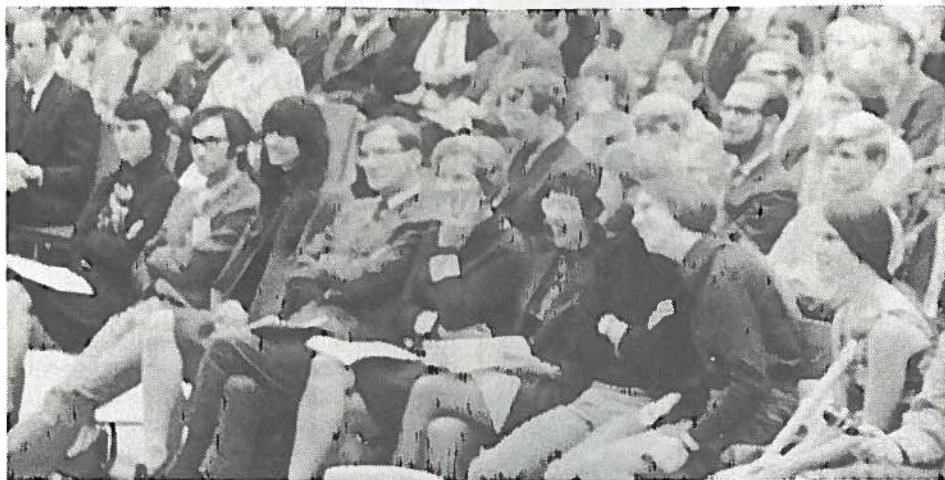
An important difference between the former and the new constitutions was the approach to membership. The new constitution recognized only one type of membership, with the earlier three-signature requirement for membership being dropped. This latter practice of screening applications for membership had been severely criticised by several members and non-members. It was felt that the Association did not need to go to such extremes to safeguard its character. Besides, where in this practice was the recognition of the office of believer?

Educational Creed

But one cannot underestimate the importance of the adoption of the Educational Creed. It has proven to be a valuable document in guiding the organization to an understanding of its task in scholarship. It spearheaded attempts by other educational institutions to come to grips with their understanding of the relation of Scripture and learning. Casper Vanderiet writes: "I like to point to the beauty of the Preamble (written by Professor Dirk H.T. Vollenhoven) and the Educational Creed (developed mostly by Professor H. Evan Runner). Both breathe a Holy Spirit-led submission to what the Holy Scriptures in Jesus Christ require in the field of learning."

One of the most hotly debated clauses in the Creed was the one that professed that "life is religion." Many board members struggled with that for a long time. Would it not be better to say that life is religious? Does the English language allow for a noun where one expects an adjective? "Never mind," argued Professor Runner, "the meaning of a statement is more important than its grammatical form. This is a confessional statement that points out that life is at bottom covenantal." Someone else said that when we say "God is light" we deal with a similar confessional statement. These are not scientific definitions. Finally the board approved the clause. Today it has become a widely recognized confessional signpost in North American religious circles.

And so the foundations were laid and the time had arrived for the establishment of a real institute for learning with building, professors and students. But that story comes in the next section.

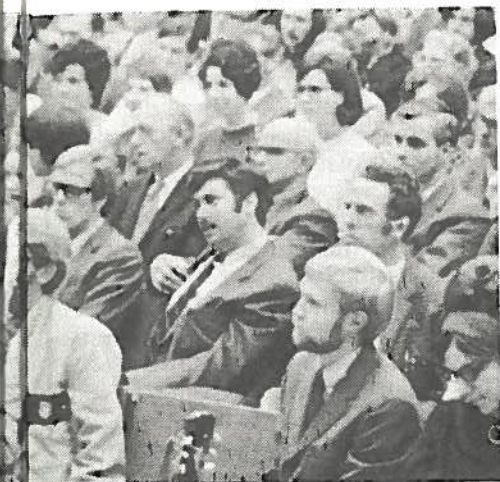


(Above)
Toronto
(Left)
Clyde
Union
Vancouver
(Below)
recreation
(Far
and

AACS conferences

A THREE-YEAR SAMPLING

7



(Above) A membership meeting in 1968 in Toronto

(Left) A section of the crowd at the 1980 Niagara Conference.

(Left bottom) A group attending the 1960 Unionville Conference (Runner and VandeZande at far right).

(Below) There was always time for recreation.

(Far right below) Evan Runner, Jack Vos and Herman Dooyeweerd in 1959

1959

60 attended
Unionville,
Ontario
H.E. Runner
A.L. Farris
H. Van Riessen

1971

1600 attended
Belvoir, Ontario
J.H. Olthuis
H. Hart

Red Deer, Alberta
B. Goudzwaard
H. Hart

Cultus Lake, B.C.
A.H. DeGraaff
P. Schouls

Pinebrook, PA.
H. Hart
B. Zylstra

Grand Haven, Mich.
L. Tamminga
J. Van Dyk
P.G. Schrottenboer
B. Zylstra
J.A. Olthuis

Camp Okoboji, IA.
B.J. Haan
H.E. Runner
J.H. Olthuis

Seattle, WA.
A.H. DeGraaff
P. Schouls

1981

2200 attended
Niagara, Ontario
C. Seerveld
S. Wiersma
B. Polman
L. Sweetman
P. Steen
L. Zuidervaat
K. Heffner
W. Bartley
N. Van Dyke
B. Van Dyk
K. McConnell

Lacombe, Alberta
H. Van Belle

Whidbey Island, WA./B.C.
J.R. Kennedy

Houston, B.C.
A. Kuyvenhoven

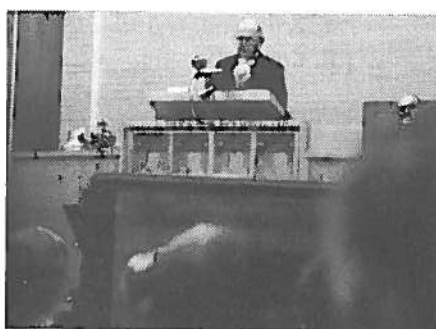


The early Institute years: 1967-1974

OPENING OF THE INSTITUTE

by Bert Witvoet

8



(Top) "The Institute" on Lyndhurst Avenue,
(Middle) Rev. F. Guillaume delivered the
sermon at a special dedicatory service in 1967.
(Above) 1967 Institute staff, from left to
right (standing) John VanderStelt, Hendrik
Hart, Fred Cupido, Jane Bumia (nee Smits),
John Olthuis and Jane Booy.

Now it happened in the days when John A. Olthuis had just been appointed Executive Director, and when the Board of Trustees consisted of M. Koole, L. Tamminga, G. VandeZande, J. DeKoning, P. Jonker, C. Seerveld, M. Vander Meulen, J. Joesse, A. Venema and M. deVries that the AACS (then ARSS) opened its Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto, Canada. These were also the days that Canada celebrated its centennial. If the AACS had its way, from now on people would refer to the first hundred years of Canada's existence as the hundred years without the Institute.

It was with such enthusiasm and hopes that some 500 friends of the AACS gathered on October 6 and 7, 1967, to witness the long-awaited first step into the arena of higher learning. A real, flesh and blood professor of philosophy, Dr. Henk Hart, had been appointed and others were waiting in the wings of the doctoral programs of the Free University of Amsterdam, all protégés of Dr. Evan Runner.

Prayer convocation

Friday evening a prayer convocation was held at which François Guil-

laume, then pastor in Edmonton, Alberta, delivered an address entitled "Shoot and Strike," a meditation on the story of Elisha and King Joash. Elisha was dying but he wanted to inspire the king to be bold in his dependance on the Lord and to look forward to victories over the enemies of God.

"A faithful believer in Christ Jesus," said Guillaume, "wages daily a spiritual warfare. He cannot tolerate it that so many fields of human life are withdrawn from God's supervision. He wants to win them back. He wants to call out over the wide world the Name of Him who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords."

Seerveld on scholarly wisdom

Dr. Calvin Seerveld, then professor of philosophy at Trinity Christian College in Chicago, Illinois and an ARSS board member, addressed especially the twenty or so students that would attend the Institute. He reminded them that wisdom is the pearl of great price which we cannot attain by searching for knowledge, like the secular scholars of the day. Nor can we hope to possess wisdom by controlling knowledge and dividing it, as the Scholastics do. "It is not that Wisdom cannot be had," he added. "It is only that Wisdom is God-given rather than man-achieved, completely a blessing and not in the least a virtue won." Pastor Francois Kouwenhoven led the gathering in a dedicatory prayer.

Runner on "Point-Counterpoint"

The next day, Saturday, October 7, was the actual opening day. Pastor Alvin H. Venema of Richmond, B.C., President of the Association, opened the morning meeting, after which Dr. H. Evan Runner delivered the keynote address entitled "Point-Counterpoint." If some of the critics

of the AACS felt that the opening of the Institute had been premature, Dr. Runner pointed out that it took place at a very late hour in the history of western culture.

Humanism was holding a tight grip on western culture and Christianity was in crisis, a crisis which began with the Renaissance. In the present crisis, Dr. Runner maintained, it is the Christian thesis that the Word of God will always remain that supra-historical principle which must be a sure guide for our lives.

In the first issue of Perspective newsletter, John Olthuis wrote, that after Dr. Runner's address, the audience, visibly moved to thankfulness, arose and through a liturgical formulary dedicated the fledgling institute to the Glory of Almighty God.

Hart on Unity in Scholarship

In the afternoon Dr. Henk Hart, first appointee to the Institute staff, delivered his inaugural address entitled "The Spiritual Unity of Christian Scholarship." He pointed out that secular universities lack unity because they do not confess that Truth can be agreed upon or held in common. Furthermore, the Christian community is divided. What we need is a common educational creed to bind us together. As for the need to work with a specific philosophy, he argued that a philosopher needs to account theoretically for what he has confessed in his heart with his fellow believers. Hart also reminded the audience that since the philosophy of Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd was the only available tool in Christian philosophical thinking, not to make use of that tool would be irresponsible.

Celebrative banquet

The ceremonies were concluded with a banquet in the auditorium of

"A faithful believer in Christ Jesus wages daily a spiritual warfare. He cannot tolerate it that so many fields of human life are withdrawn from God's supervision."

the Toronto District Christian High School. Michael De Vries was master of ceremonies. He read the various congratulatory messages or gave opportunity to representatives to deliver their short congratulatory addresses. It would be of interest, perhaps, to reprint part of a message delivered by Louis M. Tamminga on behalf of the Christian Action Foundation:

One can hardly avoid comparing the opening of this humble Institute of higher learning with the opening of the Free University on Wednesday, October 20, 1880, in the Nieuwe Kerk of Amsterdam. Abraham Kuyper then delivered his magisterial address on Sphere Sovereignty opening up immense biblical perspectives which are still powerfully relevant to the problems of the nations of the North American continent in

1967. What those people wrought by God's grace seemed so futile, so pitifully weak. But big people they were, gripped by childlike faith and unswerving obedience... May this vision, this child-like obedience to our King, this humble trust in His infallible Word, this loyal concern for God's people, this sacrificial love for the Master's cause ever be the moving forces of this Institute.

No doubt, it was a kind of cultural transplant that took place fourteen years ago and some predicted that the young plant would not flourish on this continent. But an act of faith does not worry about tomorrow, it prays for only the daily food. Today the presence and work of the Institute is a testimony to the faithfulness of God, the Provider.



H. VanAndel



F. Guillaume

The early Institute years: 1967-1974

ACTS OF THE YOUNG TURKS

by Bert Witvoet

Those early years of the Institute were heady years for members of the AACS. They saw their Institute as the instrument by which God might be pleased to stem the tide of humanism. They saw the vindication of their resolve to start a Christian University in the social unrest around them: student rebellion, Vietnam protests, charismatic renewal. The young professors, Hendrik Hart, Bernard Zylstra, James Olthuis and later Arnold DeGraaff, Calvin Seerveld and C.T. McIntire were seen as the spokesmen for the movement who were expected to take centre stage in matters of church renewal, school renewal, in short, societal renewal.

And centre stage these men did take. This is how Jim Olthuis and Hendrik Hart recall those days:

Jim Olthuis: "We had the virtues and vices of the prophetic mentality. You don't look to the right nor to the left. Consequently, we were naive about people. Our total dedication was to the norm and we gave insufficient attention to the appropriateness of our message to the situation. On the other hand, we must remember that the Word always breaks the comfort."

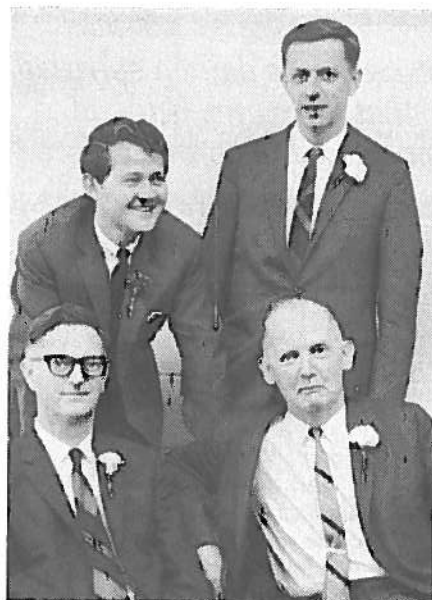
Hendrik Hart: "We were looking at life in religious ultimacies. We could not take any distance from ourselves. We have learned a lot in the meantime. We are less strident now. But would we have been more acceptable to the establishment if we had been more gentle? Look at Bob Goudzwaard in The Netherlands. He presents the same message as we do. He is calmness and humour personified. Yet, he is a much maligned figure because he opposes the main trend."

These were the days that AACS publications stirred up the Christian community, especially the Christian

Reformed Church community: *Man in Communication* by Schouls, *A Christian Critique of Art and Literature* by Seerveld, *The Challenge of Our Age* by Hart, *Understanding the Scriptures* by De Graaff and Seerveld, *Ambiguity Is the Key* by Olthuis, *Insight, Authority and Power* by Schouls, *For God's Sake Run with Joy* by Seerveld, *Worship and Politics* by Gedraitis. Most of these were well received. But the one that really shook the pulpits and pews was *Out of Concern for the Church*, a Canadian best seller. One anonymous party took out a full page ad in a Christian paper to voice open disagreement with its contents. Most people who agree with the basic thrust of the book admit that the pages contain some very unnecessary, offensive references to persons or do not show enough pastoral concern for the church the writers were so concerned about.

This is what pastor François Guillaume, a man who co-founded the Association and supported it till the end of his life, had to say about the manner in which the Institute staff presented itself then: "Voltenhoven and Dooyeweerd went through tremendous difficulties. People on the other side of the fence were accusing them time and again But they never became angry. They just presented the arguments for their position. These men were so humble It may be that I'm older now, and that I long for the past, but I don't see that humility They (Institute staff members) came, and they said: "Here I am!" But they should have said, "Who am I that I am here before you?" Do you see? That is a difference in tone, not teaching."

But the question keeps coming back: was the community not at fault by placing these men so up front? Or by not choosing a few more mature professors? Pastors



(Top, clockwise from top left) H. Hart, C. Seerveld, F. Guillaume and E. Runner in 1967. (Middle) Paul Schrotenboer, Executive Dir. from 1964-1967. (Above) John Olthuis, Executive Dir. from 1967-1974.

Kooistra and Nederlof, both members of the AACCS Board at one time or other, feel that an older man like Dr. H. Van Riessen might have been appointed as the first professor of the Institute. Bob VanderVennen thinks that the Board should have urged more restraint at that time and not be so awestruck with the learned young men.

One of the most penetrating critiques of the style of the AACCS came from the pen of Nicholas Wolterstorff, Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, Michigan. He wrote with a great degree of appreciation and honesty:

"What bothers me intensely about the mode of operation of the AACCS is its "movementism." Too often, in my judgement, the members of the movement have not humbly, selflessly, and self-effacingly served the cause of Christ and his people. Instead they have served the cause of the movement."

As manifestations of this "movementism" he cited a tendency to equate milestones in the history of the AACCS with milestones in the Kingdom of God, a habit of overlooking the faults of the members, an insistence on using shibboleths as tests of acceptability, and a few more pieces of evidence.

Wolterstorff's article was published in the *Reformed Journal* of December, 1974, and republished in a later issue of *The Banner*. It reflects on the period we are examining on these pages. Hendrik Hart's response in the March issue of the *Reformed Journal* shows that the AACCS by this time had entered a new period of more sober and humble acknowledgement of failures and of quiet determination to proceed with the task of the reformation and renewal of scholarship.

But it wouldn't be right to look at this period in the history of the AACCS with only feelings of remorse,

forgetting the tremendous work done by only a small band of professors in the house on Lyndhurst Avenue, Toronto. It wouldn't be right to forget the way the Lord continued to bless the AACCS in its work.

A North Carolina student wrote to the ICS students who had published newspapers at the 1970 Urbana conference "What have you got? Where did you get it? Your virile call to radical, militant, earth-shaking Christianity is the only one that suffices I saw the real life of Christ in me verbalized on your pages. I had paled from thinking no one else felt as all-out for Christ as I. And now - a whole organization?"

This is the language of the sixties and early seventies. This is the context in which the Institute had to make its beginnings. These were the years that students were frantically looking for alternatives. And in this period of time, the lives of thirty-year old professors or

"We had the virtues and vices of the prophetic mentality. You don't look to the right nor to the left. Consequently we were naive about people."

"I saw the real life of Christ in me verbalized on your pages."

senior members, as they were later called, were laid on the altars of slander and suspicion by a very smug establishment who apparently could afford themselves the luxury of overlooking the thrust of the message and of getting stuck in the matter of tone and style.



AACCS Board of Directors shown in 1967 at the opening of the Institute on Lyndhurst Avenue. From left to right (standing) M.

Koole, Gerald VandeZande, Peter Jonker, (seated) John deKoning, Jim Joosse and Michael DeVries.

The years of consolidation: 1974-1981

HE ROSE A SADDER BUT WISER MAN

by Bert Witvoet

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It is difficult to pin an exact date on when the exuberant, "earth-shaking" years of the Institute settled into a more sober period of hard work at the theoretical level and less flag waving in the community at large. Robert VanderVennen became Executive Director in June, 1974. Is it his personality and work that marks the beginning of a less flamboyant period? Early in 1974 the Board of Trustees approved a report by the Board of Curators (see "1974 Decision by Board of Trustees" on page 14) that set the Institute on a path it has been following ever since. Is it this decision that marks a new era? 1973 already sees the Board of Trustees reconsidering its past and hoping to chart a course for the future. The May/June, 1973, issue of *Perspective* reports on the board meeting as follows:

"Discussions at this board meeting brought out two important facts: this entire development (of the past ten years of the AACCS) has had a chastening and sobering effect on those who have been closely associated with the AACCS. Programs and ideas are being more carefully weighed and tested, and the reaction of the community is being given closer attention."

Whatever event we choose for a new departure point, it is clear that in the years 1973-1974 the AACCS came to maturity of some sort. There was a new spirit of cooperation rather than confrontation with churches and schools. The curriculum of the Institute was given shape with the introduction of the certificate program and the Associate program. Also a new program of promotion and development was begun. The realization began to dawn on more and more members that the Institute would probably never develop into a full-fledged university, and that perhaps that might not be such a bad thing.

"There was a new spirit of cooperation rather than confrontation with churches and schools."

To do foundational studies in a central place, giving direction to scholars in various places could be an exciting job description for the half dozen or so teachers of the Institute.

The fact that the Institute would not engage in professional training of teachers or psychologists was seen by some as a retreat into an ivory tower. To this day, Gerald Vandezande of the Committee for Justice and Liberty and former AACCS board member feels that the ICS ought to be more practice oriented, even issue oriented. But Hendrik Hart would not like to see the Institute directly involved in areas where academics have no authority. "When you have your position well worked out, and your contribution is well received at the academic level, you don't need to worry about the good effects it will have on our society," he comments.

Yet both Hendrik Hart and Jim Olthuis think that the Institute still suffers from shellshock after the battles of earlier years and for that reason is afraid to speak out where it ought. About the effects of a largely Christian Reformed supportive community they hold slightly different though not opposing views. Jim thinks that the support of the Christian Reformed community has been a blessing with definite drawbacks. The C.R. mentality does not encourage rubbing shoulders with believers in other communities. There is a kind of hemmed-in mentality that hinders

the work of the Association. Henk does not disagree with that analysis, but he points out that knowing the religious make-up of North American society one would be a fool to want to break out of a definite community. "You would not widen your constituency but lose it," he argues. "If the Christian Reformed Church would become more ecumenical, maybe we would lose this feeling of being hemmed in."

Perhaps this is what Gerald Vandezande is pointing at too when he suggests that the AACCS is too church-oriented. "The mores and traditions of the C.R. church determine the contours of our vision. Consequently we don't take those outside of our tradition seriously enough. The support we got in protesting against Bill 4 shows that we have many friends. Why are none of them elected to the Board of Trustees or Board of Curators? Why is the 25th anniversary service going to be held in a Christian Reformed Church?"

Battles, of course, were not the kinds of things the AACCS could steer clear of even during the years of sobriety. In 1980 there was a conflagration of sorts among members of the Association in St. Catharines, Ontario, surrounding especially the person and work of Arnold De Graaff. Much of it was a tempest in a teacup, but these things have a way of dirtying the carpet. The Board of Trustees did see fit to ask for the resignation of De Graaff, a well known member of the Institute team, on the basis of their objections to his life style, including marital and church problems. That incident threatened the unity of the Institute staff for several months. Even though the aches of that time have not disappeared, Hendrik Hart and Jim Olthuis, who were strongly opposed to the dismissal of De Graaff, feel

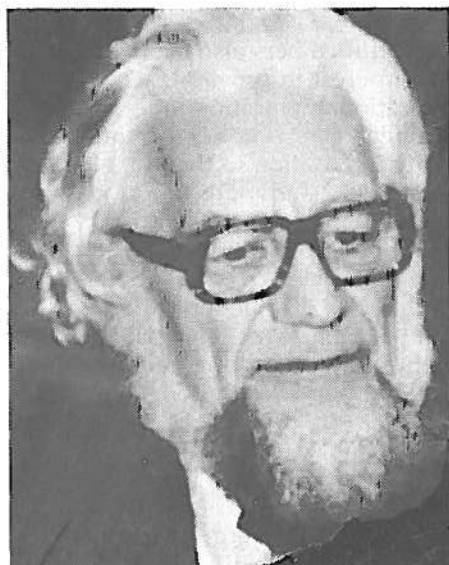


(Top) 1968 Staff members, (from left to right) J. Olthuis, A. DeGraaff, H. Hart, B. Zylstra and J. Hultink.

(Above) The late Robert Carvill, Communications Director for the AACs.

(Right) Chairman of the Board of Trustees ('61-'65) Renkes Kooistra.

(Far right) J. Olthuis congratulates graduates.



very good about the renewed efforts at unity.

They agree that the past year at the Institute has been an exciting year. The conferences on economics and theology were fine examples of the new role the ICS wants to play in the world of evangelical thought. The ICS now sees itself more as a participant in the discussions rather than a protagonist over against men and women from other traditions. As Jim says, "I would like to see us raise a clear and firm voice confessionally that shows commitment and empathy ... ecumenicity. That way you don't lose your identity by mixing with others."

This is how they talk in 1981.

"I would like to see us raise a clear and firm voice confessionally that shows commitment and empathy ... ecumenicity."

Twenty-five years is not a long time in the chronicles of mankind. But a lot of water has passed under the bridge once known as the ARSS, and sometimes it did not even act as a bridge. But what has characterized the Association during all those years is tremendous integrity and

honesty and, yes, a kind of naivete that belongs to those who believe strongly. Naivete is not always bad. Listen to Francois Guillaume talk about how it all got started:

"In the fall of 1956, Heini (Henry A. Venema) said - and Heini was really the instigator! - Heini said, 'What do you think, shouldn't we talk together about action on the university level? Can we do something in that field?'"

"Now," I said, "That is just what we have to do." And the AACCS in that sense has never looked back again.

1974 DECISION BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

At the time of the founding of the Institute there was a consensus that the Institute should work at the graduate level, that it would serve college graduates. However, in the early years undergraduate students, too, came and listened to the lectures.

In 1972, with six full-time scholars, the Institute organized its courses into two programs. One was a "preparatory professional program" leading to the certificate called Graduate of the Institute, which was expected to take two years of study after college graduation, and was equivalent to a master's degree. The other program, called the Associate of the Institute, was a longer and more demanding theoretical program and was conceived as the equivalent of the doctorate.

However, some staff and

"The Institute still suffers from shellshock after the battles of earlier years."

board members also expressed an interest in providing vocational education for applied service to the community in addition to theoretical academic study. For instance, the hope was cherished by some that the Institute might offer a master's degree program to prepare people for positions in psychotherapy, especially since virtually all the training in that field was thoroughly humanistic. During the academic year 1973-74 the faculty debated this issue vigorously. In February, 1974, the academic Board of Curators

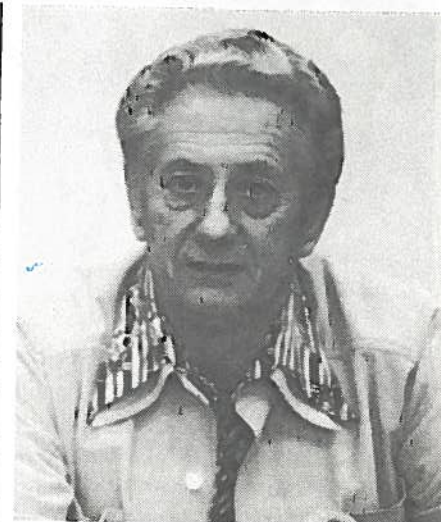
took its position, on the basis of faculty recommendations, not to go in the direction of this kind of vocational education.

When the recommendation of the Board of Curators was brought to the Board of Trustees in June, the Trustees endorsed it. The Trustees adopted this policy statement: "In all academic programs offered at the Institute, subject matter must be approached from the foundational theoretic vantage point and be undertaken in a biblically responsible manner." It was recognized that this decision identified the six academic departments as the working heart of the Institute, and that "...as one consequence, there will be no academic programs that include internships and professional training as part of the program requirements."



(Top) Institute Board of Trustees, 1967.
From left to right (standing), M. Koole, L. Tamminga, G. VandeZande, J. DeKoning, P. Jonker, C. Seerveld and M. VanderMeulen.
(Seated) J. Joosse, A. Venema and M. DeVries.

(Right) Peter Schouls
(Far right) Marinus Koole



Discovery lecture series

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In 1969 AACS launched an annual Discovery lecture series on issues in contemporary Christian living .

Year

Discovery 1969
"The Family"

Discovery II 1970
"The Institutional Church"

Discovery III 1971
"Christian Education in the 1970s"

Discovery IV 1972
"The Word of God Shall
Stand Forever"

Discovery V 1973
"Toward Maturity in Christ"

Discovery VI 1974
"Seeking the Abundant Life"

Discovery VII 1975
"Aesthetic Obedience and
Art for God's Sake"

Given in

15 locations
(Canada & U.S.)

22 locations
(Canada & U.S.)

22 locations

6 locations
video tapes to
10 centres

6 locations plus
video tapes

6 locations plus
video tapes

6 locations



Fellowship alfresco, (from left to right) Anne Tuininga, Gerald VandeZande, Helen Breems, Joyce Recker and Pete Steen.

As others see us

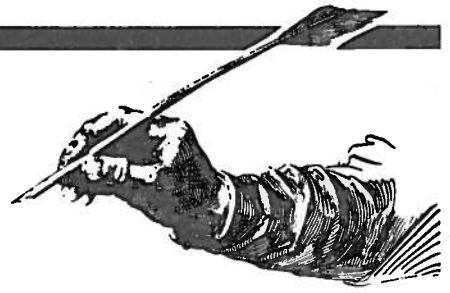
As I see it, the Institute is a bustling hive of aggressive Christian thinkers who are working hard at following faith into understanding. The task was taken on with courage, at the beginning, courage in the face of both opposition and lack of firm institutional support. Courage sometimes took the form of a certain Calvinistic stridency, maybe even a touch of hauteur, back then, but this has mellowed into a more good-humored and tolerant pursuit of its large goals; I am thankful for this because it makes the Institute people seem more ready to put up with some of us who are a little more ambivalent, a little less confident, in the struggle. By and large, I believe that the Christian community in Canada and the United States would be the poorer, and our life would be less interesting, without the Institute. So, I bless it and hope for its success.

Dr. Lewis Smedes
Professor of Theology and Ethics
Fuller Theological Seminary
Pasadena, California

The founding of the AACS was inevitable among the militant Calvinists who had adopted Canada as their homeland. Unaccustomed to being merely tolerated as a religious island in a secular sea, they desired the pulpit for the prophet, the lectern for the scholar, and a seat at the table where decisions are made, all in the name of a gospel as big and wide as the world.

At first they did not know that their acronym, ARSS, would evoke snickers and they argued much with fellow believers. Now they have international respect. And though not everyone agrees with their speakers, nearly all Christians are agreed that, if we did not have an AACS today, we would have to start one tomorrow.

Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, Editor
The Banner,
Grand Rapids, Michigan



The Coalition for Christian Outreach has struggled over the past ten years to faithfully communicate the Gospel to college and university students in our region of North America. Our labours have been enhanced and encouraged by a number of the senior members of the Institute. Some have taken part in many of our student conferences and some have assisted in the preparation of our staff to minister on campus.

We've used a number of texts written by ICS staff members and benefitted greatly from the continuing series of monographs. Though at times we debate an issue or two, we have nowhere found any group of men and women better attempting to articulate the meaning of the Gospel in every aspect and vocation of life.

Robert R. Long
Executive Director
Coalition for Christian Outreach
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Calvin College has an excellent working relationship with the Institute for Christian Studies. Some of our graduates attend the Institute for post-graduate academic work. The staff is of the highest calibre. We relate to the Institute in a number of ways. We hope that such relationships can continue in the future.

Anthony J. Diekema, President
Calvin College,
Grand Rapids, Michigan

If the A.A.C.S. has done but one thing for Christian education during the years of its existence, it has been, as the writer of Hebrews puts it, to help educational leaders and teachers "leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity."

I have not always agreed with the policies of the A.A.C.S., nor with the views of all of its spokesmen. But I am firmly convinced that Christian education would operate on a much more superficial

plane if it had not been for the contributions of the A.A.C.S. It is my prayer that soon the association may be able to go one step further and appoint a person to a chair in education. For, if there is one thing that our Christian schools need at this point, it is foundational thinking to help undergird and enlighten the praxis with which persons like myself are involved. Both the Reformed Christian community and the wider Evangelical community need the A.A.C.S. May God grant it a long and vigorous life of service to his Truth and to His Kingdom.

Harro Van Brummelen
Education Coordinator
Society of Christian Schools
Surrey, British Columbia

It is with great satisfaction that I join with you in marking twenty-five years of God's blessing on the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship. How the Lord has hammered at us and sandpapered us during this quarter century! In the world mission enterprise we who were once the guides and pioneers are learning to walk in servanthood. Likewise the AACCS has seen dramatic change and growth in many aspects of its life, but surely also in its relationship to world mission endeavors.

Today we join with you more than ever as we match deed with word, as God uses us together to establish His Kingdom to the last inch of the world.

Eugene Rubingh
Executive Secretary, Christian Reformed
Board of World Missions
Grand Rapids, Michigan

I have been perhaps one of those who both continued to value and appreciate the many fine and extremely necessary contributions of the AACCS-ICS to Christian scholarship, and, at the same time has continued in a friendly, loving manner to be very candid and occasionally severe in my criticism of the AACCS-

ICS.

I remember how this movement was greeted at first even by many of the so-called "strict conservative" element in Reformed circles as a God-send. For a variety of reasons, some not at all justifiable, most of these, if not all quickly turned against and fiercely opposed the AACCS-ICS. Much of the opposition and anger toward the AACCS-ICS could have been expected. One could expand upon this at considerable length. However, this would be quite improper especially since our brothers and sisters are painfully aware of these short-comings and are most eager to put the past behind and to engage in that kind of spiritual service in the area of Reformed Christian scholarship which will rightly merit the appreciative and loving support of all those who want to carry the battle against anti-Christ into the realm of scholarship.

Rev. B.J. Haan
President, Dordt College,
Sioux Center, Iowa

ICS and Inter Varsity have had a very fruitful relationship over the last few years. Personally, I have appreciated the friendship and ministry of Brian Walsh, Richard Middleton and Sue Bower as they have been involved with IV students and programmes. Brian in particular has given of himself "beyond the call of duty" as our staff representative at Erindale College, and the IV group there has never been healthier as a result. Our "Summer in the city" programmes, in which we have tried to help students to integrate their faith and their summer jobs, simply could not have happened without substantial work and sacrifice from these three. And not least, a number of IV students have taken Christian Perspectives courses, and their growth in faith and understanding has been exciting to watch.

John Bowen
Inter Varsity staff
Toronto, Ontario

During this quarter century, you at the Institute have addressed yourself to what is the most complex and difficult calling that confronts the Christian community: that of critically evaluating the theoretical foundations of modern culture from a Christian perspective. And with this you have also endeavored to formulate biblical alternatives to the secularized way of death that has become so dominant in the Western world. Those of us who are friends have been able to discern significant growth in work that the Institute carries on, and are grateful that during the last several years there has been an increasing ability to integrate your vision and activity with other Christian higher educational institutions and with the broader Reformed community. It is my prayer that you may continue to benefit from the direction and qualifying grace of our covenant God.

Joel Nederhood

The Back to God Hour
Chicago, Illinois

From its own beginning in 1969, Regent College has sensed much in common with the Institute for Christian Studies. From the first, it was obvious that both schools represented a fresh movement of the Spirit of God in the educational life of the Canadian church. Both schools from their inception began to reverse the "brain drain" to the U.S. And while Regent was frequently seen as bringing the best of British evangelical vitality to North America, the I.C.S. immediately became the centre for an emerging synthesis of the best Dutch and Reformed thought. Both schools were, and remain, interdisciplinary in focus. Both were, and remain, committed to historic faith as expressed in the great creeds of the church. Both were, and remain, movements of the coming generation, ready where necessary to break with the past while attempting to understand and appreciate the best of their heritage.

We celebrate with you these 25 years of God's goodness.

Carl E. Armerding,
Principal, Regent College,
Vancouver, British Columbia

The Association has added a vital component to the educational ferment of our time. Its value is not to be measured only in terms of established institutions, but in the broader context of ideas and ongoing debate.

As a fellow evangelical Christian concerned with greater Christian involvement in public life, I may not share all the specifics of the Association's program, but I am grateful for its presence and prodding. Rest assured that many Christians who are not in your ranks admire your tenacity and thank God that, in our confused age, another voice has declared unequivocally that the Lord's dominion extends over every area of human endeavor.

May the next 25 years provide a glowing chapter in your history and in your continuing contribution to the Kingdom of God.

Leslie K. Tarr
Christian Journalist & Professor of
communications, Central Baptist Seminary,
Toronto, Ontario

Dooyeweerd is definitely one of the Christian scholars of our age who must be tributed and studied for his insistence that the theology of revelation provides its own definitive categories for the interpretation of reality and life. Among evangelical philosophers there is vigorous debate over whether Dooyeweerd's indicated summary of these categories is adequate and consistent. But even this discussion stimulates creative investigation in a necessary biblical direction. Unless we provide a genuine alternative to Kantian, Marxian or other secular projections we needlessly impose alien principles on Christian theism and strip

it of intellectual power.

Carl F.H. Henry
Lecturer-at-Large
World Vision International
Arlington, Virginia

"The ICS, though it is smaller and younger than its famous Roman Catholic counterpart (the Pontifical Institute), has made a contribution in its own specialized field, that of Reformed Christian philosophy, which is comparable (to the Pontifical Institute) in terms of its importance to the intellectual community. After quite a short period of existence it is able to attract students from all over the world. Its faculty...are consulted by other scholars and their books are read with careful attention.

Oliver O'Donovan
Wycliffe College
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario

The Institute for Christian Studies is a remarkable body with high academic standards. When I have attended its public lectures, I have always found many students and professors from the University of Toronto present. I have talked to students educated at the Institute and have found that they have been made to study widely and have been educated in no narrow parochial way.

The work of the Institute has not been confined to theological and religious questions, but has been concerned with philosophy, the humanities and social theory. It has been concerned for students to understand the relation of Christianity to the complex modern questions in these fields. When the western world is threatened by so much nonsense from ideologies, serious thought about such questions is surely to be encouraged.

George Grant
Professor of Religious Studies, Dalhousie

University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

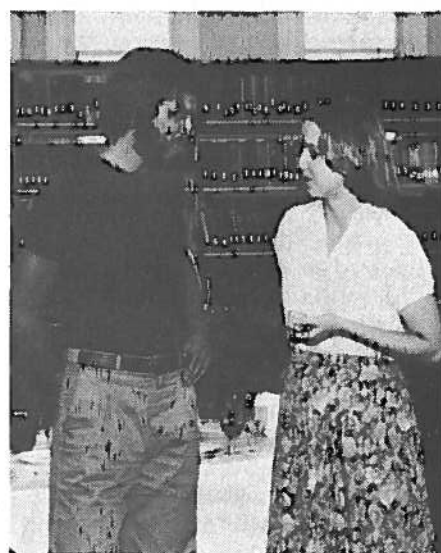
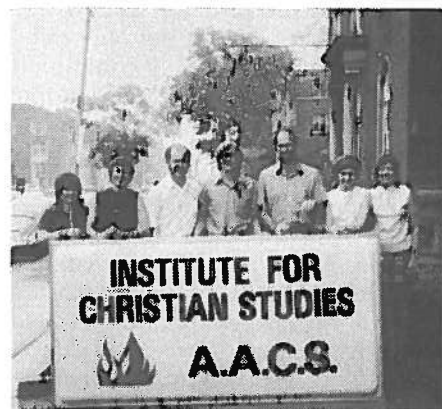
The Free University highly appreciates the work of the Institute; both institutions share basic ideas on Christian higher education. We have deep respect for the outstanding qualities of the programmes of the Institute. Members of different departments of the Free University are working on common projects with members of the Institute. At this time these projects concern mainly an exchange of scientists and information. There are also common translational projects, common courses, etc.

Professor Dr. H. Verheul
Rector Magnificus, Free University
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The Institute has sought to create in North America a Christian university of the kind which many, if not most of its staff have experienced in Holland, a university dedicated to the modern methods of research and, simultaneously, to a specific Christian perspective.

The professors teaching at the ICS have the appropriate academic qualifications and degrees. From my own experience with the Institute I have come to have the highest admiration for its academic programme and the high standards that are required. I regard the ICS as equivalent to a university.

Gregory Baum
Professor of Religious Studies, St.
Michael's College
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario



(Top) The new Institute building at 229 College Street.

(Above) Moving into the new building, 1972.

(Right) C.T. McIntire and student in the library.

The mission of the AACS Its spiritual identity and academic future

by Bernard Zylstra

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As we turn to a new phase in the life of the AACS, it is imperative that we reflect upon its confessional vision, its philosophical orientation, its goals for the future, and the means for their realization.

Confessional Vision

Every Christian confessional vision is based on the Apostles' Creed, the greatest of the Ecumenical Creeds formulated by the early church. They thus share a common confession concerning creation, fall, and redemption, which are preeminent teachings in Holy Writ. However, especially since the sixteenth-century Reformation, distinct confessional visions have come to the fore within western Christendom which differ fundamentally with respect to the meaning of creation, fall, and redemption, and the relationship between them. These differing visions have exerted a phenomenal impact on the way Christians live in the world since they shape one's life practice, spirituality, ethic, worldview, philosophical frame of reference, theological doctrines, and one's interpretation of Scripture.

We can identify three prominent confessional visions, with numerous variations and overlappings. They are the nature-grace vision, the anabaptist vision, and the reformed vision.

The nature-grace position holds that creation is only partly affected by the fall, and that redemption is in essence the reparation of a defect by grace. This position is often referred to as dualist. The anabaptist position holds that creation is so drastically affected by sin that it remains a fallen world, quite distinct from God's work in redemption which brings about an entirely new reality. This is often referred to as the two-kingdom vision. Our position, which we identify as a reformed position,

"The very fabric of nature is structured for the praise of God, in nature, history, culture, and society."

holds that sin brings about an apostate direction in creation as a whole, but that redemption overcomes sin so that grace restores creation to its original goal of glorifying its Maker. The distinctiveness of our vision consists in the all-embracing way in which creation, sin, and redemption are understood. This is evident from a reading of the AACS Educational Creed, found elsewhere in this issue. The main themes of this vision can be highlighted as follows.

Creation is the theatre of the glory of God. The relation between God and creation is an all-embracing covenant of love in which the Creator speaks His majestic Word, utters His ordinances, and in which creatures respond obediently by serving, praising and loving their Maker. Further, the words and decrees of the Maker not only call creation into being; they continue to be addressed to the creation and in that way constitute the basis for history, culture, and society. The cultural mandate is a creation mandate. The command to love our fellows in society is a creation decree. The very fabric of creation is structured for the praise of God, in nature, history, culture, and society. Everything is a creature, and every creature is a servant of the Creator. (Ps. 119:91)

Sin is dis-service, disobedience, inclination to hatred. It is the refusal of mankind, in Adam its covenantal head, to serve, love and

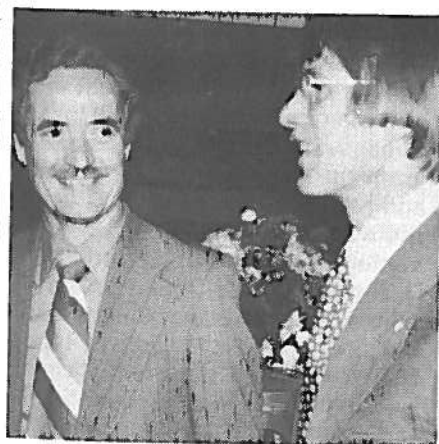
obey the Creator. Sin is all-embracing in that it pervasively affects the relation between God and mankind, between human beings, between the human self ("soul") and its faculties, and between humankind and nature. At the same time it should be kept carefully in mind that human sin cannot eliminate the divine creation ordinances. Because of His universal grace in Jesus Christ, God continues to address them to a fallen world, thus upholding it. Moreover, because of this preserving grace, sin cannot destroy the fabric of creation structured to serve its Maker. Here one should distinguish between created structure and sinful misdirection. Sin does not destroy the structure of creatures, including their created faculties. Instead, sin misdirects the functioning of these faculties toward apostasy, "exchanging the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal men or birds or animals or reptiles." (Rom. 1:23)

Redemption is the restoration and redirection of the entire creation to its original goal of praising its Maker. God the Father accomplishes this restoration through Christ, reconciling to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross (Col. 1:20), and through the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who spoke by the prophets, and Who regenerates the hearts of believers through the Word.

The need for a Christian philosophy

A Biblical confession is indispensable for Christian scholarship because it provides a basis for scriptural direction in both philosophy and science. Why then is philosophy so crucial for scholarship?

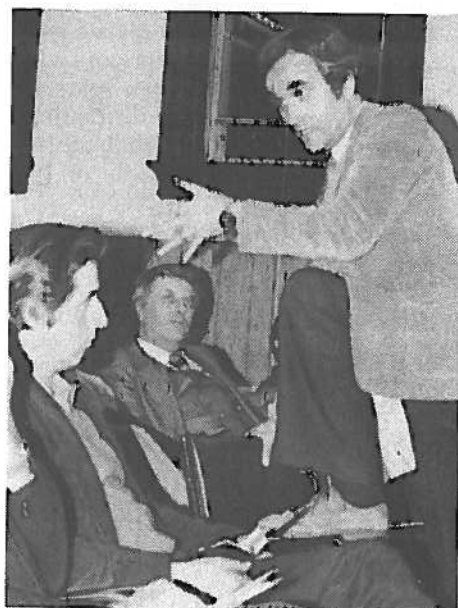
Philosophy provides the overarching framework for the entire scientific enterprise. We all know of



(Top) Entertaining the next generation at Didsbury (Alta.) Conference, 1978.

(Above) Executive Director Robert Vander Ven (left) with Morris Greidanus.

(Right) Bernard Zylstra makes a point during a recent evening course.



the many different disciplines and sciences: mathematics, logic, physics, biology, psychology, history, the social sciences, the artistic disciplines, economics, law, medicine, theology, etc. And within each science there are numerous specializations. It is quite typical of both the professor and the student in the modern university to be an expert in one narrow specialty without having insight into the entire discipline, let alone the whole of reality. Today it is impossible for one person to be an expert in all of the major sciences. There is simply too much for one mind to know. However, in order to be a good, balanced scholar it is necessary to have a systematic overview of reality as a whole. One must be able to see the forest in order to understand the meaning and context of a single tree.

Philosophy provides such a systematic overview. Philosophy can be compared with a map of the world, depicting the continents and oceans, the mountains and valleys, the cities and highways. The special sciences are focused, so to speak, on the continents and oceans, the cities and highways. Such a focus is necessary if we are to find our way in the world. It is immediately clear that without a map we'd lose the overview of things. But we need a dependable map. The trustworthiness of the map for scholars and scientists depends upon its being drawn up in the light of the Scriptures which reveal how all things hold together in Jesus Christ, how everything is to find its preeminence in Him. (Col. 1:17f.) But scholars are not to gaze at the Bible only; they are to focus on creation in its light.

The link with Amsterdam

In this light the link between the ICS and the Amsterdam school of Christian thought, developed

primarily at the Free University under the leadership of Dirk Vollenhoven and Herman Dooyeweerd, must be explained. This link has been a bone of contention since our beginning. The issue is really quite simple. The Free University was founded in 1880 by Abraham Kuyper as a centre for Christian scholarship, not only in theology but in principle in every discipline. With respect to philosophy and the foundations of the sciences, this aim was given concrete expression in the elaborate work of Vollenhoven, Dooyeweerd and their followers. Their efforts constitute a very significant breakthrough from the nature-grace position of accommodation to the reformed position of scripturally directed learning.

Because of this, H. Evan Runner advised his students at Calvin College in the fifties and sixties to complete their studies in Amsterdam. If he had not done that, the board of the AACSB would have had a hard time finding a staff for the ICS when it opened in 1967. Today the ICS continues to maintain its contacts with the Free University because a biblical approach to scholarship is still alive there. On a select basis, we will advise our philosophy students to complete their Ph.D. studies there, as Lambert Zuidervaat has just done. And we do so with our eyes open, recognizing that the Free University as a whole is caught up in the spiritual confusion of western Europe and being fully aware of the fact that the "Dooyeweerdian" school of thought there is fragmented and has lost a great deal of its initial vibrance and vitality.

The evangelical revival: our context
Our philosophical moorings are in Amsterdam. But our work-a-day world is Canada and the United States. That's an exciting world to

be in for Christian scholars today. Look what's happening on the spiritual-intellectual scene. The two most significant spiritual developments unfolding before our eyes in North America are the decline of liberal humanism - the public religion of our cultural leaders in this century - and the revival of evangelical Christianity. If this revival is to have lasting significance, it must make a constructive impact on North American culture and society. And that, in turn, will require intellectual backbone.

Ideally speaking, we need a full-fledged Christian university, an evangelical equivalent of Harvard. That, however, is not the aim of the ICS. Instead, the ICS, hopefully with other institutions, will support this revival by continuing its work in Christian philosophy and by expanding its work in the theoretical foundations of the sciences. That's where our strength lies. That's where our contribution can best be made, as we learned in the seventies.

Our academic program

The ICS will attempt to realize its aims by means of a variety of programs. For another ten years our main project will be the deepening and broadening of our graduate program leading to a Master of Philosophy degree. The basic curriculum requirements will remain as they are today: Biblical foundations, philosophical foundations and substantial work in the history and theory of the special field chosen, leading up to the writing of a Master's thesis. Today the fields in which we offer programs are these: Biblical studies and theology with James Olthuis and George Vander Velde, philosophy with Hendrik Hart and Albert Wolters, aesthetics with Calvin Seerveld, history with Thomas

McIntire, and political theory with Paul Marshall and Bernard Zylstra. The areas where we would like to expand our offerings are in economics, psychology, philosophy of education, philosophy of the social sciences, and the interface between science, technology, and society. For the next decade we will not consider expansion in a more practical, professional direction, like counselling. Theology is probably the first area that merits serious attention for a more practical academic program under AACSB sponsorship. Canada needs an interdenominational reformed theological seminary. But that is an agenda point for the 1990s.

Accreditation

Since most of our students are degree students, the issue of accreditation is of crucial significance. For students in philosophy, we now have the Ph.D. arrangement with the Free University. This arrangement may well be expanded in the near future. It is most encouraging that many of our graduates receive de facto recognition from other universities for studies completed at the ICS. But we will fight for a Charter from the Government of Ontario. And that battle will be for public recognition of the power "to grant the degrees of Master of Arts and Master of Philosophy." We do not want to surrender to the monopolistic conception of the Department of Colleges and Universities which holds that only public institutions can grant university-type degrees because they are really objective and scientific while Christian institutions like the ICS have to reveal their unscientific bias by a religious description of their degrees. Our battle for a Charter is significant not only for the ICS itself but for the sake of pluriform educational democracy in Canada as a whole.

Interinstitutional cooperation

This article has laid great stress on the basis of the ICS. That basis will remain with us. But our way of relating with Christians from other traditions will change. In the past, especially when we first got started, we pursued what one might call a confrontational model of communication. At times this is necessary, but in the future we will opt more fully for a dialogue model. As a matter of fact, in addition to our regular academic program, we will pursue a policy of making the ICS a forum for exchange among scholars adhering to a wide variety of confessional visions and denominational allegiances. The 1981 conferences on "Understanding an Authoritative Scripture," cosponsored with Fuller Seminary, and the one on "Rationality in the Calvinian Tradition," cosponsored by Calvin College and the Free University, can serve as examples. In the eighties we will also be establishing contact with the educational taskforces of mainline churches and the World Council of Churches in Geneva.

On a select basis we will make members of our staff available to other institutions and organizations. The best model for this is our involvement in the work of the Pittsburgh Coalition for Christian Outreach, one of the most effective evangelism efforts among students in sixty colleges and universities in the larger Pittsburgh area. The ICS is not directly engaged in evangelism but we count it a privilege that for several years now members of our staff have participated in training evangelists for the Coalition.

Taken together, all of these avenues of institutional cooperation show how the Lord has amazingly blessed the outreach of the AACSS.

In conclusion, there are two

"Our battle for a Charter is significant for the sake of pluriform educational democracy in Canada as a whole."

new institutions with which we hope to cooperate closely in the future. They are The King's College in Edmonton, established in 1979, and Redeemer College, which plans to open its doors in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1982. While independent, private undergraduate colleges are characteristic for the United States, in Canada they are exceptions - like Trinity Western College near Vancouver. Therefore the founding of these two Christian colleges is potentially very significant for the development of Christian higher education in Canada. There is a close spiritual and academic kinship between them and the ICS.

Cooperation of various kinds should be beneficial to each participant, with the assurance that each maintains its identity. Could it be that these three institutions should develop such mutually acceptable links of cooperation so that anno domini 2000 we in effect have a tripartite university operating in

Canada? Let's dream some dreams together, shall we?

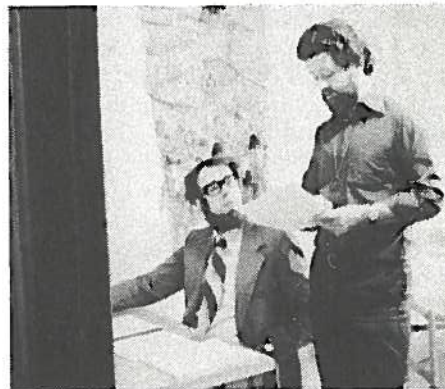
Thanks be to God

Celebration involves so much. It entails renewed reflection on one's identity. It entails exploring new horizons. But it begins with thanksgiving. The path of the AACSS has not been easy and light. There has been so much opposition, so much misunderstanding. We have made so many mistakes. And yet, the Lord has paved our path. We are surprised with joy about the countless ways He has blessed us. We thank our God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His endless faithfulness.

We also thank His people - the small band that had the vision to begin this venture and the thousands who have strengthened us, supported us. Thanks be to God, thanks be to His people, both of whom we desire to serve, who have made our mission possible.



Sander Griffioen (l.) and Massimo Rubboli.



Al Wolters (l.) and Hendrik Hart.

Institute students and graduates

by Robert VanderVennen

24

Who are Institute students? Where do they come from and where do they go?

It is unusually hard to answer the question: who is an Institute student or former Institute student. The reason lies in how the Institute has chosen to serve people, including the informal way it served in its early years. The Institute has always wanted to serve students in any way it could. It was willing to reach out to people who wouldn't even be thinking of themselves as students and let them tune in to instruction in casual, informal ways, as well as in sustained concentrated study. In this broadest sense (the sense of people having learned from the Institute) the Institute's past and present students number in the thousands.

Who is a Student?

The more common way of identifying a student, though, is to say that a student is a person who has come to study at school for a period of weeks to years and has taken at least one course and maybe finished a degree program. That is the way we will use the term "student" here, thus not including those who have come to the Institute for a summer course or an evening course.

In the strict sense the Institute has had a total of around 300 students since it started regular classes in Toronto in 1968. These students have been largely graduate students, that is, they have already earned a bachelor's degree from a college or university. In this narrow sense the Institute has enrolled between 25 and 100 students each year during most of the thirteen years of its existence.

Student Backgrounds

These students have come from a very wide range of backgrounds

nationally, religiously, educationally, and vocationally. Over the years about half of them have come from the Christian Reformed ecclesiastical background which gave birth to the AACCS and the Institute. The others form a heterogeneous half. A sizeable number have come as a result of the teaching ministry of Peter Steen in western Pennsylvania. Others were American and Canadian evangelical Christians who were looking for a way of bringing their faith to bear on education and life that was different from what they found in their own church tradition. Most surprising of all was the overseas migration to the Institute. Almost at once came a small covey of devout Lebanese political radicals, one of whom later became a member of the delegation to the United Nations of an Arab state. Then there were groups of students from Cyprus, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, England, Jamaica and South Africa, plus individual students from India, Malaysia, Sweden and The Netherlands.

It is not surprising that these students fan out in many directions after they finish their study at the Institute. Adding to the diversity of students is the fact that the Institute is not a training school to prepare students for certain particular jobs, as is a seminary or medical school. In fact, the Institute wants to prepare people to go out into all areas of society with the message that Christ redeems all of life.

Preparing to teach at colleges

The closest the Institute comes to preparing people to take specific jobs is to prepare them for college teaching and for research. Even there the Institute does not finish the job by itself. Institute alumni go to a university for a doctor's degree before taking up college or university teaching. Recently the Institute has

worked out a cooperative program for the doctorate with the Free University of Amsterdam which permits a student to take part of the doctoral study at the Institute. Even though doctoral study takes many years to complete, a number of Institute alumni are already engaged in college teaching, and a number of others are well along in doctoral programs in preparation for teaching in higher education. Among those who have taught or are committed to teach in colleges and universities are:

Dr. Barbara Carvill, Calvin College (German)
 Dr. John Cooper, Calvin College (philosophy)
 Dr. Justin Cooper, Redeemer College (political science)
 Dr. Robert Eells, Rockmont College (political science)
 Mr. Jasper Lesage, Calvin College (economics)
 Dr. Per Ake Myrin, Sweden (sciences)
 Dr. Theodore Plantinga, Calvin College/Redeemer College (philosophy)
 Dr. Bert Polman, Ontario Bible College (music)
 Dr. Massimo Rubboli, Perugia, Italy (philosophy)
 Dr. Dirk van den Berg, University of the Orange Free State, South Africa (art history)
 Dr. Henry Vander Goot, Calvin College (theology)
 Mr. Ray Van Leeuwen, Calvin Theological Seminary (Old Testament)
 Dr. Lambert Zuidervaart, The King's College (aesthetics and philosophy)
 Mr. James Bailey, Lancaster College, Virginia (adult education)
 Ms. Kuschke, Potchefstroom University, South Africa (German)
 Dr. Paul Marshall, York University and the Institute for Christian Studies (political science)

Other teachers

Many other Institute alumni have gone into teaching at the high school or elementary school level. These include:

John Bajema, Marlin Breems, Calvin Davies, Lowell Hagan, Dick Halverson, Laura Bradley Hoekstra, John Hull, Donald James, Betsy Jones, David Judd, Carol Kelley, Jenny Koole, Robert Malarkey, Deborah Steele Marshall, Miki Beldman McNally, Duane Nieuwsma, Robert Proper, Joe Reitsma, Eric Schilperoort, Arvilla Sipma, Magdalena Steyn, Richard Vanderkloet, Donald Vander Klok, Robert Vander Plaats, Harry Westerhof, Carol Wilson, John Wilson, Philip Travis, Adrian Guldemon, Peter Doan.

Staff of the Curriculum Development Centre has included the following people who have studied at the Institute: Tom Malcolm, Harry Fernhout, Donald Sinnema, Anne Tuininga and Peter Enneson.

Alumni as Pastors

Several Institute alumni have attended seminary and have entered the church ministry. Among those who have entered the Christian Reformed Church are Carl Bruxvoort, Neil de Koning, Gilbert Kamps, John Keizer, William Tuininga and Denis Van Der Wekken. Others who are ordained ministers are James Minturn, David Selvig and Herbert Myers. Koichiro Takariki and Masuo Miyasaki are ministers in Japan.

Social and political witness

A large number of former Institute students are engaged in Christian ministries in the general area of social and political witness. Several are agents for the Christian Labour Association of Canada: John Adema, Ed Breems, Fred Heerema, John Kamphof, Adrian Vanden Berg, Christy Thies Carlson

"One must be able to see the forest in order to see the meaning and context of a single tree."

and John Hiemstra work for the Committee for Justice and Liberty Foundation in Canada. Joyce Ribbens Campbell works for U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield and the Association for Public Justice. A number of alumni work in community development, including urban housing. Some are lawyers. Others are psychotherapists, social workers and overseas workers for world relief.

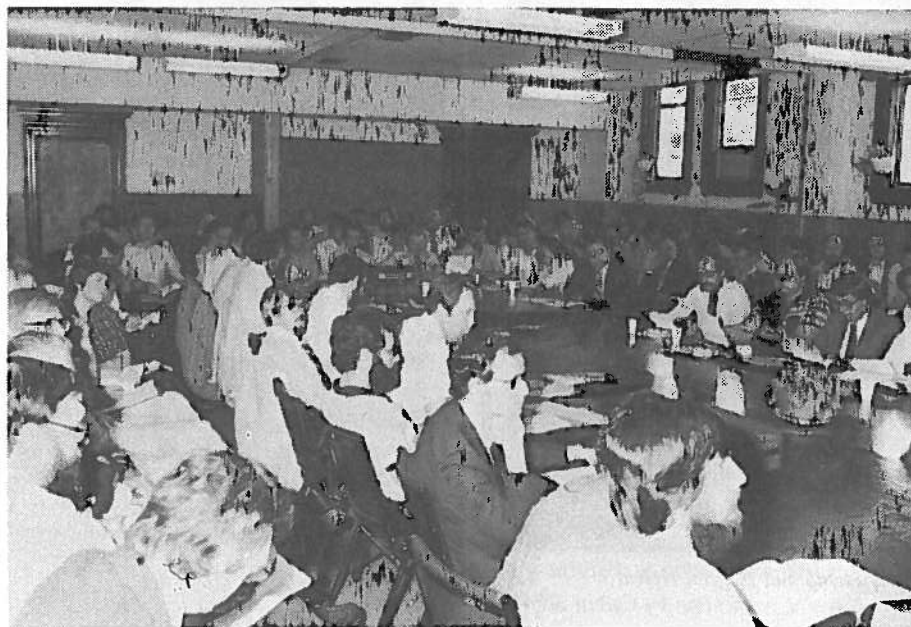
Arts, business and other work

Several former students are active in the arts. They include Henk Melles and Shoshannah Benmosché in the visual arts, Marj Snyder and Nadia Khouly in vocal music, Susan Harper in literature and Marilyn Bouma in drama.

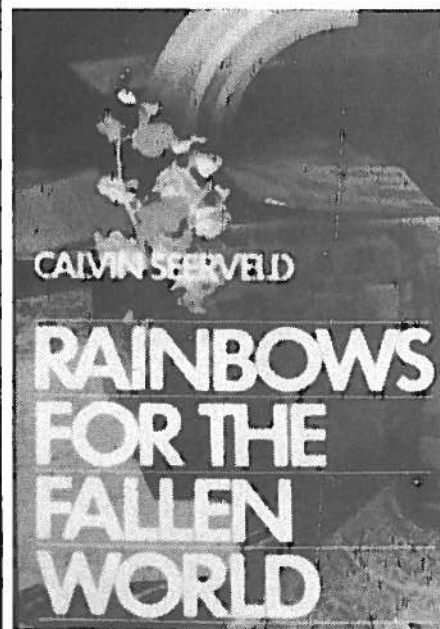
Many former students, too many to identify along with their kind of work, are engaged in business activity.

The list of occupations goes on almost without limit: health services, writing and editing, media communications, library work, child care, forestry, university student ministries, and the work of homemaker.

Nearly half of the students who have spent a year or more at the Institute are still completing their advanced and professional education. Institute graduates are just now beginning in significant numbers to take their places in society and to make their contributions. We pray that their service will be blessed and be a blessing to many.



A recent Scripture Conference at 229 College Street.



(Top) Students and staff on retreat.
(Above) A recent publication by Calvin Seerveld.



At conferences and other gatherings there is always much interest in the wide choice of AACIS/Institute publications.

Avenues of service

by Robert VanderVennen

The AACS and Institute for Christian Studies were called into existence to give Christian educational leadership. The founders and members asked for the help of educated people in thinking about important issues which confront us in an increasingly secular and sophisticated world. They looked to the AACS and Institute for help in holding fast to the faith and in using it to cope with the problems of today. Its staff was called on to make tools from materials proven in the past, and to help people learn how to use them.

Research and teaching

The means for doing this, the avenues for service, are many but are focused all in the phrase "research and teaching." The research—the reflective serious thinking—is needed in order to have something to teach, just as modern technological industries have research departments to produce new instruments.

The research is done by seven or eight professors whose assignment includes study and thinking which results in teaching, writing and speaking. They are joined by advanced students who make their own contributions as they learn to do the same work. Other scholars contribute by means of written material, lectures and participation in conferences. The best scholarship needs a community of people who can work together by stimulating and correcting each other. The students later multiply the effect of the research and teaching as they take positions of service.

The research leads to books like Calvin Seerveld's *Rainbows for the Fallen World* and James Olthuis' *I Pledge You My Troth*. The work of other scholars who join us from time to time results in books like Goudzwaard's *Capitalism and Progress*, and M.D. Stafleu's *Time*

"May the vision of childlike obedience to our King, this humble trust in His infallible Word, this loyal concern for God's people, this sacrificial love for the Master's cause ever be the moving forces of this Institute."

and Again, both of which arose from lectures given at the Institute. Many articles in scholarly journals and popular magazines also result from Institute research.

Teaching and learning

The teaching work of the Institute is both formal and informal. The center of the curriculum is the Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) degree which requires two to three years of full-time study after the student has received the bachelor's degree from a college or university. After one year (eight months) of study a student can receive the Certificate in Christian Studies. The Ph.D., offered through a cooperative program with the Free University of Amsterdam, can follow the master's degree after another three or more years of study.

But there are also many informal ways of learning at the Institute, ways which require less time commitment and are correspondingly less thorough. There is part-time study, study at a three-week January Interim course, stopping in for a special lecture or conference. Popular courses for the general public are offered in Toronto and to a lesser extent in other cities.

Conferences

Increasingly important are academic conferences, both at the Institute and at other places, where Institute professors and students speak and learn in close and intense relation with others. The Institute is taking greater initiative in calling together people to work at the frontiers of Christian perspective in various areas of life and learning. The aim is to develop more meaningful Christian insight into the world as God's creation redeemed by Christ, and to shape that insight so it can guide our lives.

Conferences have been part of the vital breath of AACS since the earliest days. The student conferences began in 1959, with the speeches published as the "Christian Perspectives" series in the 1960s, a series which had a remarkable influence. Today there are few conferences specifically for students, with the pattern now being the academic conferences described above plus the family conferences held annually for the general public in southern Ontario, Alberta, northern and southern B.C. and eastern U.S.

Publications

Besides publication of research results in books and periodicals, the Institute and AACS sponsor the quarterly publication of an informal academic paper called *Anakainosis* (the Greek work for "renewal" used in Romans 12:2), and a subscription series of academic papers mostly produced in relation to the Institute. The AACS helps to find publishers for certain academic books, and in some cases produces and sells collections of papers on a certain theme. Cassette tape recordings of a selected number of lectures, including conference speeches, are distributed.

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Student Campus Ministry

Reaching out to students not studying at the Institute is a recent important avenue of service. Started by Tom Malcolm, developed by Brian Walsh and staffed by Institute students and alumni is a program of teaching Christian Perspective courses at university campuses. This is done with the cooperation of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and often with support of church ministries on campus. A teaching manual for a basic course has been developed for use by others in their own situations. The Institute has provided services and materials for the campus ministries of the Coalition for Christian Outreach and of Dr. Peter Steen. There is also a substantial amount of personal consultation and help given to students by means of letters, phone calls and visits of students to the Institute.

Service to churches

Churches are served by AACCS and the Institute in direct as well as indirect ways. Congregations are offered resources for student members and materials for church study and discussion groups. Staff members frequently preach in churches and serve on local and denomination-wide committees. People who receive benefit from AACCS/ICS services are helped also in their service to their church.

Service to schools and action groups

Service to schools comes in a direct way through Institute education of people who become teachers and administrators. Staff members serve on school boards and on school committees. AACCS has helped with the preparation of school curriculum materials and in-service teacher development through partial support of the Curriculum Development Centre.

Service to Christian action

organizations takes place through the frequent attendance of staff members of social and political action groups at lectures and courses at the Institute and through the hiring of Institute alumni to staff positions.

The services of the AACCS and the Institute range from academic scholarship, invisible as the rudder of a ship, to practical help in the lives of God's common people. Though marred by sin, this work has brought much blessing to the Christian community at large.

AACCS/Institute programs and services

Institute resident study

Majors in theology, philosophy, history, aesthetics, and political theory

Degrees: Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) with the Free University of Amsterdam

Certificate in Christian Studies
January Interim courses

Part-time study

Academic conferences

Academic journal articles

Academic papers distribution

Anakainosis (quarterly journal)

Academic research

Book publications

Academic lectures for the public

Popular lectures

Courses for the general public

Cassette tape distribution

Pastors Workshops

Training campus workers

Counseling college and university students

Teaching Christian Perspective courses

Helping train campus workers

Bookselling service

Support for Curriculum Development Centre

Perspective newsletter

Popular articles

Financial stewardship planning

Chairmen of the AACCS Board of Trustees in Its First 25 Years

1956 Péter Speelman

1957-61 Francois Guillaume

1961-65 Remkes Kooistra

1965-68 Alvin Venema

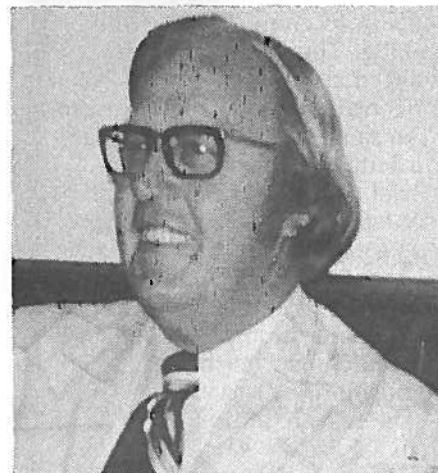
1968-71 James Joosse

1971-73 Marinus Kooole

1973-74 Paul Schrotenboer

1974-78 Alvin Venema

1978-present James Joosse



(Top) Herman Praamsma and Marinus Kooole

(Above) Alvin Venema

Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship

29

Preamble

In humble awareness of our dependence upon the Triune God, Who called all things into being to His own glory and proclaimed to men, after they had transgressed His Law, His forgiving love, which was revealed to us fully in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, we do, out of gratitude for His undeserved favour and in conformity with His requirement that we consecrate ourselves and all things to Him, establish in accordance with the principles and provisions herein set forth, an association for the promotion scripturally directed higher learning. To this end we beseech of Him that He graciously grant us both now and in the future men equipped for our task with special gifts of heart and mind together with the means to enable them to do this work, and that He always bless our association to His honour and to the salvation of His people, particularly in Canada and the United States of America, in order that they may be a blessing to both lands and all their inhabitants.

Purpose

The purpose of the association shall be to undertake or promote whatever activities it shall deem conducive to the development of scripturally directed learning and scholarly enterprise, and particularly to establish, control and develop a Christian university, and in these ways to equip men and women to bring the Word of God in all its power to bear upon the whole of life.

Basis

The supreme standard of the association shall be the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, here confessed to be the Word of God in the sense of the historic creeds of the Protestant Reformation.

Educational Creed

Believing that Scripture reveals certain basic principles intensely relevant to education, we confess:

Life. That human life in its entirety is religion. Consequently, scholarly study unfolds itself as service either of the one true God or of an idol.

Scripture. That Scripture, the Word of God written, in instructing us of God, ourselves and the structure of creation, is that integral and active divine Word of Power by which God, through His Spirit, attaches us to and enlightens us in the Truth, which is Christ.

Christ. That the Christ of the Scriptures, the Word of God incarnate, is the Redeemer and Renewer of our life in its entirety and therefore also of our theoretical thought.

Reality. That the essence or heart of all created reality is the covenantal communion of man with God in Christ.

Knowledge. That true knowledge is made possible by true religion and arises from the knowing activity of the human heart enlightened through the Word of God by the Holy Spirit. Thus religion plays its decisive ordering role in the understanding of our everyday experience and our theoretical pursuits.

Scholarship. (a) That the diligent pursuit of theoretical thought in a community of scholars is essential to the obedient and thankful response of God's people to the cultural mandate. The task of the scholar is to give a scientific account of the structure of creation and thereby to promote a more effective ordering of the everyday experience of the entire community. (b) That because of God's gracious preservation of creation after the fall, men who reject the Word of God as the ordering principle of life provide many valuable insights into the common structure of reality: nevertheless, the central religious antithesis of direction in life remains. We therefore reject the possibility of the synthesis of scripturally directed thought with any other system of thought.

Academic freedom. That scholarly pursuits are to be undertaken in the God-given freedom of a complete and voluntary submission to the Word of God and the divine laws that govern human life. The responsible freedom of the scholar must be protected against any constraint or domination of church, state, industry or other societal structure.

Summary. That all scholarship pursued in faithful obedience to the divine mandate will heed the normative direction of God's Word, will acknowledge His Law to which creation in all its spheres is subject, and will bow before Christ's Kingship over all scientific work.

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Dear God,

■ We know You are utterly faithful to your people
one generation after another,
in spite of our history of bluster, ineptness, and parochial pride.
We are thankful
that the earthly life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
your Son, our Lord,
is able to cover the repetitive misery of our sin;
and we ask,
please teach us by your Holy Spirit what it means
to become mature, seasoned, forgiven believers,
submissive to your Will,
wise to the world
and compassionate toward our neighbours.

■ Because we continue to be so weak
and have the heart to cry out for your Grace,
we believe You may be able to use us in the world
with our life, perspective, and scholarship sensitive to your Gospel,
steeped in the Reformed tradition,
and watching for new ways
to tell the old, old story of your call to a redeeming lordship
in every bit of society, culture, and historical leadership.

■ Some of us are too young to know
the history of the AACCS firsthand, dear Lord.
Some of us are too old to see
what shall happen in the next 25 years, O faithful One.
Some of us are in the middle.
Please give all of us a sense of one, committed task
to serve You with Holy Spirit-filled education,
in times that are grim,
sensitive to the fact that the Institute for Christian Studies is very fragile,
but most real,
your gift in Canada to North America and elsewhere,
a trust that is pliable in our hands while we live.

■ Bear us up gently now, Almighty Father in heaven,
and speed us with a good harvest upon our labours
until You come back to finish off
making all things, even your enemies, into a footstool of praise.

■ Hear our prayer, we plead, in the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

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