

Upcoming Events...

New Principal

You are warmly invited to attend the Induction service of Dr. Murray Capill as Principal of the Reformed Theological College.



The service will be held on **Friday, February 15, at 7.30 pm** at the College.

The speaker will be Dr. Michael Raiter, Principal of the Bible College of Victoria.

We would really appreciate your presence as you join us in encouraging the whole College community and particularly Murray as he commences his new task. It is also a wonderful occasion for thanksgiving and praise to the Lord who has provided abundantly for the College's needs.

Fan the Flame 2008



Saturday 8th - Monday 10th March
A conference to raise up Gospel Leaders

Are you...

- considering life as a pastor, preacher, missionary, church leader or evangelist?
- interested in training for youth work, pastoral care or some other ministry?
- wondering what it means to be "called to the ministry"?
- interested in some Bible college study for personal growth?
- involved in an apprenticeship or internship and want to go further?

*For enquiries & applications contact the College office or go to our website:
rtc.vic.edu.au/rtc_evn_FanTheFlame.php*

preaching *Hebrews* ...a better way

RTC Preaching Workshop
25 & 26 September 2008

Newsletter

Summer 2008

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Reformed Theological College

Newsletter

Summer 2008

Principal Retires

On Thursday 22 November a retirement dinner was held in honour of outgoing RTC Principal, Henk DeWaard. The function was attended by over a hundred people. Henk has been at the helm of the College for the past eleven years. He has been a lecturer for 27 years. His years as Principal were as eventful as they were productive. It was under his leadership that the RTC moved to its new location at the end of 1999. Henk also continued to build strong ties with the Australian College of Theology. Over the years more and more RTC courses were accredited. Our students are now also eligible for FEE Help.

As Principal, Henk also made sure that the RTC always had a window on the world. For twelve years he served on the executive of the Reformed Ecumenical Council, a worldwide body of Reformed churches. Henk made it his business to visit some of the poorest and most underprivileged of these churches both in Africa and Asia. He also visited Indonesian churches when as a Christian minority they were facing intense persecution. When many Western Christians would have preferred safer travel destinations, Henk made it a point to encourage his Indonesian brethren. As the RTC lecturer in Missions his classes were far from theoretical. Not only did he spend a decade on the field in the seventies, his frequent



visits to assist Third World churches kept him constantly up to date with new developments and challenges.

The Retirement Dinner provided a panorama of Henk's life and ministry. Rev. Martin Geluk reminisced on their student days back in the early sixties. A message from Rev. Fred Vanderbom reminded the gathering of Henk's significant contribution to the life of our churches for more than four decades. When it came to ecumenical relations, the

message read that "we have recognised and gained from the grace and wisdom, wide contacts, passion and deep commitment that you have in this area." The point was brought home forcefully by the Rev. Robby Moningka, pastor of the Indonesian CRCA congregation in Sydney. He thanked Henk for his long and fruitful ministry to Indonesian churches both at home and abroad. He expressed the desire that retirement would open up many more opportunities for the DeWaards to travel to Indonesia!

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Further reflections came from the Rev. Alastair McEwen, Henk's long-time colleague at the RTC. With his usual impish sense of humour he commended Henk for his organisational skills, sense of child-like wonder at God's creation, energetic approach to his work, humble and pastoral attitude, and multi-lingual abilities (in Dutch, Indonesian and several other languages).

A highlight of the evening came when members of the DeWaard family rose to speak. Daughters Leanne and Catherine and wife Ria spoke in warm and personal ways of Henk as a family man. As the father of four daughters, it was claimed that Henk learned many of his pastoral and negotiating skills at home! Ria reminded him of the three stages of their married life – in the ministry, on the mission field and at the RTC. The fourth stage would be retirement. She was looking forward to this new phase. Later Rev. Bill Bosker, chairman of the RTC Board, observed that for her retirement might mean "half as much money and twice as much husband." He wished them well as their journey would now allow for a change of pace and give them more time together.

Craig van Echten spoke on behalf of the students and gave a glimpse of Henk's skills in the classroom. There too his approach was always patient and pastoral, also when students asked the hard questions. Colleague Bill Berends gave a power-point presentation, allowing the pictures to speak for themselves. The dinner guests were treated to a

smorgasbord of photos depicting Henk's life. Scenes of Henk in Jerusalem and floating in the Dead Sea were included in the selection. The presentation gave in pictures what the earlier speeches had given in words.

Rev. Bill Bosker presented the official retirement gift. It was the traditional gold watch – very appropriate for a man as punctual as Henk. As he expressed thanks for the gift Henk took the opportunity to reflect back on his life. From his humble beginnings in a poor migrant family there was little indication that it would turn out as it did. He could only say that it was scripted by the Lord himself. Those present would agree that the ministry, mission and leadership opportunities that have come Henk's way were not only avenues of service but in themselves also true gifts of God. Very fittingly the evening was concluded with the singing of the hymn To God be the Glory!

After such a rousing farewell evening Henk was back at his desk early the next morning. It was the day of his last board meeting, but may well be indicative of things to come. Henk's retirement will come gradually. This year he will still be on .6 of a position at the RTC. This will not only give the board valuable time to find a replacement, but it will also help Murray Capill ease into his position as the new Principal. Henk's administrative skills will still be invaluable for the RTC during this period of transition. Lord willing, Murray will be installed as Principal on 15 February.

November Board Meeting

- » Mr Greg Tenni was thanked for many years of faithful service as the Queensland representative.
- » Dr Jo Lammersma was welcomed as the new director for South Australia.
- » Dr Henk DeWaard delivered his final Principal's report.
- » The Treasurer expressed concern at the deficit for the current financial year due to loss of membership and unforeseen costs. These were, however, largely balanced by gifts and donations so that the overall budget result is expected to be in small deficit.
- » The Business Manager reported that the RTC gift fund is working well as a facility for tax deductible contributions. This will enable the board to close down the library and building funds.
- » Representatives will again organise faculty visits for their states/regions in 2008.
- » The board discussed the future directions paper prepared by Dr Murray Capill and approved by faculty. The results of this discussion will be published in the near future.

Vox Reformata

The 2007 edition of the RTC's journal Vox Reformata is now available. This issue has picked up on the theme of last September's Preaching Conference – "**Preaching the Kingdom.**"

The lead articles are "*Kingdom Ethics*" (Bill Berends), "*The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament*" (Alastair McEwen) and "*The Kingdom of God in the Ministry of Jesus*" (Steve Voorwinde).

Copies are available from the College at \$15.00 each. An index of all the articles published in Vox can be viewed on the RTC website.

Graduation 2007



Rev Robert Benn

The recent graduation was once again a grand occasion. It was our pleasure to have as the guest speaker the Rev. Robert Benn, the Moderator General of the Presbyterian Church in Australia. The Rev. Benn addressed the graduating class on "The Key to Successful Ministry." Based on the account of Caleb in the Old Testament his address focussed on the need for perseverance in ministry. With many practical anecdotes he illustrated what it meant to be wholehearted in serving the Lord.

The ministries on which our new graduates are embarking are again proving to be varied and wide-ranging. This is indicated by the awards that were presented:

The Graduate Diploma in Bible and Ministry was awarded to Stuart Martin who had completed his studies in 2006. Stuart immediately put his theological education to good use. At the beginning of the 2007 school year he was appointed to the position of chaplain at Finley High School in NSW. As a qualified teacher he is ideally suited to this position and enjoys this new and challenging work.

The double degree of Bachelor of Theology/Bachelor of Ministry was earned by Colin Grant and Simon van der Wel. Colin completed the last years of his RTC studies on a part-time basis, combining study with a vicariate and pastoral work in the local Geelong CRCA churches. He has been called to be the pastor in Wollongong, NSW. Simon graduated in absentia, as he is coming to end of his vicariate in the nearby CRCA in Sutherland.

The Bachelor of Theology/Advanced Diploma of Ministry were the qualifications awarded in absentia to Jonathan Deenick. In 2007 Jonathan served his vicariate in Perth.

The Bachelor of Theology was awarded to Graeme Hart who has been working with the Geelong Reformed Presbyterian Church. Graeme was recently nominated to a full-time ministry position in that congregation. A fellow-graduate was Brendan Short who is preparing to serve the Lord on the mission field in the African nation of Niger. Coming August, Brendan and his family plan to move to France where they will undertake language studies in both French and Arabic.

Graduating with the Diploma of Theology were Rosalind Myer, Judith Popping and Arthur Wight. All three are already using their qualifications in the service of the local church. A valedictorian from the diploma program was Warrick Oates. Warrick is returning to Derby WA where he will be working among Aboriginal people.

The one-year Certificate Courses have been taught on Tuesday evenings over the past two years. Introduced in 2006 these courses proved immediately popular with Christians in the Geelong area. Students can simply audit these courses or even enrol in isolated subjects of their choice. However, they are not eligible to graduate unless they have completed at least four subjects for credit. This year thirteen students received their certificates.

The Certificate in Christian Studies was completed by Fiona Zuccolin, while Cor van Loon was awarded the Certificate in Mission and Evangelism. Cor has recently been putting his new knowledge into practice, travelling to Myanmar and leading Bible studies in that troubled land.

The Certificate in Theology was awarded to Derek Davey, Rachel Stasse, Sarah Weber and Philip Wilson.

The most sought after award in the 2007 evening program was the Certificate in Pastoral Ministry. This qualification was earned by Chris de Hoog, Anne Ekkel, Kate Murphy, Antonio Ramos, Mark Ramsay, Hayden Shell and Lorna Tocknell. Some of the members of this class were able to relate their studies to extensive pastoral experience. Anne and Hayden, for example, have long had active ministries with senior citizens in the local community.

Not only is graduation the official conclusion to the College year, in certain respects it is the climax as well. It is with gratitude to the Lord that the RTC community can look back on a year that was richly blessed. Day and evening courses, special events, life in the RTC residence at Barkley Hall, the achievements of our students, faithful support from churches and individuals are all causes for thanksgiving to our generous God. Once again He has looked after us in detailed and surprising ways.



The DeWaards with Rev Bill Bosker



The Class of 2007

