

The Commons

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DNW Notes from

President Dennis N. Voskuil

Early this May, a few days before commencement, Betty and I hosted a dinner celebration for the 2005 graduates of Western Theological Seminary. We have hosted such an event each May since my appointment as president and, certainly with forty-eight graduates this year, our home spilled over with students and spouses who remembered and reflected upon the time together at WTS. In a sort of practice session for the commencement ceremonies, each graduate stepped forward to receive a congratulatory handshake and a gift to remind them of the seminary.

The seminary is a community of faith and learning. It is an environment in which lifelong friendships are established among students, faculty and staff in the context of study, worship, play and prayer. I know that some of my most cherished friendships were developed during my days as a WTS student.

As our graduates leave our community to serve as leaders of the church, it is important for them to know that they do not go alone—that their classmates, the faculty, and the staff of WTS go with them into their ministries. Ministry today is always challenging and often lonely; it cannot be sustained without God's grace and the encouragement and support of our friends.

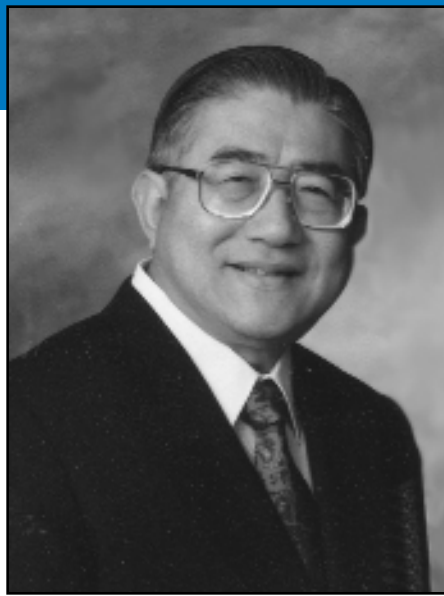
It is my hope and expectation that the relationships which our students develop during their years at Western Seminary help to sustain them throughout their lives.

Grace and peace, in Christ,

Dennis

Distinguished Alumni of 2005

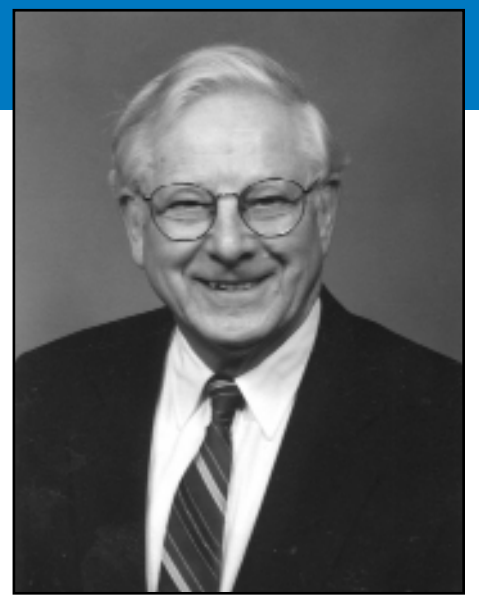
Alumni Profiles



Moody B. Yap '67

by the Rev. Karl Overbeek '66

Western Theological Seminary's Alumni/ae Council announces the 2005 Distinguished Alumni Award winners: the Rev. Dr. Moody Yap and the Rev. Dr. Bert Van Soest.



Bert Van Soest '46

by Linda Tintle (daughter)

As you get a bit older and have the perspective of a lengthy past, it's easier to track important things and people in your life. Moody Yap is such a person to me.

My first contact with Moody was during seminary days. First impressions matter! In Moody's case what I saw and experienced from the start remained the same after years of friendship. He's a gentleman. Love and grace flow from the core of his being. He thoroughly understands Jesus' words that the last shall be first, because he is always inquiring about the wellbeing of others. Then again, the same can be said of his dear wife, Jean.

Most of all, one never had to wonder where he was in his relationship with God. The light of Christ consistently shines through his smile and his conversations about his Call and

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Evangelistic Ministry in Metro-Detroit 1970-77. Team of Ministers: Ronald Van Der Werff, Frederick Kruithof, Moody Yap, Albert Vander Meer, and Wayne Joosse (not pictured)

Three words attempt to summarize my father's ministry: **people, perseverance, and providence.**

Bert Van Soest's Christian concern for people resulted in a ministry that touched the lives of thousands. Once when Bert and my mother, Barbara, were hosting a trip to the Holy Lands, they suddenly heard a call of "Hey, Bert!" echoing through the cave of the alleged place of Jesus' birth. Someone knew Bert—even on the other side of the world!

Helen is another example of Bert's pastoral commitment. She delivered his mail in upstate New York and later became an elder of a church he founded, all due to chats Bert began at the mailbox.

Dedication for serving people showed in Bert's passionate involvement in social causes. He was an advocate for racial equality in the civil rights movement of the 1960s; he favored the ordination of women in the RCA in the

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Bert and his daughter Linda at a CROP appreciation dinner in 2003

Memories

By David A. Laman '39



It seems a long time since I graduated from Western Theological Seminary, but the years have gone by rapidly. They were busy years of service and sacrifice, victories and difficulties.

Much has remained the same, but some things have changed. The tendency today is toward staff ministry, and there are many advantages. However, in my first church I conducted the morning and afternoon services, taught Sunday School, and in the evening met with the young people. I made annual family visits, conducted weddings and funerals, visited the sick and shut-ins, and presided at consistory and congregational meetings. In my later ministry serving a larger church, we needed to build a staff ministry, but I had no training in that area. I had been trained to do it all myself. I made some mistakes.

Back in 1939, I entered the ministry right after one of the big changes—services formerly conducted in English and Dutch were now in English only. In my first church I noticed an older couple were listed as members but never attended, so I went to visit them. After a pleasant visit (in English, by the way), I asked the old gentleman why they did not come to church. He replied, “They took the church away from me.” I asked him how, and he said, “They changed from Dutch to English.” He could talk to me in English, but somehow he thought that God could be worshiped only in Dutch.

Whenever changes have come, there have been those who resist. We should not be surprised, because from the beginning of the Church there has always been a Don't Change Anything party. In Acts 15:5 they are called “The Party of the Pharisees.” These “resisters” insisted that since God's people had always kept Old Testament ceremonial law, even Gentiles accepting Jesus as Savior should keep those laws. However, the leaders of the church wisely went ahead and made the change.

Some changes are not easy to get used to. In one service at Calvary Reformed Church we don't use the organ but have a praise team. Some older people prefer the Gospel hymns, and so do I, but I look

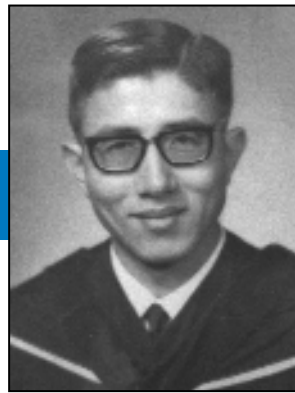
Rev. David Laman is Pastor to Seniors at Calvary Reformed Church in Ripon, CA.

at the words of the new songs and they are biblical, so I have no objection to their use. I notice how enthusiastically the young people sing them, and I say, “Praise the Lord!”

Of course, some things should not change. The Bible is the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice. When a truth is clearly presented, we have no right to make it say something it does not. Doctrinal standards are important. Our young people should be taught to treasure in their hearts the words of the first question and answer in the Heidelberg Catechism: “What is your only comfort, in life and in death?”

A great joy in ministry is helping someone accept Jesus Christ as Savior. In my first church there was a very well educated, well read man, whose wife and children were faithful members. He liked to talk about philosophical things. When the Bible was brought up, he knew all the apparent contradictions and couldn't take it seriously. I was thankful for the training I had received in seminary and could answer some of his objections. When we studied the book of Ezekiel, Dr. Albertus Pieters had admitted he did not know the interpretation of some passages, so I was not hesitant to admit I did not have all the answers. I had a strong desire for this man's conversion and prayed, “Lord, if you can save this man, I'll never doubt you can save anyone.” One Saturday he came to pick up his children from Catechism classes. He asked me to sit with him in his car and said, “I want to make confession of faith in Christ.” My heart was singing. He came to the next elders meeting and became a faithful member.

As I look back on my ministry, by the grace of God I touched many lives, taught the Word of God to many people, and helped strengthen and build up several churches. I made mistakes, and if I could do it over again, I would do some things differently. But in spite of my weakness and limitations, God has blessed.



WTS senior, 1967

Moody Boon-wan Yap '67

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kingdom work. His passion for his work is clearly seen in the variety of things he was involved in and achieved over the years—from planting churches,

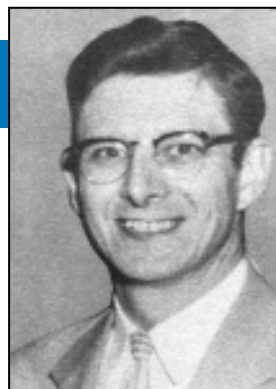
to working in various Classes, and giving himself to major efforts on the denominational level. Moody made and left his mark of love for the Gospel on individuals, congregations and cultures.

When Moody stepped into the pulpit, assumed a role in front of a group, or talked with you one-on-one it was always a memorable event. There wasn't much time for small talk because there was a kingdom cause to be addressed and leaned into. I always found myself amazed by his capacity to multi-task a variety of ministries and causes tirelessly. When he was asked to assume a role, you knew at least a couple of things: he would pray about the matter, and if led to accept, he would move into it with vision and full commitment.

Moody completed his role as Senior Pastor at Christ Church in the Bay Area a few years ago. He was



Ministry to Chinese people in the Detroit area, 1970s -- Bible studies, evangelism, meeting in homes, etc. (Moody and Jean are 6th and 7th from the left)



WTS senior, 1946

Bert Van Soest '46

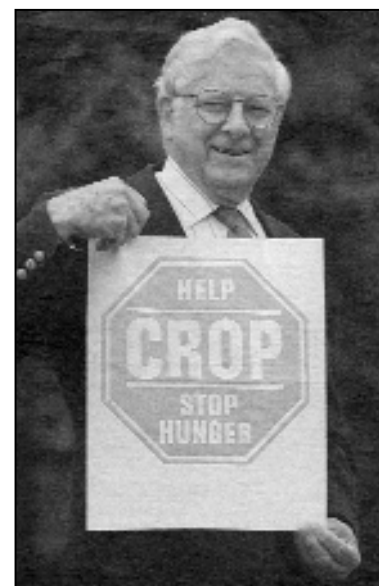
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1970s; and he began “Walks for the Hungry” on the East Coast in the 1980s, which continue today. These walks have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to help needy people worldwide.

In local communities Bert worked with rabbis, priests, and ministers of all faiths. His churches were instruments serving people through programs such as counseling, parent training classes, and AA.

Bert's perseverance helped to bring about the successful completion of five new churches across the U.S. When others were ready to quit due to obstacles, he never gave up or lost sight of his vision. The longevity of his service also indicates his perseverance. At the age of “retirement” Bert began ambitious endeavors such as founding Faith Reformed Church, beginning the “Walk for the Hungry” in the Slate Hill area, and helping to found the School of Christian Living and Service.

Because of his strong faith and belief in God's providence, Bert perseveres and persists. When financial or other difficulties make a project seemingly impossible, the first thing Bert does is pray, always asking others to join him in praying about the issue. His spiritual strength has been shown time and time again, and he continues to be a source of inspiration to those around him. ◀



October, 1994 -- Bert promotes the annual CROP walk in Middletown, NY

c. Dominick Florille/The Record



Distinguished Alumni

Moody B. Yap

b. Kulangsu Island, Fukien, China 1930
Confirmed on Easter, 1947 at New Way Church,
the first church building ever built in China by
RCA missions (1848).

BA, University of Baguio '64; MDiv, Western Theo-
logical Seminary '67; University of Michigan '68-
'69; Princeton Theological Seminary '73-'74;
DMin, North American Baptist Seminary '77
Married Jean Chua in 1955. Children: Daniel,
Esther, and Ruth

Service to the church:

1961-64 Pastor, Baguio Chapel, Evangelical Church
of Philippines

1967-70 Pastor, Chinese Bible Church, Detroit, MI

1970-77 Minister of Evangelism, Classis of Lake
Erie, Metro Detroit, MI

1977-81 Founding Pastor, Christ Community
Church, Farmington Hills, MI

1979-99 Consultant of GSEC in various capacities

1981-95 Founding Pastor, Christ Church of the Bay
Area, San Mateo, CA

1995 Minister Emeritus, Classis of Central CA

1995-2000 Pastor, Canaan Taiwanese Christian
Church, Mountain View, CA

2000-present in Moody's words, "I am remaining a
little servant of the Triune God to follow the lead-
ing of the Holy Spirit whenever, wherever, and to
meet whomever requires services until That Day
facing the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus the Christ."



The RCA's first ministry to Asians in the San Francisco Bay area. On May 10, 1981 over eighty people attended the first worship service of Christ Church of the Bay Area.

the founding pastor and had birthed another congregation of influence for the RCA. Typically, after he stepped down from this role and although he should have slowed down a bit for health reasons, he made himself available for preaching and leadership responsibilities to Chinese speaking congregations in the Bay Area on a regular basis. This man understands and has taken seriously the truth that there is no doctrine of retirement in the New Testament.

On a personal note, a few weeks ago my wife Ruth Ann and I went out for dinner with Moody and his dear wife, Jean. They know where to find the best Chinese food, and, as always, Moody ordered the meal in Chinese, so we were marginally clear of what we were about to eat. Soon four people sat around the table feasting on outstanding food enough for a dozen people. The richness of the conversation made it a perfect evening. We drove home that evening more than stuffed, full of the realization that once again we were in the presence of two unusually gifted and wonderful human beings. 🐟



San Francisco Bay area has the largest Chinese population outside of China. Christ Church has conducted three evangelistic crusades and holds spiritual energizing conferences annually.

Bert Van Soest's Years in the Regional Synod of New York

by Rev. Jon Norton, Executive Minister

Bert Van Soest did not face retirement with chagrin but with blessed hope and a listening ear. He moved into Orange County, NY to be near family and to enter his "golden years," but he never forgot his calling to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and to minister to His people.

Not long into his retirement, God surrounded Bert with a small band of people who wanted to start a new Reformed church. His age didn't bother him, nor did the generation gap. Some might complain about the high costs of starting a church, people's lack of commitment, the endless bureaucracy of church and secular requirements for buying and fixing up buildings, but Bert wasn't deterred. He forged ahead with the strength God provided him.

Well into his 70s, Bert brought leadership as the congregation grew. He and his congregation bought and began fixing up a very broken

down Presbyterian church building and soon reconstructed a comfortable church home. The Faith Reformed Church, which it had named itself, became a strong small church. In no time they outgrew that building, and Bert pointed the church in the direction of a new property site. They are now in the process of gathering funds to build their new building.

Bert is a leader whom people love. He speaks with wisdom and is confident in the blessings of God; he treats people kindly, understands them, and seeks to help them find God in real and inspiring ways.

Bert has been a friend to all he meets and a personal mentor to many other clergy. The Regional Synod of New York sent him as a consultant to other churches seeking guidance as they struggled through a variety of problems. Bert is an unusual man, specially created by God, and the work he has done will be remembered by many.

Bert E. Van Soest

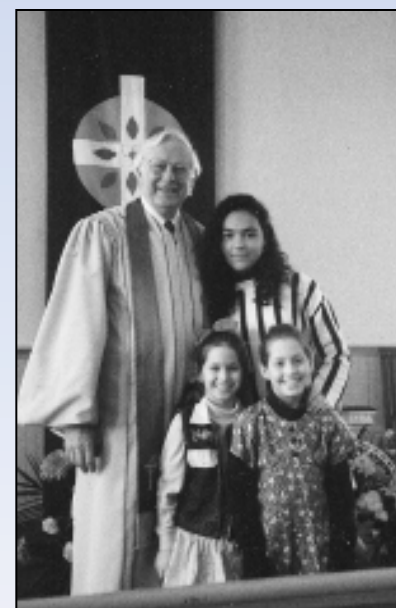
b. 1921 Strasburg, ND
AB, Central College '43; BD, Western Theological Seminary '46; Oberlin School of Theology '47 & '50; honorary DD, Central College '75
Married Barbara Stavast in 1943. Children: Mark, David, Janice and Linda

Churches served:

1946-51 Calvary Reformed, Cleveland, OH
1951-56 Trinity Reformed, Grand Rapids, MI
1956-61 Ebenezer Reformed, Morrison, IL
1961-69 Mountain View, Denver, CO
1969-81 Pompton Lakes Reformed, Pompton Lakes, NJ
1982-86 North Branch Reformed, North Branch, NJ
1986- Faith Reformed, Slate Hill, NY

Other service:

1974-75 Vice President of General Synod
1975-76 President of General Synod
1980-82 Secretary of Christian Discipleship, RCA
1987- Consultant to churches, Middletown area, NY



Bert with parishioner Julianna Foares from Brazil, 1995

Alumni/ae Day 2005



50 years

1955

Front Row: John Nyitray, Neil Van Heest, Melvin Voss, Bob Bos, Gordon De Pree, Ken Van Wyk, Harold Korver

Back Row: Earl Kragt, Don De Young, John Tien, Tom Zylstra, Howard Hanko, Wayne Tripp, Darrell Franken, Chuck Wissink, Don Hoffman, Cornie Keunen



40 years

1965

Row 1: William Herold, Tom Bruno, Stan Hagemeyer, Frank Love

Row 2: Paul Vande Hoef, Daryl Vetter, Cal Rynbrandt, Harmen Heeg

Row 3: Carl Benes, Ron Van Der Werff



25 years

1980

Tom Woudstra, Phil Schuling, Keith Derrick, Art Wiers, Mark Poppen

AlumLine

Albert F. Mansen '39 writes that he and his wife Donna hope to celebrate their 66th wedding anniversary in July.

Lubbert W. Van Dellen '51 lost his wife of 61 years, Evelyn, to Alzheimer's Disease. His class of 1951 will remember her well. On March 14, 2003 Lubbert remarried to Charmian Beach Powell, a retired hospital dietitian whom he met at the Eustis Presbyterian Church in Florida. Charmian's family, the Beach family, were members of Hope Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan, and were part of the history of the town. Her grandfather was mayor and owned a furniture factory and flour mill. Her brothers and sisters graduated from Hope College, and her mother taught at Holland Public Schools. Presently Lubbert and Charmian both volunteer at the Eustis Hospital, and Lubbert is a chaplain at the Leesburg Nursing Home (Leesburg, FL).

Peter J. Breen '52 and his wife Pauline enjoy meeting with classmates and their wives for breakfast every two months. Two of the Breen's sons serve as pastors in the Reformed Church, and their grandson, Tim Breen, is a student at Western. Peter writes, "Western Seminary always brings us happy memories."

This month **Mel De Vries '53** marks 52 years of ministry. He works as Minister of Parish Life at First Reformed Church, South Holland, IL. He preaches at least once a month and teaches weekly Bible studies. "God is good!"

Donald J. Bruggink '54, as General Editor of the Historical Series of the RCA since its inception, has published its fiftieth volume, *Taking the Jesus Road* by LeRoy Koopman.

Walter J. Kline '53 serves as Minister of Visitation at Village Evangelical Free Church, South Holland, IL.

Twin Falls Reformed Church of Twin Falls, ID has made **Don Nienhuis '54** Pastor Emeritus. Don writes that he was pleased to perform the marriage ceremony of his granddaughter Melanie Hamilton to Jedidiah Hurt on June 4 in Twin Falls. The couple wants to be missionaries to Japan.

Charles H. Kamp '58 continues as part-time stated supply pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Antwerp, OH. He was the moderator of First Presbyterian Church, Hicksville, OH, until they called a commissioned lay pastor to their pastorate.

After completing 40 years of pastoral ministry in two churches (Calvary Reformed, Monroe, SD, 1958-61, and Grace Reformed, Fond du Lac, WI, 1961-98), **Howie Vande Guchte '58** and his wife Ginny are involved part-time giving parachurch pastoral support. The support ministry is located in east-central Wisconsin and serves over 250 churches and over 300 pastors and their wives.

Lawrence J. Doorn '59 served five years as chairman of the board of directors of Baldwin Family HealthCare, a six-site primary health care organization in Michigan. He was recently designated a Health Care Governance Leader by National Association of Community Health Centers in Washington, DC, an award given to only 100 people in the U.S. The Michigan Primary Care Association bestowed the Distinguished Service Award upon him in 2004. Lawrence also serves on the executive committee of the MPCA.

After retiring from Reformed Bible College as Professor of Biblical Studies, **George Kroeze '60** taught at the Evangelical Seminary in St. Petersburg, Russia. He also taught and administered a new Bible college to train Russian pastors in Tambov, Russia. Next spring he will teach at Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Dehra Dun, India.

Russell Sybesma '62 is the Pastor of Visitation and Outreach of Ottawa Reformed Church, West Olive, MI. Prior pastorates are Faith Reformed Church, Muskegon, MI (1962-66), Grace Reformed Church (1966-82) and Hope Reformed Church (1982-98), both of Kalamazoo, MI.



Morning "welcome" reception

At the end of May, 2005, **Sherwin J. Broersma '63** retired as part-time coordinator of campus ministry for the Synod of the Great Lakes, a position he held since 1999.

Since November, 2004, **Bruce Hoffman '64** has been serving as Interim Minister at Clinton Avenue Reformed Church, Bergenfield, NJ.

Ron Van Der Werff '65 plans to retire July 31 and move from Friesland, WI to Lynden, WA.

David Maris '68 plans to retire from Plainview Reformed Church, Plainview, NY on September 30, 2005.

Don Damsteegt '72 is beginning his 25th year as a professor of psychology at Mount Mercy College, Cedar Rapids, IA. He has purchased an office building





WTS President Dennis Voskuil '69 chats with Carl Benes '65

to house his private practice group, Family Psychology Associates, P.C.

Marlin '82 and Sally Vis have accepted a newly formed RCA appointment working primarily with Palestinian Christians in Palestine/Israel. Marlin and Sally will share this position, together seeking to provide pastoral care for Palestinian refugees. They will also communicate with RCA churches to relay refugee concerns and needs, especially pertaining to Palestinian brothers and sisters in Christ. Marlin and Sally hope to be in Palestine/Israel by early 2006.

In May 2004 **Stephen W. Van Dop '85** completed his D.Min. in Evangelism and Leadership at Asbury Seminary, Lexington, KY. His dissertation, "Connecting with God: Exploring the Language, Motivation and Three Strategic Evidences in Conversion to Christ," was awarded for excellence by the faculty.



n in the Burggraaff Atrium

For the last five years Stephen has served as Pastor of Evangelism for Vineyard Church of Columbus (Ohio). It is currently the flagship church of the Vineyard Movement, and he has been involved with thousands of new believer conversions since joining the staff.

Todd Buurstra '87 just received a Doctor of Ministry degree from Drew University's Theological School in New Jersey. His thesis project was on narrative preaching on Communion for 8 to 88 year olds.

Judith K. Kuiper '90 received the Ph.D. in clinical psychology on February 28, 2005, from Union Institute and University.

Mike '03 and Elizabeth '04 Brown Hardeman announce the arrival of Neriah Brown Hardeman. She was born on April 13, 2005 and weighed 9 lbs and 2 oz.

On to Glory...

James Hakken '54
b. Bahrain, Arabian Gulf, 1930
d. Wayland, MI 8/29/04
Hope College '51; WTS '54
Professor of History at Jackson Community College, Jackson, MI, for 35 years.

Herbert S. Van Wyk '35
b. Hull, IA 1/15/10
d. Holland, PA 3/3/05
Central College '32; WTS '35
Reformed Churches served:
Middle Collegiate, NYC, NY (1935-37)
Bethel, Brandon, WI (1937-39)
Long Branch, NJ (1939-40)
Central, Grand Rapids, MI (1956-59)
Second, Kalamazoo, MI (1959-65)
Addisville, Richboro, PA (1965-78)
Also served as:
Professor, Central College, Pella, IA (1940-50)
Professor, New Brunswick Theological Seminary (1950-56)

Jerry Johnson '80
b. Holland, MI 3/31/49
d. Hartford, SD 5/16/05
Kendall School of Design '73
Hope College '77; WTS '80
Reformed Churches served:
Ada, MI (1980-88)
Glen Lake Community, Glen Arbor, MI (1988-94)
Peace, Eagan, MN (1994-99)
Grandview, Armour, SD (2002-05)



Drew and Andrea Poppleton



Paul Van Maaren

Students Tell of Calls to Ministry

The roads leading to Western Theological Seminary were different for each of the three students representing the graduating class of 2005. Just like the WTS alumni/ae in their audience, Drew Poppleton, Andrea Poppleton, and Paul Van Maaren each heard the call uniquely.



Drew Poppleton grew up in a Catholic home, played football at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, and through the influence of his head coach, he became a Christian in 1999. After college he worked for the Gospel Communications Network in Muskegon, MI and started an interdenominational ministry to young adults. God gave him a great passion for His Word and led him to seminary, where he discovered vibrant community life, intimate interaction with professors, and his future wife and partner in ministry... Andrea.

Andrea [Philipps] Poppleton had all intentions of becoming a teacher. She earned a degree in

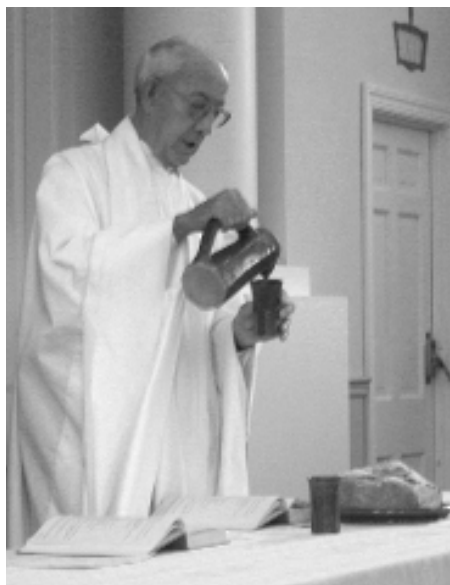
elementary education from Hope College, but in the midst of her summer job search for a teaching position, she heard the call to ministry. She was serving her home church, Hope Reformed in Grand Rapids, MI by co-leading two youth mission trips. This magnified other faint calls she'd heard from God throughout the years. With the prompting of her pastor, the youth, and the congregation, Andrea applied to seminary. At Western, Andrea learned she did not have to give up her passion for teaching. Though she has developed other pastoral gifts and passions, she knows that teaching will always be part of her ministry.

Drew and Andrea hope to find a pastoral position to share, which would meld perfectly with their plans of combining ministry and family life.

Paul Van Maaren was going to be an engineer, but people kept telling him he should be a pastor. Finally, right before his last semester at the University of Iowa, he heard the call loud and clear. He finished the semester, received his degree in Mechanical Engineering, and sold all his books back. Any passion he had for engineering went away, and God put within him a new passion for bringing the Gospel of Jesus to people.

Paul and his wife, Courtney, have accepted a call to Faith Reformed Church in Lynden, WA.

special thanks



The seminary thanks **Manabu Ishida (Th.M. '92)** for giving the seminary a one-of-a-kind communion set from Japan. Manabu commissioned the set by potter Kawajiri Hiroshi, who has worked as a Mashiko-yaki potter for nearly 40 years. He is one of the few potters in Mashiko who fires his pottery with a traditional Nobori-gama oven using firewood instead of gas or electricity. Manabu sent the set to the seminary as an expression of his gratitude for the education and friendship he received here.

(at left) Dr. Donald Bruggink '54 uses the set at a communion service, April 22, 2005



129th Commencement



The audience sings, accompanied by musicians Mara Cooper, Wendy Haack, Dr. David Stubbs, and Kyle Haack



Dr. Dennis Voskuil awards Lindsay Bona her diploma.



The Class of 2005 beams proudly after receiving their diplomas and hoods.



Carol Wagner and Dr. Nancy Miller hood Chad DeGraff.

On May 9, forty-eight students walked across the stage of Dimment Memorial Chapel to receive diplomas at Western's 129th commencement service. The seminary awarded thirty-eight Master of Divinity, seven Master of Theology, and three Doctor of Ministry degrees.

Dr. Nicholas Wolterstorff addressed the graduates on the subject, "Keeping Your Bearings when the Church is in Chaos." He reiterated the importance of being formed by the Word in a Reformed church set in a cultural and religious climate where being rooted in a tradition is not valued as it once was. Dr. Wolterstorff is the Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology, Emeritus at Yale University Divinity School and a longtime professor of philosophy at Calvin College.



Dr. Nicholas Wolterstorff

Grace Hui Liang, a graduate from Wenlin City, Zhejiang Province, China spoke on behalf of the master of theology graduates. Barb Wright from Chelsea, Michigan, spoke to the graduates about the benefits of pursuing a doctor of ministry degree, which she received that night. Rick Huselman, a master of divinity graduate from Salina, Kansas, addressed the audience on behalf of his class.



Dr. Chris Kaiser congratulates Susan Kingma

The liturgy for the event was written by graduates Brian Engel, Kate Te Winkle, and Lalrosiem Songate.

Pray with me please...

As the Director of Advancement for Western Seminary, I generally use this space to ask for your financial support. While the ministry of Western Seminary cannot be sustained without the financial gifts of faithful friends, I'd like to ask for a different type of support this time.

The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

As you may be aware, each weekday when classes are in session, the seminary community gathers for worship followed by a brief fellowship time. During this fellowship time, Dennis Voskuil invites the sharing of joys and prayer concerns.

Beginning this fall, I invite you to become a regular prayer partner with us. Of course, we welcome your prayers any time, but beginning this September a prayer list will be sent on a regular basis via email to anyone wishing to be a Western Seminary Prayer Partner. We will share the joys and concerns of the seminary community and invite you to pray for those needs.

If you would like to commit to being an email prayer partner, please email me at ken@westernsem.edu and I will gladly add you to the list. Western Seminary is a community of prayer, and your prayers sustain us on a regular basis. Thank you for keeping Western Theological Seminary in your prayers.

--Ken Neevel

Director of Advancement and Communications

Faculty News

New Testament professor **James Brownson** led workshops on "Understanding the Homosexuality Controversy in the RCA" at Christ Memorial Church in Holland (Mar. 13), Albany Synod (April 7), and Oak Harbor, WA (May 14). He will be leading a similar workshop at General Synod in June.

On February 22, **Jaco Hamman**, assistant professor of pastoral care and counseling, facilitated a community conversation with the students, staff and faculty of Western Seminary on "Pastoral Care to Persons who are Gay/lesbian and to Their Families." Dr. Hamman provided the community with seven core principles of effective Christian caregiving, which were then used in collaborative groups to discuss six different case studies.

In April **Matthew Floding**, director of formation for ministry, represented WTS at the Missions Festival at Middlebush Reformed Church in Somerset, NJ and then preached at First Reformed Church in Hawthorne, NJ. In May he taught on "Celebrating Your Strengths" at Third Reformed Church in Holland. In June Dr. Floding will preach at First Reformed in Grandville, MI and Casnovia Reformed in Casnovia, MI.

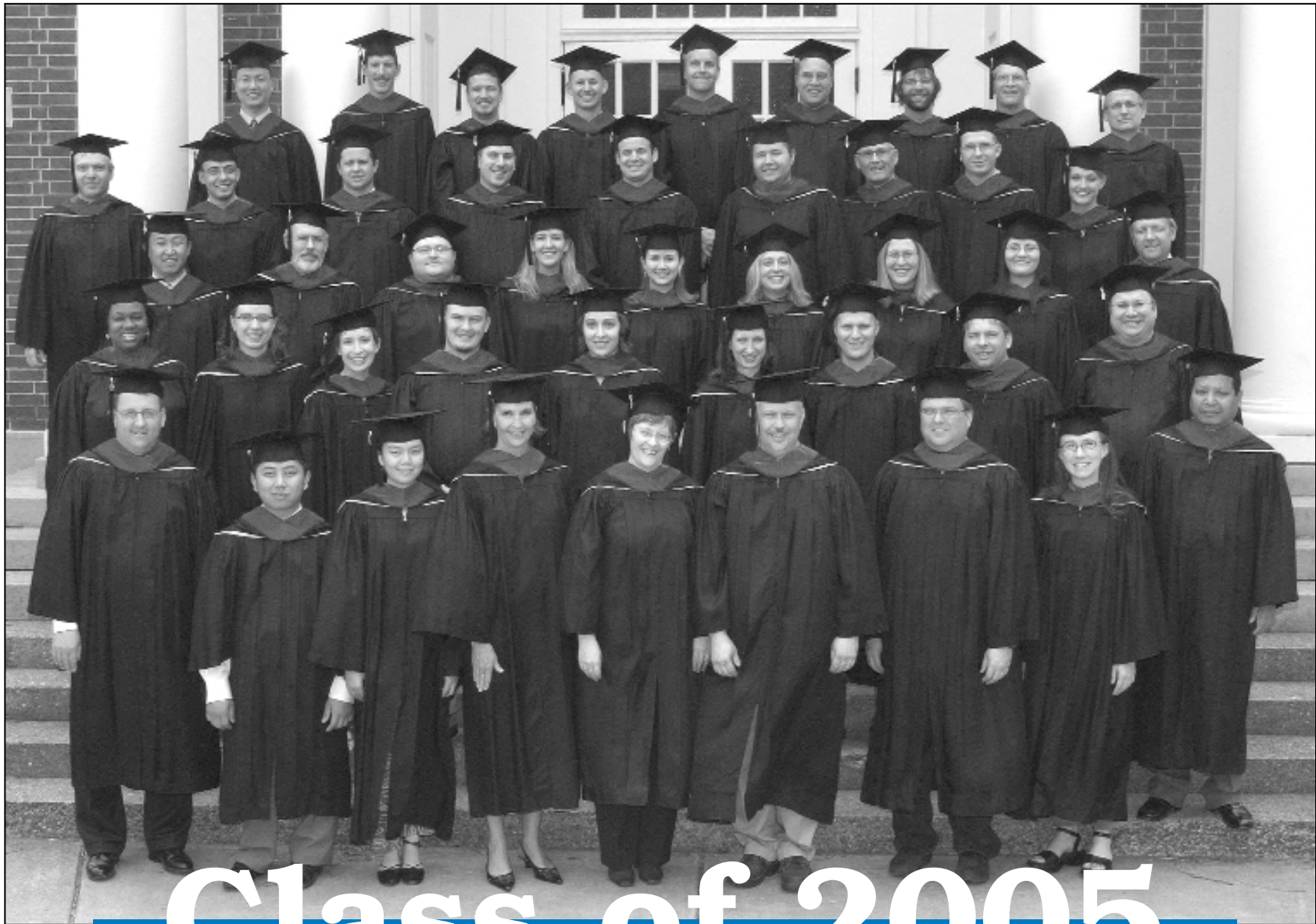
Robert Van Voorst, professor of New Testament, has signed a contract to produce fourteen articles of various lengths for the revised edition of the Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible published by Abingdon Press. In May he was a delegate from Holland Classis to the annual meeting of the Synod of the Great Lakes.

On July 2 **Chris Kaiser**, professor of systematic theology, will lecture in the Czech Republic at the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU) Congress in Olomouc. Dr. Kaiser will survey the theological tradition combining Old Testament wisdom with neo-Platonic philosophy and will show how it inspired a generation of early modern scientists. Earlier in the year Dr. Kaiser gave a series of lectures on "Early Egyptian Church Fathers" to students at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt.

Another faculty member will be traveling abroad in the opposite direction. Old Testament professor **Carol Bechtel** will give an address in July at the International Reformed Theological Institute, held this year in Seoul, South Korea. The general topic for this year's conference is "Christian Identity."

Preaching professor **Tim Brown** was honored to deliver the prestigious annual Siang Lian Lectures May 16-19 in Tai-pei, Taiwan, at the request of Taiwan Theological College and Seminary. Siang Lian Presbyterian Church, the largest Presbyterian congregation in Taiwan, sponsors the lectures each year. Dr. Brown's lectures were entitled, "That Good Habits May Be Loved: Ancient Wisdom for Post-Modern Preaching."

In June Tim Brown will preach every day for the RCA General Synod in Schenectady, NY. June 23-July 1 he will be guest instructor in the Christian Scholars Seminar at Calvin College teaching, "Keeping and Talking the Word." In July he will speak at the Cascade Family Bible Conference at Warm Beach in Seattle, WA.



Denise McElrath Photography

Class of 2005

Row 1:

Michael Drew , A.B., M.Div.	Hudsonville, MI
David Sal Thang Vunga , B.A., M.Div., D.Min., Th.M.	Yangon, Myanmar
Grace Hui Liang , B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Th.M.	Wenlin City, China
Barbara Boss , B.A., M.Div.	Newaygo, MI
Kathy Bartels , B.S., M.Div.	Spring Lake, MI
William Vander Werp , M.Div.	Zeeland, MI
Richard Husselman , B.A., M.Div.	Salina, KS
Arika Theule-Van Dam , B.A., M.Div.	Allendale, MI
Lalrosiem Songate , B.A., B.D., M.A., Th.M.	Manipur, India

Row 2:

Denise Kingdom Grier , B.A., M.Div.	Holland, MI
Kelly Brouwer , B.A., M.Div.	Edgerton, MN
Pamela Henshell , B.A., M.Div.	Hamilton, Ontario, CAN
Mitchell Brink , B.S., M.Div.	Hamilton, MI
Amy Avery , B.A., M.Div.	Holland, MI
Wendy Haack , B.A., M.Div.	Zeeland, MI
Kyle Haack , B.A., M.Div.	Hospers, IA
Brian Engel , B.A., M.A., M.Div.	Chatham, NY
William Freeman , B.A., M.Div.	Grand Rapids, MI

Row 3:

Jong Pil Yoo , B.A., M.Div., Th.M.	Seoul, South Korea
James Schepers , B.S., M.Div.	South Haven, MI
Aaron Schulte , B.A., M.Div.	Orange City, IA
Susan Kingma , B.A., M.Div.	Grand Rapids, MI
Andrea Poppleton , B.A., M.Div.	Kentwood, MI
Katrina Te Winkle , B.A., M.Div.	Sheboygan, WI
Lindsay Bona , B.A., M.Div.	Williamson, NY
Jamie Schmeling , B.A., M.S., M.Div.	Miles City, MT
Darrell Koopmans , B.A., M.Div.	Holland, MI

Row 4:

Ferenc Baumann , B.A., M.Div., Th.M.	Erdély, Romania
György Kustár , M.Div., Th.M.	Debrecen, Hungary
Wayne Barrett , B.A., M.Div.	Poland, OH
Mark Andersen , B.A., M.Div.	Orange City, IA
Drew Poppleton , B.S., M.Div.	Pittsburgh, PA
Kamren Zorgdrager , B.S., M.Div.	Holland, MI
David Van Huisen , B.S., M.Div.	Hudsonville, MI
Joshua Bode , B.A., M.Div.	Hudsonville, MI
Mara Cooper , B.A., M.Div.	Zeeland, MI

Row 5:

Mun-Gye Lee , B.A., M.Div., Th.M.	Seoul, South Korea
Adam Potgiesser , M.Div.	Lawton, MI
Scott Stephan , B.S., M.Div.	Elk Rapids, MI
Chad DeGraff , B.S., M.Div.	South Holland, IL
Shane Sterk , B.A., M.Div.	Chiapas, Mexico
Paul Van Maaren , B.S.E., M.Div.	Kellogg, IA
Joshua Baron , B.A., M.Div.	Allendale, MI
Jeffrey Allen , B.A., M.Div.	Holland, MI
Dennis Scheibmeir , B.B.A., B.S., B.S., M.Div.	Wichita, KS

Not pictured:

Manabu Ishida , B.A., M.A., Th.M., D.Min.	Tochigi-ken, Japan
Rodney Veldhuizen , B.A., M.Div., M.A., D.Min.	Yankton, SD
Barbara Wright , B.A., M.Div., D.Min.	Chelsea, MI



Stan Rock

The seminary thanks Dr. Darell and Mary Schregardus for creating the **Dr. Stanley Rock Preparation for Ministry Fund** to support the emotional health of M.Div. students at Western Theological Seminary. This fund was established in honor of Dr. Stanley A. Rock for his commitment to the spiritual, emotional, and relational development of pastoral ministry candidates. Dr. Rock served as Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling at Western Theological Seminary from 1976-2002.

All students have access to this benefit through the Student Assistance Program. Students who recognize areas in their life they need to address receive care from licensed clinicians. As a result, their relational life changes: marital stability and community involvement increase, classroom behavior changes, even their grades go up.

"In a real sense, they become better human beings," reflects Dr. Jaco Hamman, the "gatekeeper" for the program. "As they go out into ministry, they will be better pastors, better fathers, better mothers, better people."

"I thank the Lord for the Schregardus' gift," says graduate Paul Van Maaren. "The counseling I have received is invaluable."

Special Gifts to Western Theological Seminary

In Memory of Rev. Martin Hoekman Barbara VanArendonk	In Memory of Rev. Dr. Lambert Ponstein Jean Weener	In Honor of Dr. Timothy Brown Rancho Community Reformed Church
In Memory of Mildred Hoff Roger & Connie Brummel Marvin D. & Joanne Hoff Jerry & Penny Rosema	In Memory of Ruth Ann Poppen Alvin J. & Mari Lynn Dozeman	In Honor of Mike Drew '05 Engel & Annetta Corstange
In Memory of Norman Hahn Jean Weener	In Memory of Rev. Raymond Rathbun Providence Presbyterian Church Covenant Sunday School Class	In Honor of Rev. Harold Oppermann Zion Evangelical & Reformed Church
In Memory of Henry Kleinheksel Wayne A. VanKampen	In Memory of Rev. Paul Tanis Melvin J. & Jacquelyn DeGroot	In Honor of Rev. David Zomer Melvin J. & Jacquelyn DeGroot

Gifts made March 1–May 13, 2005

Back for More

Last year's graduates, the Class of 2004, returned to campus for a continuing education opportunity on May 22-24, 2005. This pilot event centered around the themes of coaching, consistory leadership, spiritual renewal, and call and family.

The alumni shared joy, frustration, and the work of their first year together, as well as a very meaningful time of worship. "It was encouraging to see and hear God working all over the country through people we've grown to love," said Dan Lannin, associate pastor of youth and discipleship at Oaks Community Church in Chino, CA.

Some spouses came for the event and found comfort and advice interacting and reflecting with other spouses. A suggestion was made to create a special workshop for spouses of pastors.

The WTS faculty benefited from the event also. Last year's graduates reflected with faculty on their theological education and what in their first year as pastors they had found to be very helpful and what they felt was missing.

Plans for similar events are being developed for graduates in their third and fifth years in ministry.



Randy Van Doornik shares with Angie Mabry-Nauta about a particularly positive first-year experience.

Enduring Influence

After serving in the U.S. Navy and graduating from Hope College in 1950, Elton Bruins entered Western Seminary in one of the large classes fueled



Elton and Elaine Bruins

by returning veterans. He graduated from the seminary in 1953, spent two years in graduate work and then served as a pastor in Elmsford and Flushing, New York. In 1966, four years after earning his Ph.D. from New York University, Elton joined the religion department at Hope College. He

enjoyed teaching for 26 years and had the privilege of seeing many of his students enter Western Theological Seminary and go on to become pastors.

Through the years Elton remained actively involved at WTS serving on the alumni/ae board, participating in annual phonathons, and raising funds for seminary capital campaigns. This publication, *The Commons*, was shaped by his expertise and input as a member of its founding committee.

Dr. Bruins retired from teaching in 1992. Shortly thereafter he accepted the challenge to direct the newly founded Van Raalte Institute, established to research Dutch immigration to America in the 19th and 20th centuries. He led the institute for eight years and remains involved as a senior research fellow writing papers and books on Hope College, Western Theological Seminary, and local history.

Elton and Elaine Bruins recently joined the Zwemer Society at Western Seminary by making a gift arrangement through their estate plan. Elton has great confidence in Dr. Dennis Voskuil's leadership as the president of Western Seminary. "After all," he says with a grin, "I recruited Dennis to the Religion Department at Hope College back in 1977!" Through membership in the Zwemer Society, the Bruins will continue to impact Western's future and the future of the Reformed Church in America.

For more information about joining the Zwemer Society, please contact Western's Office of Advancement at (800) 392-8554. We look forward to talking with you!



Let classmates and colleagues know about the milestones in your life. Send your news items to "Alumline", Western Theological Seminary, 101 E. 13th St., Holland, MI 49423; fax 616-392-7717; or carlaw@westernsem.edu.

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