



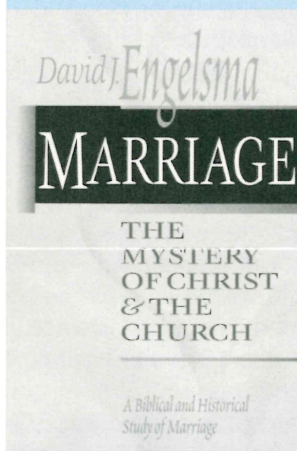
# R F P A

*"Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces;  
that ye may tell it to the generation following" – Psalm 48:13*

Volume 1 #1

September 1998

## Significant Revision of Marriage Goes to Press



COVER, revised edition of Marriage

Calvinism is the doctrinal stance of most RFPA readers. They may be surprised to learn that Calvin and the other early Reformers came to the wrong conclusions about divorce and remarriage.

Professor David Engelsma's book, *Marriage: The Mystery of Christ and the Church*,

originally published by the RFPA in 1975, has now been revised and significantly expanded to show that the Reformers made a departure from biblical truth by allowing divorce for other than adultery and for allowing remarriage in certain cases even when a person's first spouse is still alive. The revision will be published by the RFPA this fall.

(continued on page 1)

## Have You Joined?

### Membership in Association Assures Continued Board To Govern Publications Work

Men living in the area of Grand Rapids, Mich., who have a special interest in the continued publication of a high quality *Standard Bearer* and of Reformed books, all of which uphold the Bible and the Three Forms of Unity, should be making their conviction practical by joining the Reformed Free Publishing Association. Just because you belong to the RFPA Book Club does not necessarily mean you are a member of the RFPA itself.

Members of the RFPA believe that Reformed literature should not only forthrightly state the truth, but that it should also expose contrary, false, and deceptive views. Are younger men ready to fill up the ranks of the RFPA, helping to shoulder the responsibility? Gord Schipper of the board says, "Men who desire these spiritual riches for themselves, their families, and Christians throughout the world need to join our association. We want men who are zealous to speak out against the lie."

Membership in the RFPA works much the same way it does in parental school societies.

The men constitute a pool out of which the board nominates individuals (with their permission) who will serve on the governing board of the organization for a term of three years.

To become a member, attend the Thursday, Sept. 24th, annual meeting of the RFPA and indicate your willingness to join. If a majority of the members approve, you will then be a member of the RFPA.

**What?** Annual meeting of the Reformed Free Publishing Association (refreshments and fellowship to follow).

**When?** Thursday, Sept. 24, 1998, at 8:00 p.m. (SOON!)

**Where?** Grace Protestant Reformed Church, Tallmadge Township, Mich. (corner of Lake Michigan Drive and 8th Avenue).

**Why?** To show support for what the RFPA has accomplished in the past year.  
To elect four RFPA board members.  
To hear from the guest speaker how RFPA work relates to directives in the Word of God.  
To use this once-a-year opportunity to become a member of the RFPA.

**Who?** Rev. Steven Key, pastor of Randolph PR Church, Randolph, Wis., will speak on "Reading, Writing, and Heretics."

RFPA members and those who want to become members. Wives, sons, daughters, relatives, and friends are also welcome to witness how the RFPA functions.

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PICTURED are members of the RFPA Board's Publication and Book Committee. Seated, from left, are Bill Langerak, Marinus Kamps, and Jeff Kalsbeek. Standing, from left, are Henry Kamps and Gordon Schipper (Dave Harbach not pictured).

### **RFPA Update Begins Publication To Keep Readers Better Informed**

You are reading the first issue of **RFPA Update**, a newsletter that the Reformed Free Publishing Association intends to send out twice a year. Its purpose is to inform subscribers to its *Standard Bearer*, buyers of its books, and members of the RFPA about the association and its many endeavors.

Another purpose is to encourage men who live in the area of Grand Rapids, Mich., to become members of the RFPA at the annual meeting, held the last Thursday of September.

In the interim between RFPA catalogs, the newsletter will keep readers abreast of publication news.

#### **RFPA Update**

Publisher:

Reformed Free Publishing Association  
(a non-profit organization registered in  
the State of Michigan)

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### **How the RFPA Works**

#### **Constitution Ensures Board Diversity; Standing Committees Divide Tasks**

"Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40). And so they are on the RFPA Board, according to procedures spelled out by the organization's Constitution, last revised Sept. 1995.

The board oversees all operations of the RFPA. It meets the last Monday of each month except in September since the board usually meets to reorganize itself shortly after the September annual meeting. Four of the board members complete their 3-year terms at the annual meeting, and four more are elected to office. With this orderly transition, opportunity exists for the influx of new personalities as well as for a return of men who have an abiding interest in the work of publishing. On Sept. 24th this year, four of the following nominees proposed by the board will be voted in as board members: John Buiter, Jon Engelsma, Dave Kamps, Ron Koole, Clare Kuiper, Steve Langerak, Tom Schipper, and Matt VanOverloop.

Board officers who have served for the 1997-98 season are Dave Harbach, president; Marinus Kamps, vice president; Henry Kamps, secretary; Bill Langerak, treasurer; and Gord Schipper, vice-all.

The 12-man board divides itself among three standing committees, which meet individually each month prior to the board meeting. The committees formulate policies and procedures for consideration at meetings of the full board.

The MEMBERSHIP, INFORMATION, AND EDUCATION (M.I.E.) COMMITTEE of four board members is composed of Jon Hop, Jim Koole, Bill Oomkes, and Joel Vink. It keeps records of RFPA members, initiates promotion and distribution of the *Standard Bearer* and books, prepares book catalogs, oversees bound volumes & indexing of the *Standard Bearer*, makes decisions about book storage, and arranges for the RFPA annual meeting.

The PUBLICATION AND BOOK COMMITTEE currently has the following six board members: Dave Harbach, Jeff Kalsbeek, Henry Kamps, Marinus Kamps, Bill Langerak, and Gord Schipper. The areas handled by these men are new book possibilities, evaluation of manuscripts, decisions about reprinting, and considering printing production details (book sizes, formats, layout, design, etc.).

The third standing committee of the board is the FINANCE COMMITTEE, consisting of Rod Brunsting, Mark Engelsma, and Dave Kregel. They focus on pricing of publications, subscription information, employee compensation, equipment purchasing, bill paying, evaluation of pricing quotations, keeping the financial records, and reviewing accounting procedures of the organization.



## Outgoing RFPA Board Values the Experience

Members of the RFPA Board whose terms expire at the annual meeting Sept. 24th are Rod Brunsting, Dave Harbach, Jeff Kalsbeek, Bill Langerak, and Bill Oomkes. **RFPA Update** asked them the benefits they have found of serving on the board, and here are several of their replies.

Jeff Kalsbeek says, "There is invaluable experience gained in working with and making decisions among men committed to the Reformed faith. It also deepens one's appreciation for the gifts that God has given editors, managers, and authors to use in His service. There is joy in witnessing God's blessing when there are articles as well as books authored which clearly and unashamedly proclaim the truth of Scripture, when the tendency in our day is towards a tolerant, appeasing rhetoric which conceals the glory of God."

Rod Brunsting adds, "I feel it has been a privilege to have had a small part in the publishing of sound, reformed material. It is my desire that God will use our feeble efforts to the upbuilding of His Church."

Dave Harbach, who is finishing his term of office as president of the board, states it this way, "Being part of the decision-making process for the *Standard Bearer* and books that spread the truth of the glorious gospel of Christ through the printed page is well worth the time and effort."

## Reformed Free Publishing Association: What it IS, and What it IS NOT

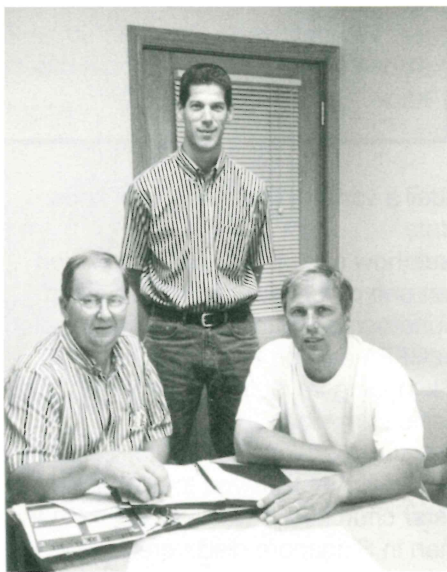
Some think the RFPA is the Reformed Book Outlet, a Christian bookstore in Hudsonville, Mich. They are mistaken.

Others are under the impression that all the RFPA does is to publish and send them their *Standard Bearer*. Not so.

Others assume the RFPA is run by the Protestant Reformed Churches in America. This, too, is incorrect.

To the originators of the organization in 1924, the name "Free" in Reformed Free Publishing Association meant that its writers were free to publish what they were convinced was biblical truth over against errors being promulgated in their day by a denominational publisher that had banned their articles.

The RFPA is an independent, non-profit organization located in Grandville, Mich., that publishes 21 issues a year of the *Standard Bearer* magazine as well as Reformed books in the Calvinistic tradition, especially those by authors associated with Protestant Reformed Churches.

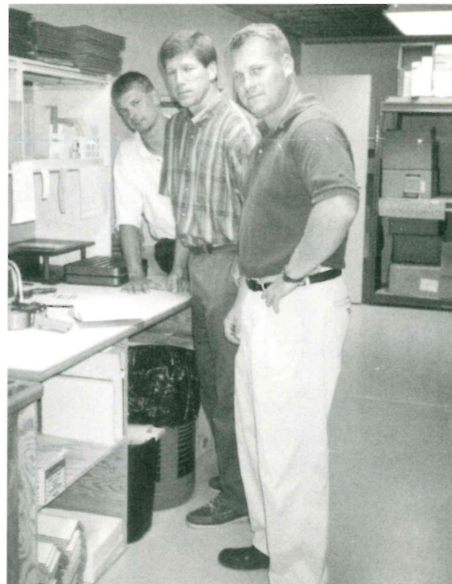


EXAMINING their records during an August meeting are members of the Finance Committee of the RFPA Board. Left to right are Rod Brunsting, Mark Engelsma, and Dave Kregel.

## SB's 40 Writers

Forty writers authored one or more articles that appeared in the *Standard Bearer* for the publication year Oct. 1, 1997 - Sept. 15, 1998.

Out of this number, four are seminary professors, 17 are pastors, one is a minister-on-loan, one is a home missionary, two are ministers emeriti, 10 are lay people, two were pastors who died in this century, and three were historic Reformed personages. Not included in the count were the many who contributed letters to the Editor.



GROUPED around the shipping area where RFPA books are boxed and mailed to customers are members of the RFPA Board's M.I.E. Committee. Left to right (from the back) are Joel Vink, Jim Koole, and Jon Hop (Bill Oomkes not pictured).

## Thank You, Contributors!

Nobody asks them to do it, but many subscribers to the *Standard Bearer* and buyers of Reformed books add a contribution beyond the price of their publications. The RFPA is always grateful to these donors, who play a more significant part in the work than they may know.

Protestant Reformed churches have for years been taking free-will offerings for the *Standard Bearer*. Do they have a separate collection, as well, for RFPA books? Putting out a single book is also an expensive proposition, and in books the doctrines held dear by Reformed believers can be more fully obtained.

Should either a church or an individual wish to give to the RFPA, it would help if they specify whether their contribution is for the *Standard Bearer* or for book publishing since the financial records of each are kept separately.



**Ready to Give An Answer:  
A Catechism of  
Reformed Distinctives  
by Herman Hoeksema and  
Herman Hanko**

Books with solid proof for historical, doctrinal stands are always good reference works to have in one's personal library. Such is *Ready to Give An Answer*.

RFPA Book Club members received this book early in the year, but others may not know about it since it was not finished in time to appear in the last catalog.

Sometimes a history of doctrinal conflict can be a bit daunting to read. That's why *Ready to Give An Answer* is expressed in a question and answer catechism. This format makes it easier to follow the arguments of two controversies in which the Protestant Reformed Churches were historically engaged. It also makes it easier for the reader to find the argument he is looking for. The churches mentioned defended the truth of sovereign grace to maintain a witness, first in the 1920s against "common grace" and the "well-meant offer of the gospel" and next in the 1950s against a conditional covenant dependent on man for its fulfillment. The book contains "The Declaration of Principles" drawn up by the Synod of 1950 as a statement to be used in missions work that would not be subject to misinterpretation.

*Ready to Give An Answer* is a 238-page hardcover book with a cover photo collage picturing all the PR ministers who lived and stayed with the Protestant Reformed Churches through the aforementioned controversies. It can be purchased for \$24.95, postpaid.

**Thank-you from SB Reader**

From a Represa, California, reader of the *Standard Bearer*: "At long last—a magazine that does not compromise the Word of God."

**'Cloud of Witnesses'  
To Become  
Book of 'Portraits'**

How many were not thrilled by the brief but fascinating stories of saints and martyrs of the church in Professor Herman Hanko's series in the *Standard Bearer* under the rubric "Cloud of Witnesses"?

This was such a popular series that the RFPA is publishing them all in book form in early 1999 under the title *Portraits of Faithful Saints*.

A look at the illustrations in progress for this book makes one say, without reservation, that this will be a handsomely designed book. Artist Jeff Steenholdt is enhancing the flavor of the work with graphics of the pen and ink variety in "pictures" we have all seen of the Reformation fathers. The first word of each chapter starts with an old-style woodcut alphabet letter.

**Watch for This!**

The Reformation Day special issue of the *Standard Bearer*, published annually on Oct. 15th, will this year feature "**Abraham Kuiper and the Reformation of 1886.**" All of the articles will be on this theme.

**Believers and Their Seed:  
Children in the Covenant  
by Herman Hoeksema**

A reprint edition is now available of *Believers and Their Seed*. Although you may own the original paperback, you may want to consider buying the reprint.

Featuring an attractive new hardcover, the book now includes an 11-page biography of the life of Herman Hoeksema, a photo of the author as a young minister, and a lengthy preface by Professor David Engelsma.

Orders may be sent to the RFPA with remittance of \$17.95, which includes postage.



**STANDARD BEARER** managing editor, Don Doezema, and his assistant, Judi Doezema, look at an article that Judi is keying into her computer. All typesetting of the magazine is done in-house. Printing is handled by Eerdmans Publishing Co.

**Bound SB Index  
Enjoys Quick Sales**

A mammoth venture was embarked upon when Don and Judi Doezema began compiling an *Index* for volumes 1-73 (Oct. 1, 1924-Sept. 15, 1997) of the *Standard Bearer*. Recently Brenda Brands assisted with this project as well.

This past spring the arduous work of indexing the first 73 volumes was completed and bound into a black volume that looks identical to the bound yearly volumes of the *Standard Bearer*. It is designed to fit on a shelf with them.

The price of the *Index* is a costly \$49.00, yet the labor-intensive project involved hundreds of hours in addition to expenses for photocopying and binding.

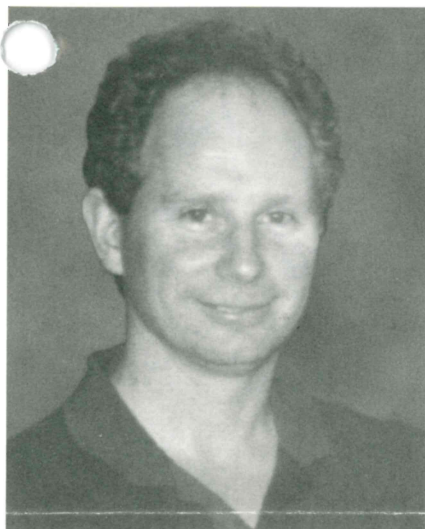
One usually thinks of only libraries ordering bound volumes of periodicals, yet an incredible number of 114 indexes have already been snapped up; 36 are all that remain in stock.

Those who own the *Index* might want to make a habit of photocopying the yearly index published at the back of the Sept. 15 *Standard Bearer*. If all the indexes are kept with the bound volume index, it will be easier to search for articles.



## Meet Jeff Steenholdt, Book Designer

### Illustrator Gives Books Exciting New Look; Computer Technology Provides Speed & Flexibility



**Jeff Steenholdt**

As the RFPA enters the 21st century, its books are getting an up-to-date facelift. The person responsible is the artist Jeff Steenholdt.

Jeff is a long-time member of the Kalamazoo, Mich., Protestant Reformed Church. When the late Prof. Homer C. Hoeksema was in Kalamazoo to preach one Sunday in 1977, the professor's wife Gertrude was attracted to some sketches Jeff had done of church scenes for the bulletin. She asked if he would try designing a trial book cover for *Voice of Our Fathers*. When his concept was accepted for that title, Jeff was also commissioned to design covers for *God's Eternal Good Pleasure* and a number of other titles carried today by the RFPA.

Those were the days before Macintosh computers and desktop graphic design programs, and the artist spent long, late hours illustrating by hand and performing time-consuming paste-ups. The lengthiest project of all was the 2-3 years he spent creating the cover art and numerous page illustrations for Gertrude Hoeksema's 599-page *Come, Ye Children*, a Bible storybook that is still an RFPA top seller today. Jeff also designed the new RFPA logo with the Reformation "TULIP" theme and the latest book catalog.

Using computer technology, Jeff finds it much easier to design a book today. His artistry is seen recently in the titles *Better to Marry, Far Above Rubies, God's Everlasting Covenant of Grace, Saved by Grace, A Watered Garden, Lori, Good Morning, Alice, Ready to Give An Answer*, and the reprinted *Believers and Their Seed*. Designing is still a time-consuming effort, however. "The most spontaneous book cover I ever designed," explains Jeff, "took about 1-1/2 hours whereas some take weeks or months." Jeff's daughter Mindy helps him on many of his RFPA projects.

Jeff is a graduate of Kendall College of Art & Design in Grand Rapids where he majored in advertising/graphic design. Today he and a partner run Allied Art & Photography, an art design studio in Kalamazoo.

### Book Club Membership Results in Benefits For Reader and Publisher

One of the most helpful ways to support the RFPA financially is to belong to the "Book Club."

The benefit to club members is receiving each newly published RFPA book as published at a 35% discount with no shipping charge. Any time a member wishes to order titles, he is entitled to the 35% discount. The program does not work like other book clubs where the purchaser decides whether or not to buy each title mailed. RFPA Book Club members (there are now 850 of them) agree to accept each book received, thus providing enough

sales for the association to fund its next venture. (Reprints and curriculum materials for children are not automatically sent to club members.) By joining the Book Club, customers never miss a title and watch their home libraries grow. They may decide to use certain titles for gift giving, too.

Those wishing to join the Book Club may send the RFPA their name, address, and request for Book Club membership. Please specify which church if you attend a Protestant Reformed church.

### Revised Marriage Book

(continued from page 1)

The author reworked his *Marriage* book, adding a whole new section entitled "An Historical Study of Marriage," which doubles the size of the book. He also made revisions to the original, especially with regard to the explanation of I Corinthians 7:10,11 that sheds light on the controversial "exception clause" in Matthew 19:9. Scripture and name indexes have been added.

The author states that the new book "makes a case for the position that the Protestant Reformed stand on marriage is no novelty but is the stand that the (western) church took for some 1,000 years after the apostolic era." He explains in a new chapter, "The Development of Herman Hoeksema," how even Hoeksema took the view of the Reformers for some time until his study of Scripture led him to take a bold stand that has strengthened Protestant Reformed family life ever since.

In a "Contemporary Lawlessness" chapter, the author points out the views on marriage that support unbiblical teachings. He names denominations and such churchmen as the 'spineless evangelicals' as being responsible for bringing Christian families into marital chaos, destructive to the very church itself and not befitting the symbol of God's unbroken covenant with His people.

### *Come, Ye Children*

written by Gertrude Hoeksema  
illustrated by Jeff Steenholdt

4,100 copies of *Come, Ye Children: A Bible Storybook for Young Children* were published by the RFPA in 1983. This popular book will be reprinted in November since the entire stock is now sold out, and backorders are waiting to be filled.

*Come, Ye Children* has proved an ideal book to read to young children after a meal as part of family devotions or while putting the youngsters to bed. The author never fails to provide a spiritual application along with her Bible history.



## Global Audience Captured By New RFPA Website

[www.iserv.net/~rfpa](http://www.iserv.net/~rfpa) is an Internet site to visit. It is the RFPA's homepage.

Every week RFPA staff find messages from visitors to its website, which registers between 50-100 "hits" a month now. Sometimes the person visiting the homepage is reaching the RFPA from a foreign country, like a man from Korea who recently keyed in a request to become a member of the Book Club. He also ordered 17 books.

Ordinarily no monthly fee is charged to non-profit organizations hooking up to a server. The RFPA would qualify, but it decided to pay \$30.00 a month to provide its customers with a secure credit card electronic charging system.

Tim Hanco from Hope Church in Walker volunteered to set up the website and did a masterful job of making it user friendly. Tim continues to add "links" to other website locations so that people searching for Reformed topics under a variety of headings will know that the RFPA exists.

When you arrive at the website, you will see how easy it is to get information on the RFPA and all it has to offer. Just click on one of the blue book titles along the left of the screen, and that will bring up a photograph of the book cover in color and a description of the book from the current RFPA catalog along with its price.

If you want to order a title, you can do so by typing in your name, address, and credit card number. Even "hunt and peck" types can manage this!

The website also allows you to subscribe to the *Standard Bearer*, to read meditations from a current SB issue, and to click on links that take you to homepages of Protestant Reformed churches and their sister churches. It was while looking for websites on Reformed topics that a businessman in Singapore discovered the website of the Loveland, Colo., PR Church. From there he learned that a sister church in Singapore was located two blocks from his home!

## 'Top Ten' Titles of RFPA

Even a religious book publisher can have a "Top Ten." Final figures for books sold from Sept. 1996 - Aug. 1997 revealed the following titles to be the best sellers:

- 1—**Suffer Little Children** (5-book set, Bible curriculum, grades 1-3), by Gertrude Hoeksema.
- 2—**Show Me Thy Ways** (6-book intermediate Bible curriculum), by Gertrude Hoeksema.
- 3—**Come Ye Children, A Bible Storybook for Young Children**, by Gertrude Hoeksema.
- 4—**Better to Marry**, by David J. Engelsma.
- 5—**Hyper-Calvinism and the Call of the Gospel**, by David J. Engelsma.
- 6—**Far Above Rubies**, compiled by Herman Hanko.
- 7—**Saved by Grace**, by Ronald Cammenga and Ronald Hanko.
- 8—**Reformed Dogmatics**, by Herman Hoeksema.
- 9—**Calvin's Calvinism**, by John Calvin.
- 10—**Marriage: The Mystery of Christ and the Church**, by David J. Engelsma.

Which of the more than 50 RFPA titles will be the 1997-98 "Top Ten"? Those who attend the annual meeting, Thursday, Sept. 24, will be the first to know.

## Credit Cards Accepted For Convenience of RFPA Customers

Credit card ordering now makes paying for RFPA publications more convenient. Via phone, fax, letter, or website, orders are a simple and safe procedure. See website address in first sentence of website article on this page.

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