

# PERSPECTIVE

**Institute for Christian Studies**

*Christian graduate education for over 30 years*

Volume 34, Issue 3, September 2000



## ICS SUMMER CONFERENCES: ALBERTA

### Experiencing God in all aspects of life

*Record attendance filled the camp with chatter and the joyful greetings as new and old friends saw one another again for the annual ICS conference in Alberta.*

by **Elizabeth Kroon**, Conference Attendee

**D**eer Valley Meadows was alive with anticipation on the August long weekend. A record attendance compared to the last number of years filled the camp with chatter and the joyful greetings as new and old friends saw one another again for the annual ICS conference in Alberta. Of the 168 adults registered for the full weekend, 60 were first time attendees. We also experienced a dramatic shift in the age of attendees as many younger families came to spend the weekend. 108 children and teens challenged the talents and resources of the volunteer nursery staff, craft and teen leaders.

The weekend opened on Friday evening with welcome and devotions lead by Dr. Harry Van Belle – our MC. This was followed by a bonfire and wiener roast – a nightly tradition.

The weather cooperated and many people visited late into the night every night.

The flowing morning we were introduced to Dr. James Schaap. Throughout the weekend Dr. Schaap read to us with great oratory style some of his stories. We were brought face to face with everyday occurrences - a mother, daughter and a wedding; father, son and life and death; infidelity and friendship; tradition and the true meaning of communion. We were able to see parts of ourselves in these quite different stories and were brought to tears and laughter as we lived through

each episode. Storytelling came alive as these stories opened the door for many to start sharing their own story. We need to experience God in all aspects of our lives – in these day-to-day moments – because this is the fabric of our lives that we bring daily to God in prayer.

Rev. Roy Berkenbosch led the Sunday



morning service with meaningful liturgy and recital of the “The War of the Dragon”. Communion followed with everyone standing in a large circle as we passed on the elements to one another.

These few words cannot completely express the nuances of the whole weekend. It was a very full and fulfilling weekend. Thanks be to God for his faithfulness.

*(Continued on page 3)*

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*Affiliate Member of the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto*

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**“  
Universidad  
Cristiana  
Latinoamericana  
has about 1400  
students, and  
enrolment is  
expected to  
grow to 5,000  
in the next five  
or six years!  
Dr. Proano  
wants to find  
ways and  
means of  
helping his  
faculty  
members grow  
as Christian  
scholars, but is  
very unhappy  
with the  
resources  
currently  
available.  
”**

## Global challenge

**T**he Institute's "Directions" statement, adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1999, includes a commitment to "globalize the reach of our programming by offering innovative distance learning courses for credit and continuing education." For me, the recent conference sponsored by the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE) underscored the immense potential for this kind of outreach (see report at right).

At the IAPCHE event I met Patricio Proano, head of the Universidad Cristiana Latinoamericana in Quito, Ecuador. This institution already has about 1400 students, and enrolment is expected to grow to 5,000 in the next five or six years! Dr. Proano wants to find ways and means of helping his faculty members grow as Christian scholars, but is very unhappy with the resources currently available. Dr. Dan Antwi faces similar problems at Central University College, a rapidly growing institution in Accra, Ghana. John Medendorp, who is associated with an emerging evangelical university in the Dominican Republic, told me that professors from that school often look to the University of Havana in communist Cuba for their master's and doctoral training!

These three leaders all stressed that the long-term development of vibrant Christian learning at their institutions requires courses and programs designed to help faculty members develop as Christian scholars. But all three also stressed that such programs must be accessible; neither the individual scholars nor the institutions can afford long absences for study in North America.

ICS degree programs currently require a minimum of two years of study in Toronto. The traditional model of face-to-face learning for an extended period of time has clear advantages. But it is also clear that this traditional model is not well suited to serving scholars in emerging institutions in areas such as Africa and Latin America. For them, gaining access to Christian academic resources is the key issue, and any access (even without all the benefits of face-to-face interaction) is an improvement.

The ICS "Directions" statement places these exciting issues squarely on our institutional agenda. Can and should we explore new ways to serve Christian scholars around the globe? Is it realistic to think in these terms, given our limited resources? We are committed to dealing with these questions with both vision and realism. And we seek your advice and prayers as we contemplate immense new challenges.

## IAPCHE 2000

### Service to individual scholars and institutions

**N**inety Christian higher education leaders from 27 nations gathered on the campus of Dordt College in Iowa (USA) from August 12-16 for a strategic planning conference organized by the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE). This 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary event gave IAPCHE an opportunity to refocus by exploring how it can best be of service to individual scholars and institutions, especially in areas of the world where Christian higher education is growing by leaps and bounds.

After an opening celebration and worship, conference participants spent a busy day listening to five addresses on the challenges facing Christian higher education in five world regions: Asia/Oceania, Latin America, Africa, North America and Europe. Two days of intensive planning work followed, as participants reconsidered the purposes of IAPCHE and discussed a variety of possible future projects.

ICS personnel played a significant role in the IAPCHE conference. President Harry Fernhout presented a plenary address on "Through the Needle's Eye: A North American Perspective." ICS Librarian Yvonne Barber presented the Faith and Learning Network project, which is designed to make resources on the role of faith in learning available on-line. This project received an enthusiastic endorsement from the conferees.

Before the conference ended participants reviewed the draft of an ambitious long-range plan for IAPCHE. The plan affirms IAPCHE's commitment to the development of integral Christian higher education worldwide through various networking (such as regional conferences) and other activities (such as faculty exchanges and the eventual development of an international Christian Studies certificate). Reflecting the positive spirit of the conference, the plans call for the vigorous development of IAPCHE into a strong organization with sufficient resources to carry out its mission effectively.

The conference allowed colleagues from around the world to share common experiences and learn about each other's challenges. Stories of the amazing growth of Christian institutions in Africa, Latin America and Asia created an air of excitement. And the morning hymns, sung in several languages, were an audible affirmation of the common calling of the conferees: to honour Jesus as Lord in higher education.

## ...A letter of Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God

*Changes in time and circumstances allow us to replace road signs (of Biblical interpretation) without threatening the authority of the Scriptures.*

By Alice & Bastien Stassen, Conference Attendees

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Ontario Conference has come and gone. The theme text was 2 Corinthians 3:3, "You are a letter of Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts." Does this text give us authority to be flexible or creative in our interpretation of the Bible as the Spirit guides us?

Hendrik Hart challenged us in his keynote address to imagine road signs of Biblical interpretation giving us direction (or "Torah") toward our goal. He suggested that changes in time and circumstances allow us to replace these road signs without threatening the authority of the Scriptures. In Sunday's keynote address Sylvia Keesmaat pointed out that the Biblical narrative is incomplete, and that we are part of this unfolding story. We have to search the Scriptural account with "innovative faithfulness" in order to live "imaginatively redemptive, Biblical lives." Richard Middleton, in his sermon, had also urged us to go back and immerse ourselves in the Biblical narrative in order to move forward in the way God intends.

Monday's Panel Discussion was entitled "A Fragmented Culture and the Biblical Worldview." Brian Walsh moderated a discussion featuring panelists Richard Middleton, George Vandervelde, Ron Kuipers and Amanda Benckhuysen. The tough problem of how to dialogue with (and possibly learn from followers) of other faiths was discussed. The panelists and audience alike struggled with the difficulty of making Christianity attractive in today's culture, asking how can we hold onto the Truth without offending others with exclusivity.

Vandervelde reminded us that we never own the Truth, but rather that the Truth claims us. Henk Hart explained that the problem is exacerbated by the different meanings of the word "truth" itself. No magic answer was worked



Members of the band at the Ontario Summer Conference: Doug Romanov (centre) and Sara Hildebrand (right)



Enjoying a lighter moment at the Ontario Summer Conference are (from left to right) Andrea Kloet, Dory Strikwerda, Debra VanNoord, Andrew Webber, Helen Verkuyl-Boyko



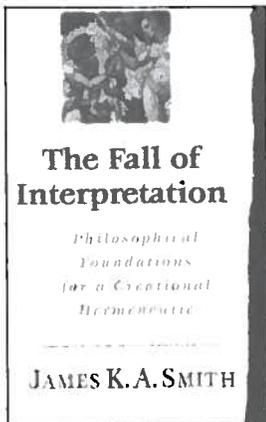
Wynne VanderZande (left), chats with Henk Hart and Lena Joosse (right) at the Ontario Summer Conference. In the background Harry VanderZande and Peter VanEgmond.

out, but Kuipers perhaps expressed the problem most succinctly when he suggested that established Christianity is seen by people today as providing prepackaged answers rather than allowing them space to live with their questions.

If ICS can continue to host Summer Conferences of this caliber, attendance at future ones is very highly recommended!

## The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic.

by James K.A. Smith



ICS alumnus James Smith surveys the current hermeneutic discussion, identifying three traditions and how they understand interpretation: a present immediacy model, an eschatological immediacy model and a violent mediation model.

Questioning the foundational assumptions that these models

share, Smith deftly draws on and reworks Augustine's biblical understanding of the goodness of creation to propose a creational-pneumatic model of hermeneutics.

### Distance Education Courses

ICS and the National Institute for Christian Education (NICE), in Australia, are partners in delivering graduate level courses to teachers across North America. Distance education techniques, allow participants access to courses normally out of their reach.

#### October 2000 – January 2001

**Ways of Learning (Educational Psychology)** enables educators to develop an understanding of the learning process by investigating significant theories about learning styles and multiple intelligences. Participants are encouraged to evaluate these theories for their consistency with a Christian worldview, and to integrate insights in a coherent view of learning that embodies this worldview. Participants are also encouraged to develop strategies for more effective learning, incorporating both theoretical insights and observations from the participant's own experience.

#### February 2001

**Biblical Foundations for Educational Decision Making** is approved for the CSI Administrator Education Program and for Area II and IV of the OCSTA Christian School Teachers Certificate.

For more information or to register please contact: Jeanne Jordan-Awang, Academic Administrative Assistant, 416-979-2331 x234, toll free 1-888-326-5347 or [jjordanawang@icscanada.edu](mailto:jjordanawang@icscanada.edu).

### STUDENT LETTER

## Language, Truth, and Postmodern Culture

This short letter is meant to record a few words in praise of the seminar on "Language, Truth, and Postmodern Culture" held at the Institute for Christian Studies earlier this summer. No doubt, I would have been content just for the opportunity provided by the seminar to discuss the work of Martin Heidegger, Richard Rorty, and Jacques Derrida. But, happily, the seminar proved to be much richer than I could have expected. From the outset the seminar leaders – Lambert Zuidervaart, Hendrik Hart, and Jim Olthuis – created an open and engaging context for the seminar participants.

While concentrating on the specific texts of these three thinkers, they were unfailingly responsive to the interests and perspectives of the participants. I found very helpful their ability to combine close interpretive attention to the focal texts with critical reflection on the larger issues and implications raised in these texts. The leaders provided a very conducive atmosphere for our discussions that continued well beyond the scheduled seminar meetings, often literally spilling out into the streets and cafes of Toronto!

This was the most important aspect for me because it facilitated the kind of mutual learning from other participants that one hopes for with such a seminar. In fact, even within these three short weeks there emerged an experience of intellectual community that, for me at least, is exceedingly rare and perhaps even unique. Such a fulfilling experience, I believe, would not have been possible without the spirit of generosity that prevailed among the seminar leaders and the support staff at the Institute. This no doubt had everything to do with the gift of their personalities as well as their talents. To them – and to the other participants – I would like to give my heart-felt thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel L. Tate, Ph.D.,  
Philosophy Department,  
St. Bonaventure University

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you know someone with skills, talent and time to offer please pass this newsletter onto them. At ICS we are always happy to receive new volunteers. Currently, we have a variety of volunteer openings available.

If you are interested in volunteering at ICS please contact the Volunteer Coordinator:

Carol Lammers at  
416-979-2331 x227  
or  
clammers  
@icscanada.edu.

## HOUSING NEEDED!

Due to an increase in enrollment for the Fall semester, ICS is looking for housing for a family of four in the Toronto area.

If you have an apartment or home for rent, or know of a suitable possibility, please contact

Jeanne Jordan-Awang.  
Tel: 416-979-2331  
x234  
Fax: 416-979-2332  
or  
[jjordanawang@icscanada.edu](mailto:jjordanawang@icscanada.edu)

## Connie Kuipers leaves for new challenge



On July 14, ICS said goodbye to **Connie Kuipers** who had capably handled the roles of events planning and communications for the past four and a half years. The Institute wishes her well as she goes on to a new challenge in the field of training and facilitation.

## New staffing, new ideas, new energy

Since **Mike den Haan** left in the early spring, ICS has been restructuring its development department. The Institute is pleased to announce the following appointments to fill roles carried out previously by Mike and Connie. **Jan van der Woerd** has been appointed to the position of Marketing Manager. Jan will oversee all communications functions at ICS and play an integral role in fundraising. **Ron McClory** has been appointed to the part-time position of Director of Major Gifts Development. Carol Lammers who has been with ICS for the past two years will take on an expanded role in membership and constituency development. Her new title is Constituency Relations Manager.

## New *Perspective* editor, new Conference Coordinator



In addition, some other shifts have taken place in duties at ICS. ICS librarian, **Yvonne Barber** will also edit *Perspective* and organize the 2001 Ontario Summer Conference. Yvonne and Carol Lammers took over organizing the 2000 Ontario Summer Conference in the final couple of

months. We will also be hiring an additional part-time staff member in September to assist in the areas of events planning and communications.

## New team

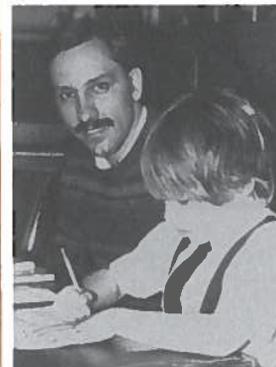
While these changes could create a feeling of instability, there is a great deal of enthusiasm about the new faces of the ICS staff. Part of the change has been to develop staff work plans around a set of new strategies developed early this summer. These strategies include areas of fundraising, student recruitment and retention, and communications. Five strategy areas were determined and staff teams were developed around each. This has helped to cement a team spirit amongst staff. Harry Fernhout, ICS President, stated, "The level of competence on this new team should be of great help in meeting the challenges facing ICS in the coming year or two."

## New caretaker

Lastly, though not less importantly, ICS has a new caretaker. **Ivor Sarjoo** was hired to be the new caretaker for the 229 College Street building managed by ICS; taking over from a contractor who previously did the job. While Ivor's job will be to take care of all of the buildings tenants, he will spend part of his time keeping the ICS facilities running smoothly and looking smart.

## Courses for Fall 2000

Philosophy of Education Wisdom and Schooling	Doug Blomberg Doug Blomberg
Art and the Aesthetic	Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin
Christian Visions of the Political Community	Jonathan Chaplin
Worldview Foundations	Carroll Guen Hart
Biblical Foundations Jesus and the Third Quest	Sylvia Keesmaat Sylvia Keesmaat
Philosophical Anthro- pology 20th Century Theories of Inter- subjectivity,	Jim Olthius
Philosophizing Between Vogues and Traditions	Robert Sweetman
Philosophical Foundations	Bob Sweetman
Modern Philosophy	Vaden House
Church, Kingdom, World	George VanderVelde



**Mike Goheen** successfully defended his doctoral thesis at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

Former Doctoral student **Kevin O'Brien** and his wife Loretta gave birth to their second son, Nathan John, on July 14.



**David Smith** successfully defended his doctoral thesis entitled *Modern Language Pedagogy, Spiritual Development and Christian Faith: A Study of their Interrelationships in England*, on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. This fall he will be joining the German Department at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



On July 14, **Sylvia Keesmaat** (Biblical Studies and Hermeneutics) presented a paper on "The New Testament Context of the Song of Mary" at a conference on worship at Redeemer College. She also had commentary pieces on Colossians 3.18-4.1 published in the July and August issues of *Third Way*.

**Doug Blomberg** (Philosophy of Education) is still waiting to receive the necessary permit from the Canadian consulate in Sydney to allow him to come to ICS at the

beginning of September. We pray that this hurdle will be lifted and that he will arrive on time to begin his scheduled courses this fall.

At the ICS Family Conference **Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin** (Philosophical Aesthetics) presented a multi-media interactive workshop on the fine line between imaging and idolatry in both verbal and visual representations of God.

Together with research assistant, Chris Cuthill, she has also been working on the preparation of a second edition of her co-authored book *Art and Soul*, due to be published by a new English publisher called Piquant, in conjunction with a North American publisher, in the fall of 2001. A further time has been spent on research on the aesthetics of the french phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who will feature in her core

course in the fall.



**Hendrik Hart** (Systematic Philosophy/Dean) is trying to slow down somewhat from the hectic pace of activities from May through August. He continues to devote time to the scholarly side of his assignments besides his demanding schedule as dean with as much energy as he has. He is getting three doctoral students ready for either their comprehensive examination or their actual thesis defense, while he is also working on four articles that are all behind schedule. One is a continuation of his debate with atheist Kai Nielsen, while another

is for a Dutch Theological journal and it, too, is connected with that debate. The other two concern discussions within the reformational intellectual tradition, one being part of a joint faculty project on Christian scholarship, while the other grows out of a discussion with Henk Geertsema of the Free University about the reformational view of God's order for creation.

**Jonathan Chaplin** (Political Theory) participated in a colloquium on 'The Modern State, Civil Society and the Future of Freedom in the Thought of Robert Nisbet', Charleston, South Carolina, June 8-11. During the month of July, Jonathan taught a course on 'History and Foundations of Christian Political Thought' within the 'Civitas Summer Institute' in Washington DC, to 12 American doctoral candidates. The Civitas Program is organised

by the Center for Public Justice, a directed by ICS alumnus Keith Pavlischek. As well, we look forward to reading his article due to appear in the September issue of *Pro Rege*, entitled 'Silencing the Silencers: Reclaiming a Public Voice for Christian Faith'.



**Jim Olthius** (Philosophical Theology) presented two successful lectures on "Anger", one for teens and another for adults attending the Ontario Summer Conference. Jim continues to work on his writing in the area of psychotherapy.



## Sabbatical highlights

George Vandervelde (Systematic Theology)

To spend four months of my half-year sabbatical in England is itself a highlight. Bea and I lived in a village whose population swelled by 0.67% merely by virtue of our moving in, and whose only church increased its average attendance by a whopping 20% by our presence. Getting up at six or six-thirty to be greeted by a herd of cows chewing the cud was certainly more conducive to reflection and meditation than the hum of traffic on Toronto streets. A half-hour train ride would take me to Oxford, where I could take advantage of the magnificent ancient libraries. Just how ancient became obvious when

I was asked to swear an oath that contained the following promise: "I hereby undertake . . . not to bring into the library nor to kindle therein any fire or flame, nor to smoke in the library."

**"The other project involves something I have toyed with for quite some time: to write a semi-popular book about an unpopular subject, namely, election or predestination."**

I decided to spend part of my sabbatical elsewhere, however, not so much to find more books, but to have the space to write. Reading (one more book, one more article) can become the enemy of writing. I worked on two projects.

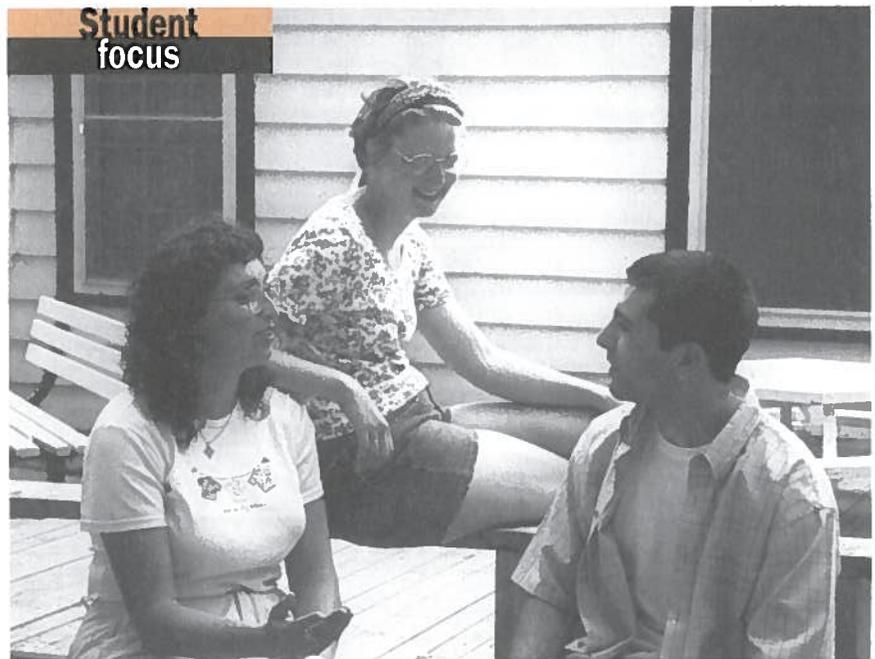
One concerns the way in which human life, and creational life generally, is to image God. Increasingly, Christian scholars of various traditions argue that since God is triune, some-

thing of the relations among Father, Son, and Spirit, ought to be reflected in the make-up of the church, and even of social structures. So, to know what the church should look like, we need to know what the triune God looks like.

The other project involves something I have toyed with for quite some time: to write a semi-popular book about an unpopular subject, namely, election or predestination. That interest is prompted by various paradoxes. Let me name two. For my own immediate faith community, the Christian Reformed Church, the notion of predestination is one of its distinctives. Yet for many of its members the notion of predestination is either a dead doctrine, or functions as a dead weight. To them it suggests fate and exclusivism and thus sounds the death knell of mission and evangelism. That is the Reformed paradox. But one could speak also of an Evangelical paradox. In most of evangelicalism, the notion of predestination is considered to be John Calvin's strange invention, to which some Christians inexplicably adhere. The paradox here is that the good book, which most Evangelicals hold to have the final say in these matters, devotes more than three consecutive chapters to this teaching. No other biblical doctrine gets similar "coverage." The CRC and the Evangelical paradoxes are sufficiently intriguing to impel a systematic theologian to reach for pen or keyboard. As it turned out, it was the topic on which I spent most of my writing time.

Sabbaticals are unpredictable also in other ways. Soon after we arrived in the UK, I received an invitation to attend one of the Jubilee events convoked by Pope John Paul II. The pontiff has put great store in organizing an event commemorating the martyrs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Because the Pope has for some time underscored the fact that martyrs are the most powerful witnesses to the unity of the faith, he wanted the commemoration to be an ecumenical event. As chair of the Task Force on Ecumenical Issues of the World Evangelical Fellowship, I was there representing this worldwide body of Christians. The vesper service was led by the Pope at the Coliseum in Rome on May 7. It was a moving service, lasting almost three hours. In the liturgy I read the testimony of a Catholic woman in China who suffered in work camps and jails because of her Christian convictions. To give voice to the confession of a sister suffering for Christ, resounding off the walls of the Coliseum, where so many made their final testimony, was both moving and unsettling.

A highlight towards the end of my sabbatical was the successful doctoral thesis defence by my friend, colleague, and former student, Mike Goheen, a professor at Redeemer College. It was a joy and privilege for me, as co-supervisor, to participate in the proceedings at the University of Utrecht, and to celebrate this major event with Mike and his family.



*Pam Trondson (left), Director of Student Services and incoming students Charlene Jongejan and Sam Gassanov.*

## Student body grows!

ICS has an exciting year ahead! There has been an increase in enrollment and ICS finds itself in a year of growth. At least eleven new students will be joining our community in the fall bringing a variety of backgrounds and interests that will enrich the life of the ICS community. And they are excited! Let me briefly mention their names and tell you about a few of them more in-depth, so that you too will be excited about the good things that this year holds. Our new students: **Michael De Moor, Sam Gassanov, Alvin Gongora, Loretta Jaunzarins, Charleen Jongejan, Eric Kamphof, Christian Nwaopara, Martijn Vroom and Andrew Tenyenhuis.**

Eric Kamphof comes to us from King's University College in Edmonton.

He and his wife Karen will both be studying, she at the Royal Conservatory in music and Eric with Bob Sweetman in the History of Philosophy/Philosophy.

We are pleased that visa requirements were met so that Alvin Gongora could come to us from Bogota, Columbia, to prepare for a Ph.D. program. He and his family are familiar with Toronto, as Alvin did studies at Tyndale College. He currently works with the Latin America Mission in Columbia.

Loretta Jaunzarins successfully defended her thesis this summer and hopes to become a minister in the United Church in the future. In the meantime, she begins the MPhilF program full-time this fall.

Please pray for wisdom for our new and returning students.

Pray that as each student seeks to grasp new ideas and to grow in understanding that they will also grow in faith. And, as this exciting year unfolds, pray that we will all grow together in community.

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\*Not including people who are still completing the application process or those who will be taking individual courses.

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In the last issue of *Perspective*, you met ICS students **Max Skybin** and **Yana Filippenko**, from the Ukraine. We give thanks with Max and Yana as they have recently received landed immigrant status in Canada. We realize that this has been a long awaited process, and that it will provide a lot of opportunities for them. We join them in giving praise to God!

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<i>Faith in the State: The Peril and Promise of Christian Politics</i> Jonathan Chaplin, Inaugural Address	\$ 5.00	_____	\$ _____
<i>The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic</i> , James K.A. Smith	\$32.00	_____	\$ _____
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The cost of printing and distributing *Perspective* is increasing! If you are not a current financial supporter of ICS but wish to continue receiving this newsletter, we request a minimum of \$20(CDN)/year to cover expenses. If you have questions about this please call Yvonne Barber at 416-979-2331 x227.

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