

NEW HORIZONS

— in the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

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FEBRUARY 2016

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New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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Many members of the Presbytery of Philadelphia,
 meeting on November 21 at Grace OPC in Middletown,
 Delaware, visited Forest Presbyterian Church and are
 pictured here in front of their building on West Main
 Street. Grace Church came out of Forest Church in
 1936. Elder Charles DeBoer (Trinity OPC, Easton, Pa.),
 moderator of the presbytery, stands front and center. This
 group went on a tour of the building, which was built in
 1851. (Photo by Drew Harting.)



2 + 2 = 4

AND

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD



TOM SORKNESS AND JOEL BACON //

There is an anecdote, perhaps apocryphal, regarding the founding of the Christian school where we have taught for many years. Cornelius Van Til was part of a small group of people who

helped to form what would eventually become Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy. After it was established, Dr. Van Til visited the school one day and upon entering a classroom saw two things written on the board: “2 + 2 = 4” and “Jesus Christ is Lord.” This, in his estimation, was the epitome of Christian education: two great truths brought together in time and space and presented to young covenant children—two truths that should not be separated. This reality epitomizes the foundation of the Christian school. Built upon this foundation, Christian education should be covenantal, catechetical, cultural, Reformational, and doxological.

Five Pillars of Christian Education

It is the conviction of parents, following the demands of the covenant, that leads them to place their children in the Christian school—to always place them in the context of truth. Deuteronomy 6 reminds us that we are to teach our children God’s laws when we lie down, when we rise up, and when we walk along the way. Placing our

children under the teaching of competent, dedicated, and loving Christian teachers seeks to fulfill that command.

Catechetically, we are to impress the truths of God’s Word and his world upon the hearts and minds of our children. Supremely, this means teaching them God’s plan of redemption, but along with this to expose them to the way God formed the world and sustains and governs it through his providence.

Next, parents need to impress upon their children that human beings develop culture because they are image bearers. The impetus for the arts, scientific inquiry, and even commercial pursuits comes from the fact that we think God’s thoughts after him. Impressing this on students shows that the impulses of man to enter into and make culture is good and intended by God.

Reformationally, we are called to bring God’s Word to bear in a world that has been so wracked and perverted by sin that man endeavors no longer to bring glory to his Maker, but to glorify himself. We are called to redeem the culture in which we live, to turn

our pursuits back to God and to present them to him for his glory. Although this is accomplished imperfectly, it is our intention to do such things in faith, so that they might be presented to the Father in righteousness.

Finally, all we do in a Christian school should involve our children giving praise and glory to our Creator and Redeemer in all areas of life. After all, man’s ultimate purpose is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

What follows are but two examples of how such purposes play out in the classroom. Both examples flow from the truths of the catechism—the first from teaching about the physical universe (written by Joel Bacon), and the second from teaching about the social universe (by Tom Sorkness).

The Physical Sciences

“God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.” That short statement from the Shorter Catechism encapsulates the Bible’s teaching about the One who

“created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). What I want my students to understand is that the God who made everything is not a mere concept, but the One who is! As a teacher of high school chemistry and physics, I have many opportunities to explore and express his being and attributes with my students.

We are told in Romans 1:20 that “his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.” One of God’s invisible attributes is infinitude. I teach that the scale of the universe—from the very, very large to the very, very small—bears silent but powerful evidence of God’s infinitude, in all its aspects.

For example, if the Sun were the size of a mm-sized dot (•), Earth would be too small to be seen without a microscope and it would be a bit over 4 inches from that dot. Pluto would be about 14 feet away from the dot, and the next nearest star would be about 18 miles away! In between is pretty much empty space. Our scaled-down Milky Way galaxy would stretch out almost 2 million miles, more than seven times the actual distance to the moon! I have a mural on one wall that demonstrates the scale of the planets, the solar system, and some famous stars. It is a daily reminder to the students of God’s infinitude.

King David had a clear idea of the immensity and beauty of the heavens and expressed it in the Psalms. On clear evenings, my physics students gaze upon virtually the same sky and echo David’s awe, “What is man that you are mindful of him?” (Ps. 8:4). Lest they go down the wrong path and conclude that man is nothing special, we read the whole psalm. The One who created the universe and maintains it is mindful of each of his children. To those who say, “The cosmos is all there was, all there is, and all there ever will be,” we say, “nonsense!” “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Ps. 14:1).

As far as size goes, chemistry stu-

dents deal with the smallest particles of matter. They learn that there are more atoms in a pinhead than there are leaves on trees in the whole world! At the same time, they confront the very large as we learn about the mole concept. A mole of any substance, by definition, consists of approximately 6.022×10^{23} units of it—the number of atoms in 12 grams of carbon-12. This huge number is called Avogadro’s number, and to help students get the big picture, they count the number of drops in 10 mL of water. They then figure out how much water it would take to have an Avogadro’s number of drops. It turns out to be enough water to cover the United States to a depth of about 2 miles! In considering such things, it is my intention that students be left in awe of the majesty—the infinitude—of God, the Creator and sustainer of the universe.

The Social Sciences

So, what of the social universe? That man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever is well known to our students, but they still need to discern how that plays out. As they examine Scripture, they see that although God’s plan for each person is providentially unique, the creation ordinances point to the fact that he has a common will for all mankind. As they consider Genesis, they discover those ordinances: labor, marriage, and Sabbath rest. These ordinances Adam followed to the glory of God, but they were deeply affected by his fall into sin. Yet, they were not abrogated. They are still God’s ordinances for us today.

But what about sin and its devastating effects? God has solved that problem through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, who has produced the firstfruits of a new creation—one now realized, yet still to come.

But what about the here and now? The new heavens and earth have not yet arrived; man is in conflict with his fellow man. Further study of Scripture, such as Romans 13, alerts the students to God’s temporal plan: the civil magistrate as God’s instrument of common

grace. They learn that the purpose of civil government is to promote the good and restrain evil.

As we launch into our yearlong study of civics, students come to see a wide variety of governmental constructs and ideologies made manifest over time. Some systems have sought to maintain human dignity, recognizing man as an image bearer of God, but others have been not only abusive, but ultimately antithetical to God. Totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century—at both ends of the political spectrum—have not only sought to brutally control human beings, but have even challenged God’s authority by redefining and redirecting the creation ordinances.

As the students read Abraham Kuyper, they note that according to late nineteenth-century German philosophical pantheism, the state has undergone an apotheosis: it has replaced God and has become God. In the end, as the students examine the social universe, and particularly the civil order, from the perspective of Scripture, they are provided a gauge by which to assess the manifestation of man’s organization throughout the ages, both civil and otherwise. This provides them with a basis for true judgment as they live in this world.

Conclusion

The Christian school, then, provides the way for covenant children to fully appreciate the world in which God has placed them. At Phil-Mont, it is through the lens of Scripture that this is accomplished. Only by using the Bible can covenant children come to full knowledge of who man is in relation to God, his fellow man, and the world in which he lives—and ultimately to direct their lives to the glory of God as he shapes and reshapes that world. Whether it is $2 + 2$ or 6.022×10^{23} , the student in the end knows that Jesus Christ is indeed Lord! □

Mr. Sorkness (left in photo) is an elder at Cornerstone OPC in Ambler, Pa. Mr. Bacon is a deacon at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.

OUR HOMESCHOOLING EXPERIENCE—PLUS A CLASSICAL SCHOOL



THOMAS AND JULIA CHURCH // We “officially” homeschooled our seven children, from pre-K through twelfth grade. Although they were homeschooled in name, we had lots of help along the way. During the grammar years, we relied heavily on

Calvert School Home Instruction Courses, at times even using their teacher advisory service. As we had preschoolers and various grade levels, an organized course of enriched instruction was invaluable.

Beginning in sixth grade, the day-by-day teacher’s manual was written to the student himself, encouraging our children to be more self-directed in their formal education. Since Calvert is not a “Christian” curriculum, it was necessary for us to apply biblical truth to what we were learning, which proved to be excellent preparation for when all seven of our children went to secular universities.

Our Many Helps in Homeschooling

For one particularly challenging grammar school year, we were able to hire a recent college graduate from our congregation to work with two of our young students. This proved pivotal for us all: the teacher discovered her teaching gifts (she went on to teach at a Christian school and is now home-

schooling her own children) and our family was able to continue its homeschooling path.

As our children began to move into the middle school and high school years, we collaborated with other families and began a “Thursday School” in which we employed teachers (local pastors, parents, and recent college grads) who were qualified in various subjects and who were able to bring a Reformed perspective to their material. The students met in classes on Thursdays and worked at home on the course material on the other four and sometimes even five days. Classroom space was graciously donated by our home congregation, Immanuel OPC in Bellmawr, New Jersey. These were rigorous courses, taught at a college-prep level. They taught not only the subject material, but also Christian worldview, college study techniques, and academic discipline. Some students were even prepared to take the AP exams in specific subjects.

There was one unanticipated benefit of this “school”: families from various denominations were exposed to

Reformed theology. Two of these families eventually joined our congregation and even supplied both our church and our daughter church with elders!

If that was not resource enough, we also had the encouragement of a local Christian school. At our first meeting, the principal told us that “God gave families the responsibility of teaching their children, and we are here to help.” As homeschoolers, our children could choose from the school’s course offerings, attending part-time. They were considered part of the student body and were permitted to participate in almost all activities the school had to offer. When our youngest completed his high school education, his father was even asked to be the graduation speaker. This cooperative education proved to be beneficial to both the school and the students.

The Difficulties and Joys of Homeschooling

This all sounds like our schooling was structured and organized. Not so in the daily running. I would say that

our homeschooling day, on the whole, was somewhat amorphous and chaotic. It was a true picture of life on this side of the fall. What an opportunity it was to turn from subsequent frustration to faith! And that is where the true benefit was: spiritual growth.

Homeschooling is both emotionally taxing and labor intensive, so we entered into it with much prayer, thought, and commitment. As our first child approached the kindergarten sign-up deadline, we discerned that he was not quite ready for structured learning away from home. Paradoxically, we were encouraged to take up the task of teaching him because of instruction that Julia received from a local public school's early childhood education training group for moms of preschoolers. We were also told by a school teacher that it was critical for students in the early years to get help at home. The first-year progress of our son was so good that we were motivated to continue. Each year we reassessed both our family's needs and our resources, always remaining open to beneficial changes. Homeschooling enabled us to play to our individual children's strengths, while addressing weaknesses. Before too long, we were seeing so much benefit—not only academically, but especially spiritually—that homeschooling became our great joy.

All seven of our children, now grown and walking with the Lord, went on to successful undergraduate studies,

where they were leaders in their campus Christian group, local church, pro-life group, residence, and even a fraternity. We are blessed with a family musician, a pediatric nurse, a theologian, a historian, a nutritionist, a lawyer, and even a neurosurgeon. Now they are becoming wonderful parents of the next generation!

A Classical Christian School

And what of that next generation? Of course, we are home school advocates for our grandchildren. We are encouraging their parents to consider homeschooling, and some are being homeschooled right now. Nevertheless, we know that a good school that helps parents with their responsibility to teach their children is a wonderful asset. So we are pleased that two of our grandchildren are now attending Tall Oaks Classical Christian School in New Castle, Delaware.

The classical school definitely provides a contrast with homeschooling. While our children at times were homeschooled in their pajamas, the classical school requires a full uniform. The whole family of our two grandchildren in the classical school is loaded into a car for the morning drive across the bridge from New Jersey to Delaware. Once at school, the students join for prayer and the singing of a hymn (sometimes a psalm sung a cappella) before going to their classrooms. There are

no Bible classes at the school, because all studies are infused with the Bible and the Christian worldview. The classical method of instruction recognizes three levels of learning and thinking, together known as the Trivium. These three are the Grammar, the Dialectic, and the Rhetoric stages, corresponding to the biblical terms knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. The Grammar stage, K through sixth grade, is when the students learn the facts of their subjects through lots of memorization, often in song and hands-on learning. The Dialectic, grades 7–9, is when the facts learned are now used in logical thinking and analytical reasoning. During the Rhetoric stage, grades 10–12, the students conduct research, form their own conclusions, and effectively communicate their understanding. Students graduate from high school having written and defended a thesis. Along with lots of courses in music, art, and science, unique courses such as rhetoric, logic, Latin, Greek, and even etiquette are studied. Days, of course, are long and demanding for students, and travel time and tuition payments are involved for committed parents.

With this wealth of educational background, what do we recommend to young parents? Parenting is a full-time job—not just until kindergarten begins, but until high school graduation. Don't give your responsibility over to others, but wisely use the wealth of resources available. Be realistic, knowing that we live this side of the Fall and that whatever course we take is never going to be perfect. Assess your gifts and resources and your children's needs. Keep the goal of maturity in Christ before you, that your children "may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:9–10). □

Thomas Church is the pastor of Immanuel OPC in Bellmawr, New Jersey. Julia is his wife.



The Church family in May 2015 (Julia and Thomas at the far right)

HOMESCHOOL CO-OP CELEBRATES 20 YEARS



ELISABETH AND KATHERINE
DELLAROVA AND STEPHANIE
FARRELL // “I’m very fond of pop-
corn,” said administrator Mary Capal-
do, “and the beginning of the LEARN

day reminds me of popcorn.” She described the administration office at LEARN (Liberty Education and Resource Network), a Christian homeschool cooperative currently serving about 170 families, which meets once a week at Faith OPC in Pole Tavern (Elmer), New Jersey. In the administration office, the photocopier is constantly running, and people are coming in and out with attendance sheets, questions about class changes, and requests for extra help in a classroom. It gets very noisy, at least for the first two hours. When she’s not answering questions, Capaldo tries to plan classes, teachers, and rooms for the next semester.

How did a co-op of about fifteen homeschooling families in the mid-1990s turn into what it is today—five hundred people of all ages, from all over New Jersey, meeting in a church building? They’re all there for a common purpose—to enrich homeschool education and support other homeschoolers.

LEARN meets on Thursdays for two ten-week semesters, one in the fall and one in the spring. Four hours of classes, with twenty-five classes per hour, are offered for children in four age groups: 3–5, 6–9, 9–12, and 12–18. Parents sign up their children for classes at LEARN’s website,

www.njlearn.org. Parents who aren’t teaching a class are assigned to classrooms as helpers. Teachers charge a small fee for their classes, but it goes entirely to the cost of supplies and textbooks. All of LEARN’s teachers and helpers are parent volunteers.

LEARN was founded by two homeschool moms, Bethann Detwiler and Lori Carbonetta. They wanted to create a support network and a place for homeschoolers to get together and study subjects that parents didn’t feel qualified to teach, or to take an extra-curricular class in a classroom setting. They realized that other homeschoolers felt the same way. Detwiler had experience with cooperatives, so she researched and wrote the beginnings of what are now the LEARN bylaws. They set up meetings with Faith OPC’s then pastor, David Cummings. The group launched LEARN in the fall of 1996.

Some of the original classes are still offered today, and some of the early families are still attending. Susan Hartman is a mother to four sons and a longtime LEARN teacher. In her twenty years of teaching, she has taught a variety of classes, but she is known for teaching Shakespeare.

“To me, teaching is a ministry,” Hartman explained. In college she ma-

jored in English education with the intent to become a Christian schoolteacher. “But God laid it on my heart to homeschool,” she said. Homeschooling was the perfect opportunity to teach her own children in a Christian environment, and when she joined LEARN, it opened a door for her to teach more students in a classroom setting while still being able to express her faith.

In some cases, the co-op is ministering to the second generation. Katie McDaniel’s mother attended LEARN with two of her sisters. Now Katie, wife of Pastor Steve McDaniel of Providence OPC in Mantua, is at LEARN with her four children. “This is my fourth year, my first time teaching. I enjoy the chance for my kids to be in a classroom setting, to be with other kids their age. They get to do art projects and science experiments we don’t get to do at home,” said McDaniel. “I really appreciate that it’s a ministry of the church. I feel comfortable with who’s running it.”

There’s a lot of behind-the-scenes work that keeps LEARN running smoothly. Picture this: It’s Thursday afternoon at LEARN on week 8 of the semester, and it’s far from uneventful. There’s paint on the floor. The toilets are overflowing. A woman is waiting in the administration office with a question

about church doctrine. Someone has to go to the bank and make a deposit. Making his way from room to room, LEARN's facility director and board chairman addresses each issue with confidence and speed. "At LEARN, my motto is 'wing it.' Sometimes we need to make decisions fast," said Joe Cerone. Joe and his wife, Jennie, and their children have been involved with LEARN since it began. They began attending Faith OPC in 1999. Cerone has served as chairman and as a go-between for the church and the LEARN ministry since 2011, and he's been on the board since 2000.

He said some of the challenges that LEARN has faced over the years are recruiting teachers, helpers, and cleaners; changing rooms in the church into classrooms, then converting them back on Thursday evenings; transitioning from "a paper-driven administration to a computerized system"; and establishing communication between the different ministries that use the church.



Some of the LEARN students

The LEARN board, which has six members, meets every quarter to discuss finances, approve new teachers, address facility or website concerns, or make changes to the LEARN bylaws. Pastor Richard Ellis of Faith OPC is also on the board. "We're so grateful that Pastor Ellis is so pro-homeschooling," said Capaldo, the head administrator. "What many people don't realize is that LEARN is really a ministry of the church. We're governed by the church."

The website is easy to use, and only costs seven dollars each school year per family. It also makes it easier for new families to find LEARN.

Capaldo stressed that it doesn't take just a board and an administration staff to run the co-op. "It takes everyone to run something this big." Cerone agreed: "There are no prima donnas here at LEARN." He explained that everyone, from helpers to teachers to administrators, works hard without complaint.

"For students, my prayer has always been for them to develop a love for learning, to achieve their academic potential, and to grow in their relationship with Jesus," said Detwiler. During her time at LEARN, Milne has noticed that it isn't just homeschooling that unites them. "It's all centered around the lordship of Christ. That's the true common bond we all have. God has blessed this ministry." She added that the close friendships she's made through LEARN have encouraged her in her family's homeschooling journey. "I would never have been able to continue homeschooling my kids for fifteen years without LEARN. It's not just a homeschool co-op. It's our family." □

Twins Elisabeth (at left in photo) and Katherine DellaRova are students in Stephanie Farrell's newsletter class at LEARN.

Covenant Classical Academy

A small group of homeschool families, eight in all this semester, meets on Fridays at New Hope OPC in Bridgeton, New Jersey, for a seven-hour day at a co-op built on classical Christian education. Tracey Taylor, Pastor Claude Taylor's wife, oversees the co-op. She taught at LEARN because of her ties to Faith OPC. "I never thought I would homeschool my kids. I was really impressed with the homeschool kids. I met an intern at Faith Church who did Classical Conversations. I was completely captivated. It sold me on homeschooling. You can't do Classical Conversations by yourself."

Different from LEARN, Classical Conversations is a core curriculum, not enrichment. "It is very structured, and it needs a group to work." Taylor enlisted a friend to help her. They started the co-op with five OPC families.

Though families have come and gone, the Friday co-op is an intimate one. "It has always been small. That was deliberate from the beginning," said Taylor. "We didn't believe we could handle a large group." One of the benefits of CCA is that "whole families are studying the same material. We coordinate history, science, music, and art."

WHY WE CHOSE PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR OUR BOYS



BARB AND JOHN VAN MEERBEKE // Since many people have strong convictions about how a covenant child should be educated, we thought that the best way to start the conversation would be to share some background about us and the experiences

that influenced our decision about how to educate our children.

We were raised in church-going families. To our knowledge, our parents didn't consider anything but public education. My (Barb's) dad was on the school board. Homeschooling wasn't on people's radar back then.

Faith was meaningful to both of us as we set off for the University of Delaware, so we got involved with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) as soon as we arrived on campus. We connected with a large community of believers. God used Will Metzger, our IVCF staff worker, to encourage our growth in Christ. We were the "guinea pigs" for Will's book, *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel to the Whole Person by Whole People*, now in its fourth edition. We were plugged into small-group Bible studies, and we were encouraged to share our faith in our dorms and classrooms. "Friendship evangelism" was a regular theme. It still is.

We were married during the summer after college, and we set off to the North Shore of Boston to Gordon-

Conwell Theological Seminary. We settled in at First Presbyterian Church—an OP congregation where professors and OP ministers Carl Schauffele, Meredith Kline, and Burton Goddard worshipped.

At First Pres, there was a healthy and loving debate going on about public, Christian, and home schooling. For us, the ideas raised by different parents and educators were interesting and new. Our Christianity was one where living in the world and teaching our children to live in the world was a no-brainer. We believed in a sovereign God, and so our plan to send our children to public school was an extension of our faith. Yet we listened carefully. We didn't have any children yet. We decided that we would try to live in an area where the public school system would provide a quality education. If this was not possible, or if we started to see negative outcomes in terms of how our children were growing and learning, we would reevaluate.

Our children attended schools in North Andover, Massachusetts, and in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Both were

good school systems. We talked a lot to our kids about what went on at school and about their relationships at school. We paid close attention to what they were learning. We got to know their teachers. There were occasionally unpleasant situations, but they provided us with opportunities to talk to our sons about life's challenges. They sought out both Christian and non-Christian friends, and we tried to teach them about how to think and act "Christianly" in the world.

In the public schools, they had access to excellent teachers and facilities. There were excellent processes in place when their learning styles differed from those of other students. Some teachers commented that there was something different about the Van Meerbeke boys. In these instances, we thanked God for giving us opportunities to talk about our faith. Each of our sons went on to earn degrees at secular universities—Dickinson College, Boston University, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute—where their faith was challenged some

[Continued on page 19]

A MISSIONARY TO ... PHILADELPHIA?

// DAVE HOLMLUND



New regional home missionary Dave Holmlund

My name is Dave Holmlund, and I have just taken up my labors as the new regional home missionary for the OPC's Presbytery of Philadelphia. I'm joined in this new adventure by my beloved family—my wife Elizabeth and our four children: Zach, Ezra, Evie, and Ben.

This particular ministry is so new that, as I sit here at my desk writing (last December for all of you readers holding the current issue), I've only just taken my computer out of the box a few hours ago, following the move from New Hampshire, and it is still another three weeks before I am scheduled to do anything official in my new position! In other words, I feel slightly *presumptuous* to write an article at this point if it is supposed to be a report on all the work I have been doing. However, the timing is probably very good if it might offer insight into *how you can pray* for one of the presbyteries in the OPC where there is much church planting to be done and now a guy in place to help on a full-time basis.

But perhaps we need to stop and explain a couple of things. What does a regional home missionary (RHM) do? I'm going to guess that many *New Horizons* readers do not know the answer to this question.

To put it most simply, an RHM is a minister-at-large for a given presbytery who is available to help with the planting of new congregations. Often this means that he serves as a temporary pastor for a very young mission work until an organizing pastor can be called onto the field. But there are many other kinds of settings where an RHM can be helpful: talking to groups of people who are interested in the OPC, doing the spade work of outreach or evangelism in a community that seems to need the clear gospel witness of an OPC congregation, mentoring church planters who are often thrown into this challenge only months after finishing seminary, and perhaps even serving on the session for young congregations in the presbytery.

Because we believe in connectionalism, which brings churches in a presbytery together to help start new congregations, the ideal is to have OPC ministers and ruling elders from a larger region to assist in all of our OPC church plants. However, OPC ministers and ruling elders are already very busy people, and so it helps a great deal to have a single minister available to focus on the needs of various church-planting endeavors. This is where the RHM comes into the picture. Out of the seventeen presbyteries of the OPC, nine of them have an RHM, and this investment by the presbytery has often proved to be very helpful to make sure that church planting continues with healthy core groups in cities that demonstrate a need for a Reformed and Presbyterian, Bible-believing church.

So, having given this background on what an RHM is supposed to do, that brings up a question for those who are familiar with the OPC: *Is there actually a need for an RHM in the Presbytery of Philadelphia?* The Philadelphia area is at the heart of the Presbyterian tradition in America, and historically it has been a place of strong OPC presence through several churches, the denominational offices, and Westminster Theological Seminary.

The need for church planting with the help of an RHM even in the Presbytery of Philadelphia is clear in several ways. First, even in regions with relatively many Bible-believing congregations, it is a mark of health and biblical faithfulness to continue to plant churches, since the Great Commission demands it. Secondly, while there are several strong OPC congregations close to Westminster Seminary and the OPC denominational offices, there are certainly cities and whole counties within the boundaries of the presbytery that are in great need of new congregations to give faithful witness for the gospel. Our existing churches are not easily accessible from all parts of the larger metropolitan area of Philadelphia, and if this is true for the city of Philadelphia, it is certainly true for the smaller cities and towns in the presbytery. Therefore,

even in the Presbytery of Philadelphia, the work of home missions must continue!

I am quite impressed by the priority which the churches in the Presbytery of Philadelphia have placed upon home missions. Because of that commitment, they have brought me “onto the field” to begin this work in the months and years ahead. While other presbyteries have been able to call an RHM from among the pastors already serving in their region, the Presbytery of Philadelphia was led by its Home Missions Committee to extend a call to me despite my lack of familiarity with Eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware—the geographical boundaries of that presbytery.

When foreign missionaries first arrive on the field, they must learn the language and the culture in order to have a fruitful and lasting ministry with the natives. In my case, there is not much of a language barrier to consider, but I’m still aware of the need to understand the “natives” in Pennsylvania and Delaware before I make too many blunders as a newcomer to the region. In one sense, the natives are those who inhabit the region and the specific communities where the Lord is opening a door for possible OPC home missions works. The demographics of these people change from one setting to another, so I will seek to be an RHM who ministers the gospel with attention to the specific spiritual and cultural needs represented in each community where the Lord opens a door for ministry.

Yet there is an altogether different group of natives to consider—the Christian people who are already part of an OPC congregation in this presbytery. They will need to support the church planting that we desire to do and have already begun to uphold in prayer. I am looking forward to meeting many new friends around the Presbytery of Philadelphia in order to join them in prayer for regional mission work and learn about the opportunities they see in the towns and cities around them. In the particular region where I now live, this group even includes a good number of seminary students interested in OPC ministry. Please pray that God, in his perfect wisdom, would bring me into conversations with OPC sessions and church members to whom I can offer the most needed help for the sake of the Great Commission in our region.

We are still prayerfully considering where the Lord would have me focus my RHM efforts for the sake of future church plants, but we see fields ripe for gospel ministry by a church such as the OPC in the urban environment of Philadelphia, in some of the relatively unchurched suburban areas north and west of the city, in the smaller towns and cities reaching up to the northeast corner of Pennsylvania, in Lancaster County, on

the southwestern side of Wilmington, Delaware, and in many areas clear down to the southern beach cities of Delaware. It will take wisdom to know how to balance the needs of daughter congregations from established churches with the church planting needs in areas that are far from OPC congregations.

I mentioned at the start of this article that I am not beginning this exciting ministry adventure alone; my family will be a part of this as well. Since they need the community and pastoral care that comes from being in a single local church, they will settle down in a local OPC congregation where they can serve and be served in the larger body of Christ. Please pray that Elizabeth and the kids will find the community they need for church and school, since we are still a relatively young family with children between three and ten years of age. My involvement in home missions in various parts of the presbytery in the years ahead will make it all the more important for them to have continuity in relationships for as long as the Lord gives me the privilege of being an RHM.

Since I have only recently arrived in Pennsylvania, I also feel the need to pray for the people of Pilgrim Presbyterian Church back in Dover, New Hampshire. Please join me in praying for the Lord to be with them during this pastoral transition. We trust that the Lord and Head of the church will in due time supply the man of his choosing to be their undershepherd to lead them, now that the Lord has called me to a new place of ministry.

The Great Commission brings changes and challenges when the raising up of laborers for one field means a transition for the previous field of service as well, but God is good and faithful. We can trust him to supply all that is needed, both in the places where missionaries *are sent* and in the places *doing the sending*, as we remain faithful before him. This has been a lesson learned in the OPC many times in the past, and we trust it will again be found to be true through a revamped effort for home missions in the Presbytery of Philadelphia.



Dave and Elizabeth Holmlund

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org.
New editions: February 10, 24.

LEARNING DISABILITIES IN YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

// SUZANNE DeBOER



Suzanne Galbraith DeBoer

If you are a Sunday school teacher, you see how your children are different. But one in five children has a “hidden disability” (a learning disability) and will be struggling to learn in the same way as the others. That child may be fearful of coming to class each Sunday, but you may never know this because:

1. Learning disabilities are not visible to the naked eye,
2. The parents have not informed you (and may not even know) that their child has a learning disability, and/or
3. You have no idea what a learning disability looks like.

In order to help these children have an opportunity to love learning about God’s Word, a basic understanding of two things is needed:

1. What learning disabilities look like, and
2. How you can adapt your instruction to ensure a high level of comfort for those with these disabilities.

Our responsibility as Sunday school teachers is not only to enable the child with a disability to feel comfortable in the classroom, but also to enable that child to shine brightly as a reflection of God’s light.

It is important to understand that learning disabilities are neurologically based processing problems that interfere with reading, writing, and math, as well as organization, planning, abstract reasoning, memory, and attention. The learning-disabled child is an “inefficient” thinker, not a “deficient” thinker. He (or she) receives information into his brain, but once there, it becomes jumbled or misfiled, and he has great difficulty making sense of it.

The Major Learning Disabilities

For simplicity’s sake, the major learning disabilities may be placed in the following classifications:

1. Auditory processing disability: difficulty understanding

and/or remembering what is heard.

2. Visual processing disability: difficulty discriminating symbols, coordinating with motor skills, and/or remembering what is seen.

3. Written expression disability: difficulty expressing on paper what is understood and remembered.

4. Language processing disability: receptively, difficulty attaching meaning to spoken words, sentences, and stories; or expressively, difficulty expressing with the spoken word what is understood or remembered.

5. Dyscalculia: difficulty understanding numbers and learning math facts.

6. Dysgraphia: difficulty with handwriting and fine motor skills (cutting, pasting, etc.).

Children with learning disabilities may go undiagnosed at school, may not qualify for services, or may be too young for services. Therefore, it may fall to you to be vigilant and intuitive to ferret out the difficulty a child may be having, and, armed with the brief information given above, to adapt your curriculum to the special needs of this child. The bonus is that the adaptations you put into place for this one child are just good teaching techniques and will make your teaching for the whole class more effective.

Instructional Adaptations for Specific Disabilities

Adaptations are specific to the special needs of the child as defined by the disability. The adaptations below reference the disabilities listed above:

1. Auditory processing disability adaptations: Use visual cues to augment your spoken words. For example, using a whiteboard or large tagboard paper, draw whatever you are discussing. Stick figures work, and you can have a student draw for you if he or she is fast.

2. Visual processing disability adaptations: Let the parents know by email during the week the passage that you will be reading in class the following Sunday; ask them to practice a certain verse with their child, and when class comes on Sunday, have him read that verse. No one will know that he has practiced it. You can even give the parents the entire lesson for

the following week; they can study it all week, and the child will be able to answer all your questions.

3. Written expression disability adaptations: If worksheets require the student to write an answer to a question, allow the child to tell you the answer orally, rather than writing it out. If students have homework, ask the parents to assist their child by writing out their child's exact answers.

4. Language processing disability adaptations: Direct questions to the child that set him up to give just a one-word answer when you truly believe he knows the answer.

5. Dyscalculia adaptations: If there is a math-type question or situation, you can say, "Who wants to solve this while the rest of us get to watch?"

6. Dysgraphia adaptations: If this is a serious difficulty, have a portion of the motor-skills activity already prepared and help the child complete it. (For example, you cut it out before class and he pastes, or you write the answers he gives you.) Meanwhile you can give the child a responsibility (e.g., hand out the papers), so he is busy and helpful.

A Few Additional Hints

Here are a few additional helpful hints for establishing a positive atmosphere for all students and especially your learning-disabled student:

1. Call on children when you believe they know the answer, rather than to get their attention.

2. Children who have auditory, visual, or language processing disabilities often appear to have an attention deficit problem, due to their inability to process the information they are receiving. Try to experiment with the adaptations to discover their learning strengths.

3. Keep track of Bible memory achievements in such a way that individual students can see only what they have done.

As a Sunday school teacher, you are responsible to take the hand of the child and lead him or her gently to a better understanding of the precious Savior through his Word. The best way to do that is to reflect his acceptance of each of his children with all of their needs and make your classroom the haven of learning that they may not experience anywhere else.

The author developed and directed two special education programs for Christian schools in Modesto, Calif.

☆ Congratulations

The **Shorter Catechism** has been recited by:

- **Sammy Gregory Wu**, *Limington OPC, Limington, ME*
- **Benedict Patton**, *Bethel OPC, Wheaton, IL*

The **First Catechism** has been recited by:

- **Eva Perez**, *Calvary OPC, Middletown, PA*
- **Sullivan Perez**, *Calvary OPC, Middletown, PA*

2016 Pastoral Intern Information

Applications are available for seminarians looking for pastoral internships and congregations considering having a summer or yearlong intern in 2016. Both the potential interns and the churches must submit their applications by the **February 29, 2016**, deadline.

Seminarians are eligible to apply for yearlong internships if they are under care of, or licensed by, an OPC presbytery. Summer interns must be under care of an OPC or PCA presbytery. After the application is received, Pat Clawson will contact all potential interns to schedule a phone or in-person interview with Intern Director Danny E. Olinger.

Churches with a pastor who has served in the OPC for at least five years may request up to \$1,000 a month in support for a summer intern and \$1,250 a month for yearlong interns. The churches must match or exceed that monthly support. With the application, the pastor also submits an intern mentoring plan that explains his goals and his plan for training the intern.

The Committee on Christian Education's Subcommittee on Ministerial Training will consider the seminarian and church applications at their March 14, 2016, meeting. Seminarians and churches will be notified whether or not they have been approved for the program.

Application forms are available at www.opc.org under Worldwide Outreach, then Christian Education. Scroll down to Internship Program and select the appropriate application. Then email the application to Danny Olinger at olinger.1@opc.org.

● Out of the Mouth . . .

I caught my three-year-old son helping himself to some cookies right before supper. My wife assured me she had not given him permission. When questioned, my five-year-old son said he had opened the package for his brother, since "Mom said it was OK." Informed that it was not OK with her, he defended himself: "He tricked me, just like the sneaky snake in the garden!"

—Mike LeMahieu
Oostburg, Wis.

Note: If you have an example of the humorous "wisdom" that can come from children, please send it to the editor.

LOVING EARNESTLY

// ERIC W. TUININGA

“Love one another earnestly from a pure heart.” These words from 1 Peter 1:22 struck me deeply as I was preparing to lecture on 1 Peter. To love “earnestly” is a life-changing activity! I was convicted. Do I love my students at Knox Theological College earnestly? Do I love my wife and children earnestly? Do I love the members of our church here in Mbale earnestly, including the many children who come from a slum? What about the members of village churches, who often struggle because they have so little? To love all these people “earnestly from a pure heart” is a command that requires a life-and-death struggle—death to selfishness, death to self, and Christ living in me.

It is a wonderful privilege to be serving here in Uganda with the Orthodox Presbyterian Uganda Mission. There are unlimited opportunities to teach. Even after turning down many requests, my schedule is still overflowing: preaching, leading Bible studies, leading prayer times, training pastors at Knox Theological College, etc. Teaching, using the right words, is not so hard. But words without a heart of love make for empty clanging. While studying 1 John 3 recently, I read, “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.... Let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”

While I have a long way to grow in loving like Christ, it is encouraging to see areas where Christ’s love has made a real difference in people’s lives, both spiritually and physically. I thought I would share some examples.

Spiritual Impact

Spiritually, it is a blessing to see the students at Knox Theological College grow in their knowledge of Christ. Many of the students are already pastors—some Presbyterian and some Pentecostal. (We even have an “apostle” who came with very little knowledge, but has been eagerly embracing



Flora

solid doctrine.) Recently I taught a course on Old Testament prophets. On the exam, many students commented that they had had their eyes opened to see how the Old Testament prophets pointed to Christ. For many of these brothers, this is the first time to enjoy the treasures of biblical theology.

Another spiritual blessing recently was a membership interview with a thirteen-year-old girl named Florence. She lives with her father and grandmother, but like many children she comes alone to church. In the interview, she answered all of the questions very well. She showed a good understanding of the gospel and her own sin. Since her father and grandmother were present, we also asked them questions, but they could not answer well on even the most basic questions. This revealed the impact that our church has had on this thirteen-year-old. Through the teaching of the church, she has come to know the truth about Christ and the gospel, truth she would not have received at home. She joined our church last Sunday.

Physical Impact

A young man named Henry, who attends our congregation, had a wound on his leg that had oozed pus for seven years. It was from a bone injury that had never healed. What he really needed was bone surgery, but the family was too poor to afford it. With assistance from the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, the Mission was able to provide the needed funds, so he could have the surgery. This has been a real testimony in the community where Henry lives (near where the church has purchased land and hopes to build soon). His many neighbors and relatives knew him as the teenager with the leg that never healed, and now he is doing so well!

Sometimes opportunities to see Christ’s love come when we are not expecting them. Some months ago Dianna wrote the following:

We had a lovely week with some visitors from Australia... Friday morning, Eric was to leave at 7:00 a.m. to take them to the airport—a five-hour drive away. He was going to take the three older boys. At the very last minute, Benaiah also decided that he wanted to go. While everyone was waiting in the van, I brought Benaiah inside and scrambled to [get him ready]. It delayed the whole trip about three minutes.

They left, and about fifteen minutes later, Eric called. “Dianna, I just witnessed a very bad accident. We are transporting a small girl to the hospital. *I don't think she's going to live.*”

He had been driving through a trading center when he saw a young girl get thrown into the ditch because a boda (a motorcycle taxi) had hit her. He also saw a young lady who was a passenger on the boda get thrown off.

Since we live in a country where there are no first-responder ambulances, our visitor took the girl, who was bleeding profusely, into her arms and into our van. The girl obviously had a severe head injury and a severely broken leg. (The bone was protruding.) Our visitor held her as she bled and vomited and slipped in and out of consciousness. They also loaded up the boda passenger, who had some minor injuries.

Eric called another friend of ours, Milton, who drives for us. He got in our other car and started heading up to meet Eric. Since Eric still had to get our visitors to the airport, they transferred the patients to our other car and brought them to CURE hospital here in Mbale....

I met them [Milton and the patients] at CURE, and we were able to do a CT scan for both patients. The older one was fine, and she was then transferred to the regional hospital. The little patient, however had a fractured skull and a significant concussion.... After the scan, the doctor stitched up her head wound.

Then we transferred her to Kumi Orthopedics (the same place I took William when he broke his arm). She had surgery that afternoon to repair her leg.... Today, we drove up there to visit her and see how she is doing. She is still in a lot of pain, but the surgery had gone well. They had put a fixator on her leg.

We were also

able to find out more about little Flora. She is eight years old and in grade 2. She lives with her grandmother. Her mother ran away when she was just a baby, and her father asked the grandmother to take care of her. She calls her grandmother “mama.” She is a pretty little girl in need of a lot of prayers.... Her family is extremely poor.

They didn't speak English, but their neighbors in the hospital ward were super friendly to translate for us. They told us that the grandmother is a Christian, but that the father is not. The neighbors in the hospital ward were also Christian. The neighbors are there with three patients who were all in a car accident last week! The lady told me, “As soon as the girl and her grandmother came in yesterday, I knew in my spirit that I needed to minister to them. They had nothing with them because they came so suddenly and now are so far from home. So we've been sharing our dishes and basins with them and letting them use our phone.”

I cannot help but see God's handiwork in this whole thing—everything from Benaiah delaying the trip for just the “right” amount of time, to God's providing the perfect visitor who could handle the situation and, despite tears, was able to literally be the hands and feet of Jesus to hold the bloodied body of a little girl until her mama was able to meet up with us ... to providing others in the hospital to help take care of them when no one else could.

There are many things to pray for in the work here. Please pray that the training of pastors at Knox Theological College will be effective. Pray for the ongoing ministry in the local church here in Mbale and in the villages. Pray for the many opportunities to help with diaconal aid. And please pray that we, and you, will love the people in Uganda “earnestly from a pure heart.”

The author is an OP missionary in Mbale, Uganda.



Eric Tuininga's students at Knox Theological College

WORLD WISE OUTREACH

// ROBERT Y. ECKARDT

Some years ago, before I was ordained, I sat in on a meeting of the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. I remember hearing a big debate on the importance of the “combined budget.” Financial terminology was not my strong point then, so I wondered how important it could be with such an obscure title. It was something about supporting missions in a combined way.

Passionate speeches were made on whether it would be good to support missionaries as each one desires, or whether we should have an overall strategy for supporting the work of our committees: Home Missions, Foreign Missions, and Christian Education.

Now that we have finished yet another year, and have received our most recent Thank Offering, we can again consider the wisdom of what is now called “Worldwide Outreach.” Let’s change the name again and see if it fits: how about “World Wise Outreach”?

Other fine articles have been written on this subject (see, for example, the article in *New Horizons*, April 2004, by Don Poundstone and Larry Wilson), but let me summarize for us on this page.

Each one of us and each of our presbyteries is always free, in Christian liberty, to contribute to individual missions and missionaries as we desire. Nonetheless, I am convinced that there is a certain “wisdom” in having the Whole Church support the Whole Work unto the Whole World. I realize that this may seem like a grandiose goal. However, consider the wisdom.

We have our committees on the denominational level coordinating with one another (the Committee on Coordination), and we

have our presbytery committees seeking to do the same thing through the denominational committees, as they are able.

In this way, we can as a denomination set a strategy for the work of missions and Christian education. We can combine the wisdom of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in her committees to set goals and provide a unified vision and way to reach that vision. It is very Presbyterian.

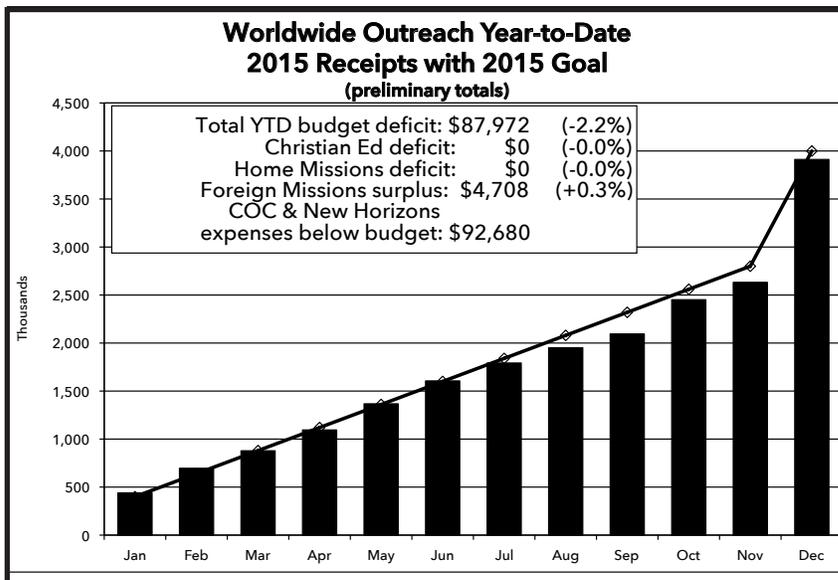
To some, this method may seem to remove the personal touch and the personal commitment that we might desire. We might think that we give to the local church, the local church and the presbyteries give to WWO, and we never think about it again.

However, think of how *New Horizons*, as part of the work of WWO, keeps us up-to-date on what is happening, how our missionaries are available on their busy furloughs to visit the churches and presbyteries, and how we pray for them all in our monthly prayer calendar. We can write emails (or even letters!) to our missionaries. We can have local reviews of missions (as we do every month at our church, with multimedia) and weekly reminders in our bulletins, as many do, and prayer meetings at which they are remembered.

There is a certain wisdom and even excitement in supporting missions with these methods. How great it is to visit another OP church and see that congregation remembering the same missionaries and having the same pictures on their bulletin boards.

Missions is wider than the OPC, and wider than our committees, you could say. But consider continuing to support World Wise Outreach in the OPC.

The author is the pastor of Redeemer OPC in Dayton, Ohio.



FEBRUARY

1. **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for Heather as she homeschools their children. / **Jim and Tricia Stevenson**, Tulsa, Okla. Pray that the congregation of Providence OPC will grow in spiritual maturity. / Pray for **David Winslow** and **Joel Pearce** as they work through the copyright process for the Psalter-Hymnal Committee.
2. **Sean Gregg**, staff administrator for the Committee on Home Missions. / Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray that seekers visiting the church in Port-au-Prince will respond in faith to the gospel. / Pray for **churches to apply for a summer or yearlong intern** by the February 29 deadline.
3. Pray for the labors of affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne** and **Linda Karner**, Japan. / **Kim and Barbara Kuhfuss**, Eau Claire, Wis. Pray for new visitors at Providence Reformed Church. / Committee on Coordination: **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the finance director; **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
4. **Chris and Megan Hartshorn**, Anaheim Hills, Calif. Pray for boldness for the people of Anaheim Hills Presbyterian Church to share their faith, and that people will be converted. / **Ethiopian Reformed Presbyterian Church**. Pray for those providing leadership in the church. / **Doug Watson**, part-time staff accountant.
5. **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for Ray in his ministry responsibilities. / **Paul and Sarah Mourreale**, St. Louis, Mo. Pray that the Lord would provide Gateway OPC with a music accompanist. / **Andy (and Anna) Smith**, yearlong intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Ill.
6. **Mika and Christina Edmondson**, Grand Rapids, Mich. Praise God for his continued blessing on New City Fellowship. / Missionary associates **Markus and Sharon Ruth Jeromin**, Uruguay. Pray that God would guide and equip them for their ministry in Montevideo. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
7. **Church in the Horn of Africa**. Pray for God's continued protection as believers gather to worship him. / **Jonathan and Lauryn Shishko**, Queens, N.Y. Pray for the discipleship and ministry of Reformation Presbyterian Church. / **Matthew (and Elin) Prather**, yearlong intern



Paul and Sarah Mourreale

at Harvest OPC in San Marcos, Calif.

8. Pray for new Home Missions associate general secretary **Al Tricarico**, as he adjusts to his work. / **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for Heero as he leads the congregation in L'viv in biblical worship. / Pray for **Ross Graham**, stated clerk of the General Assembly, as he works with the Committee on Arrangements to plan for an efficient registration process at the 2016 General Assembly at the Sandy Cove Conference Center in Maryland.
9. **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray that the Lord would awaken those attending outreach activities to their need for the gospel. / **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Andover, Minn. Give thanks for new visitors to Immanuel OPC. Pray that they will return. / **Wayne (and Suzanne) Veenstra**, yearlong intern at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Mich.
10. **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray that visitors to San Antonio Reformed Church will desire to join in communicant fellowship. / Pray for missionary associates **Jennifer Nelson**, Quebec, Canada, and **Jesse and Hannah Van Gorkom**, Nakaale, Uganda. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund administrator.
11. Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic. Pray that many will visit the church in Modřany and hear the preaching of the Word. / Pray for **David Crum**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California, as he follows up on contacts and visits Bible study groups. / Navy chaplain **John (and Linda) Carter**.
12. **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. (downtown). Pray for unity and growth within the congregation of Gospel Life Presbyterian Church. / Pray that the Lord would provide for the needs of retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Cal and Edie Cummings, Greet Rietkerk**, and **Young and Mary Lou Son**. / **Brian Guinto**, yearlong intern at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.
13. **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. F. as he maintains a busy schedule of teaching and ministry oversight. / **Phil Strong**, Lander, Wyo. Pray that the Lord would build up the people of Grace Reformed Fellowship. /



Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra

Committee on Diaconal Ministries administrator **David Nakhla**. Pray that the Lord would grant the CDM wisdom on behalf of the church to minister to refugees in his name.

- 14. Ron and Carol Beabout**, Gaithersburg, Md. Pray that five new families will come to Trinity Reformed Church. / **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay (on furlough). Pray that the Lord would use Mark's ministry to bless the OP congregations where he speaks. / Pray for Christian Education general secretary **Danny Olinger** as he edits *New Horizons*.
- 15.** Missionary associates **M. D., D. V., and S. Z.**, Asia. Pray that they will be an encouragement to the young people they teach. / **Jeremy Logan**, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Pray for continued development in the ministry of Knox Presbyterian Church. / **Darryl and Anita Kretschmer**, yearlong intern at Lakeview OPC in Rockport, Maine.
- 16. Robert and Christy Arendale**, Houston, Tex. Pray for Cornerstone OPC, that God would save local families and bring them to fellowship. / **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia. Pray for Mrs. M. as she prepares for and teaches classes at a local school. / **Chris Tobias**, *New Horizons* cover designer.
- 17.** Missionary associates **Mr. and Mrs. C.**, Asia. Pray that they will have opportunities to present the gospel to seekers. / **Mike and Katy Myers**, Hartwell, Ga. Pray that the Lord would open doors for Heritage Presbyterian Church to reach more families. / **Charles Williams**, yearlong intern at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, Mich.
- 18. Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, Ky. Pray for the Lord to bless Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church's outreach and evangelism efforts. / Tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia. Pray for the teachers at the university as they prepare for a new semester of classes. / Navy chaplain **Tim (and Janine) Power**.
- 19. Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that many Karimojong will hear the gospel through diaconal outreach programs. / **Tom and Martha Albaugh**, Pittsburgh, Pa. Pray for Redeemer OPC Mission, that God's elect will be brought in. / **Tim (and Jeni) Son**, yearlong intern at First Presbyterian Church, North Shore in Ipswich, Mass.
- 20. John Shaw**, general secretary for the Committee on Home Missions. / Pray for **David and Rashel Robbins**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they begin their labors in Uganda. / *New Horizons* managing editor **Jim Scott**.
- 21.** Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he reports to the Committee on Foreign Missions meeting this week. / **Christopher and Ann Malamisuro**,



T. L. L.

Cincinnati, Ohio. Pray that recipients of Good Shepherd OPC's Angel Tree project will come to worship. / **Lowell (and Mae) Ivey**, yearlong intern at Covenant Community Church in Taylors, S.C.

- 22. Brian and Sara Chang**, Cottonwood, Ariz. Pray for new opportunities for Verde Valley Reformed Chapel to make the name of Christ known. / Pray for Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Katrina Zartman** during this busy week of Committee meetings. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.
- 23.** Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson** as the Committee begins two days of meetings. / Pray for **Steve Doe**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic, as he visits mission works and churches throughout the presbytery. / **Daniel Adams**, yearlong intern at Calvary OPC in Glenside, Pa.
- 24. Jonathan and Kristin Moersch**, Capistrano Beach, Calif. Pray for growth and harmony at Trinity Presbyterian Church, as well as a bold and gracious witness. / Pray for our missionary associate teachers in Uganda: **Sarah Jantzen, Fiona Smith, Rachel Turner, and Angela Voskuil**. / **Mark Stumpff**, office assistant.
- 25. David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that the Reformed faith will take deep root in Karamoja. / **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray that God would add several new families to Keys Presbyterian Church. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Pat Clawson** and proofreader **Sarah Pederson**.
- 26. Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, Fla. Pray for more families at Christ the King Presbyterian Church. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Leah Hopp** and **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. Praise the Lord for the assistance they provide to the medical work in Karamoja. / **Benjamin (and Emily) Gordon**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.
- 27. Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for the programs for women and children in the local churches. / **Jim and Eve Cassidy**, Austin, Tex. Pray for continued peace at South Austin Presbyterian Church and an increased flow of new visitors. / *Ordained Servant* editor **Greg Reynolds** and proofreader **Diane Olinger**.
- 28. Brad and Cinnamon Peppo**, Springfield, Ohio. Pray that the transition to morning worship at Living Water OPC will bring new visitors. / **Charles and Connie Jackson**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray that God would bless Charles's teaching ministry at Knox Theological College. / **Marvin Padgett**, executive director of Great Commission Publications.
- 29. Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa. Pray that Brian's students will gain a fuller understanding of the Scriptures and develop ministry skills. / **Joshua and Jessica Lyon**, Carson, Calif. Pray for continued growth and spiritual development at Grace OPC. / **Stephen Pribble**, OPC.org senior technical associate.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

UPDATE

CHURCHES

• Merrymeeting Bay OPC in Brunswick, Maine, has changed its name to **Living Hope Presbyterian Church**.

MINISTERS

• On December 8, the pastor relationship between **Tony L. Garbarino** and the Home Missions Committee of the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada was dissolved at his request, effective November 20, in view of his resignation on that date as an evangelist laboring at Providence Presbyterian Church in Morgan Hill, Calif.

• The pastoral relationship between **D. Nathan Holloway** and Bethlehem Reformed Church in Freeman, S.D., was dissolved by the Presbytery of the Dakotas as of December 20. His ministerial credentials are being transferred to the Presbyterian Church of Western Australia in order to serve as pastor of Peel Presbyterian Church in Mandurah, Western Australia.

• On September 18, the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario dissolved the ministerial relationship between **Markus G. Jeromin** and Little Farms Chapel in Coopersville, Mich., to labor at the mission work Providence Presbyterian Church in Manistee, Mich., effective December 31. He has been appointed to serve as an OP missionary associate in Uruguay during 2016.

• On November 25, **Christopher L. Post** was installed as an evangelist of Cedar OPC in Hudsonville, Mich., to serve the preaching needs of various churches.

MILESTONES

• Former OP minister **Richard J. Venema**, 93, most recently in the URCNA, died on November 30.

REVIEWS

A Journey to Wholeness: The Gospel according to Naaman's Slave Girl, by **Mark Belz**. P&R, 2015. Paperback, 208 pages, list price \$14.99. Reviewed by OP pastor **David Graves**.

A Journey to Wholeness is a volume in P&R's *The Gospel according to the Old Testament* series, which "is designed to encourage Christ-centered reading, teaching, and preaching of the Old Testament." Using that criterion as the focus of his book, Mark Belz succeeds in shedding Christ-centered light upon 2 Kings 5. He leads the reader through the narrative, as well as showing its place in the flow of redemptive history.

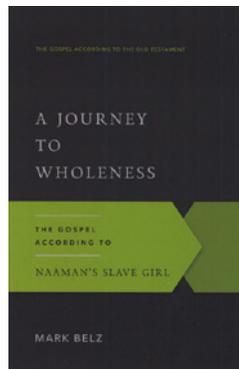
Belz begins with a broad overview of the narrative, and then he looks at the major characters of 2 Kings 5: the slave girl, Naaman, and Elisha. He interrupts his discussion of Elisha with a chapter on God's healing of Naaman. Afterwards he interacts with the sordid affair of Gehazi embezzling from Naaman. Belz demonstrates how God still received the glory, even though the gospel proclamation evident in the healing of Naaman was obscured by Gehazi's sin. Belz shows the folly of Ben-hadad's attempt to kill Elisha in 2 Kings 6, and how, through the opening of the eyes of Elisha's unnamed servant (who Belz says was probably Gehazi, restored from his leprosy) and the closing of the Syrian army's eyes, God brought an end to the Syrian raids on Israel, which had resulted in the enslavement of the Israelite girl in order to bring her into contact with Naaman.

Finally, Belz focuses on Naaman's relationship to Christ Jesus. He contends that, since Jesus is the only hope, even the healing of Naaman was in fact a proclamation of Jesus by Elisha. This is a helpful reminder that the Old Testament narratives declare the glory of God that was

ultimately revealed in the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that, from the Fall in Genesis 3 onward, the only hope of mankind is found in the atoning and reconciling work of Jesus Christ.

Belz is a gifted storyteller, and his skill greatly enlivens the flow of his volume.

At some junctures, though, he adds details for the sake of a good story that are not in the biblical narrative. For example, he speculates that Naaman's family listened to their slave girl because she was not prone to telling wild stories. Thankfully, though, when Belz's imagination begins to overreach, he generally then flows into sound theological reflections on the text. In the



PUBLIC SCHOOL

[Continued from page 9]

more. God protected them. They grew in their faith.

Today they are all thriving in fields they love: medicine, hospitality management, and architecture. We think that they are good problem solvers and good critical thinkers. They are gentlemen. By the grace of God, they are believers. They are active in good churches. Two of them married Christian girls that they met at school. The third is dating a believer. We are blessed beyond what we ever imagined. Praise be to God!

Public education may not be the best choice for everyone. However, we hope that our story will show that public school education can be a good and reasonable choice for covenant children. □

John Van Meerbeke is the pastor of Living Hope OPC in Gettysburg, Pa. Barb is his wife.

case just mentioned, he explains that the family listened to her ultimately because of the providence of God.

Aside from the occasional fancy in his storytelling, Belz demonstrates a sound hand with both his close reading of the text and his connecting of this story to the progress of redemption. This book would serve well as devotional reading; it illustrates, through a lesser-known biblical account, God's meticulous care for his people.

***Keeping Your Cool: A Teen's Survival Guide*, by Lou Priolo. P&R, 2014. Paperback, 256 pages, list price \$12.99. Reviewed by OP pastor's wife Kelli Clifford.**

Among difficulties in family relationships, perhaps nothing brings pain quite like angry conversations and attitudes. Even in its least harmful form, such as grumpiness or complaining, living with it presents a real challenge. And in our technological and texting age, parents struggle with how to keep lines of communication open with teenagers, much less discuss frustrations with each other.

Enter: *Keeping Your Cool: A Teen's Survival Guide*, by Lou Priolo. Here is a biblically rich, down-to-earth, and highly practical book written to equip teens to understand anger through the lens of Scripture. Priolo communicates with teens in a respectful, positive way, teaching them to glorify God by listening to and speaking with others in a biblical way.

Priolo, an experienced counselor, writes in a clear, conversational style with humor that should disarm even the most skeptical teen from the first pages. He writes gently and matter-of-factly about the sin that causes our anger. He doesn't beat around the bush, but neither does he beat you over the head.

While written for teens, this book would be useful for any believer to provide clarity on biblical forgiveness and reconciliation. And couldn't we all benefit from a refresher course on how to handle

conflict, rejection, and offenses?

Priolo clearly maps out a pathway to deal with these issues. He includes journal entries and diagnostic checklists that one may photocopy. (If your teen is really mad, you just might need to buy some new ink cartridges!) On the journal pages, one answers questions like:

- What patterns do I see to my anger?
- What do I tend to think and do?
Clam up, quietly punish, blow my top, blame, despair, etc.?
- What does the Bible say about these actions or attitudes?
- How does the Bible direct me to a better response?

Priolo's case studies and sample answers further clarify how to go about working toward change.

He also provides biblical ways that young adults may respectfully talk to their parents about their (parents') sin against them. Another chapter describes how to make a godly appeal in the face of an unfavorable rule or decision. My own kids especially liked that one!

While these tools can help family dynamics, they will also help people graciously navigate difficult conversations in the future with other authority figures, friends, or a spouse.

Depending on the maturity of the young adult, *Keeping Your Cool* would be suitable for kids twelve years of age or older. It would also generate great discussion in a teen Sunday school, Bible study, or parenting class.

***The Trinitarian Devotion of John Owen*, by Sinclair B. Ferguson. Reformation Trust Publishing (Ligonier Ministries), 2014. Hardback, 140 pages, list price \$16.00. Reviewed by OP Minister Kim Kuhfuss.**

I had always thought of John Owen as more theological than devotional, but Sinclair Ferguson makes it clear that Owen is both. The very words "Trinitarian Devotion" in the title of this book

bring this out.

The bulk of Ferguson's book deals with writings found in the first three volumes of his collected works, which are the most pertinent to the subject at hand. However, there are also quotes from, and references to, later volumes—and even his seven-volume exposition of Hebrews. All of this points to Ferguson's comprehensive knowledge of the writings of Owen.

The author makes it clear that to John Owen, the believer's knowledge of, and communion with, the Trinity is a fundamental part of his Christianity. It is hard to read this book without gaining a deeper hunger and thirst for more intellectual and practical knowledge of the glorious Godhead!

The book begins with a short biography of Owen, and then moves into the main subject. In this section, the first and last chapters deal with the entire Trinity. The three chapters in between deal with each person of the Trinity individually, based on the benediction of 2 Corinthians 13:14.

In the chapter on "Communion with the Father," the author focuses on Owen's emphasis on the Father's love for the believer. This is a topic that believers can never spend too much time thinking about.

The chapter on the Son highlights the grace that is with us. The author brings out what he calls "one of the most important insights in all of [Owen's] theology." This is that "grace is, ultimately, personal. Grace is Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ is God's grace."

In the chapter on the Holy Spirit, the author reminds us that when Owen wrote his volume on the Holy Spirit, he was treading on ground that no one had really walked on before. Owen, like Calvin, is fit to be called "The Theologian of the Holy Spirit." The gifts of the Spirit are often emphasized in our era, but Owen reminds us that it is better to concentrate on the person of the Spirit. Ferguson discusses the ten specific works of the Spirit in the life and work of Jesus, as identified by Owen. These are grouped according to the incarnation, ministry, death, and exaltation of Christ.

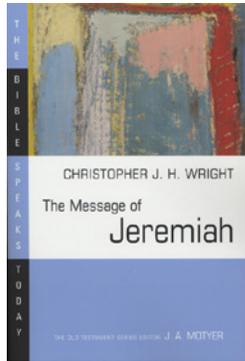
If you have never read John Owen, I



would urge you to read this book, because it will whet your appetite to read more of this Puritan giant. And if you, like me, have read Owen, but have forgotten a lot of what you read, this book will make you desire to go back and read him again.

***The Message of Jeremiah*, by Christopher J. H. Wright. IVP Academic, 2014. Paperback, 448 pages, list price \$20.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Matthew H. Patton.**

Many Christians have scratched their heads at the book of Jeremiah. Into this confusion, Chris Wright's new book expounds Jeremiah with accuracy and clarity, relating it at every turn to contemporary life. Following a short introduction, Wright explains the book passage-by-passage in considerable detail.



Wright is a British evangelical, and his conclusions comport with a conservative Christian worldview. He writes for a non-technical audience, with scant citations and only oblique references to the original language. He approaches the book by imagining what it would be like to be the original audience in order to explain the text and make straightforward applications to today. Along the way, he is consistently aware of theological issues that may trouble Christians: How do we deal with God's intense anger in Jeremiah? Was it right for Jeremiah to pray his angry prayers of cursing against his enemies (e.g., in 18:19–23)? And so on.

Wright has a knack for memorable turns of phrase. Regarding Judah's worship of Baal and Asherah, he says, "The cult of fertility was a cult of futility, in which there was neither substance nor salvation" (p. 64). In discussing the horrible judgment of exile, Wright says, "The book of Jeremiah, in its profound anticipation and explanation of the exile, is not Jeremiah's gloating 'I told you so', but rather his tear-filled, 'I told you *why*'" (p. 47).

Notwithstanding Jeremiah's intense, pathos-filled oracles of judgment, Wright

shows how God's plan in the book ends in salvation, a salvation that ultimately comes in Jesus Christ.

Wright gives a fresh read to Jeremiah that is both reliable and upright. His long-standing passion for missions and social justice shines through on every page (Wright is the international ministries director of the Langham Partnership).

However, Wright's concern for biblical morality crowds out the more central theme of grace in Jeremiah. The "theological and expository reflections" at the end of each chapter are largely moral applications and almost never mention the completed work of Christ (although Wright does draw some connections to Christ in discussing the new covenant in 31:31–34). The Christ-centered, redemptive-historical interpreter will have to do his own

legwork in order to preach Jeremiah, since Wright only rarely shows how Jeremiah fits into the larger narrative of redemptive history, and will sometimes confuse passages that are specially connected with the exile (e.g., the closing down of hope in 14:1–15:9) with our situation today, as though God would ever abandon his people after Christ.

Also, one sometimes feels that Wright fails to capture the intensity and profundity of this amazing book. The untamed prophet does not roar with ear-splitting power from Wright's pages. Deep reflections on Jeremiah's theological underpinnings (e.g., that judgment *must* precede a new beginning) are sometimes lost in the details.

Nevertheless, faithful and clear interpretations of Jeremiah are rare in our day, and Wright is to be commended for his contribution.

***Knowing Christ*, by Mark Jones. Banner of Truth, 2015. Paperback, 250 pages, list price \$16.00. Reviewed by Prof. Ryan M. McGraw.**

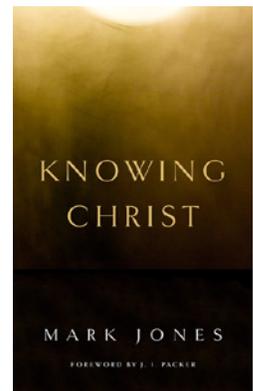
Years ago I heard R.C. Sproul say that while his favorite book he ever wrote was *The Glory of Christ*, it was also his worst-

selling book. The fact is that while millions of readers (apparently) want to find their best life now, far fewer people invest in knowing the glory of Jesus Christ. Although Mark

Jones's *Knowing Christ* presents nothing novel, many of its teachings will be new to many readers. This book is calculated to help readers grow in their affection for Christ, even while they increase their knowledge of him.

Knowing Christ is pastoral and practical. It arose, appropriately, from the crucible of preaching and ministering to a local congregation (p. xi). Some of the best devotional works of the church have been produced in this way. Jones's choice of John Owen as one of his great "heroes" (pp. xiv, 232) is reflected fruitfully in the rich content of this book. He includes the key aspects of Christ's person and work, including his two natures, his humiliation and exaltation, his covenant with the Father, his voluntary and vicarious obedience, his suffering, his role as Judge, his death, his resurrection, his ascension and session, and his threefold office, among other subjects. Jones takes what is difficult for most and makes it personal and practical for all. His primary goal in writing is to give readers "a reason to love [Christ] more" (p. xv). This reviewer hopes that this aim will prove to be contagious.

Knowing Christ is precise and well written. The strength of the Puritans lay in their ability to use precise scholastic concepts as the backdrop for warm devotional theology. Jones writes with the same skill. The endorsements, however, are a bit over the top. While this reviewer agrees that *Knowing Christ* should endure for a long time, is it wise to predict that it will "serve the church permanently" or that it will be "passed down from generation to generation"? The Lord alone knows which works will endure, and he alone can give such a blessing. Some



books should be remembered that are not, while others that should not stay in print do so. This has as much to do with divine providence as with a book's merits (or demerits). Nevertheless, this reviewer prays that Jones's book will get the readership it deserves, since most do not know what they are missing.

In a homiletics course that I teach, students often ask how to preach Christ. My short answer is that we should preach Christ as Paul preached him. His example did not grow out of a homiletical theory as much as from a heart and mind preoccupied with the glory of his Savior. No one can preach Christ well unless he knows Christ well. The material presented in *Knowing Christ* is the primary need of ministers and church members alike in every age.

***The Communicant's Spiritual Companion*, by Thomas Haweis. 1764; Reformation Heritage Books, 2015. Paperback, 132 pages, list price \$14.00. Reviewed by Prof. J. V. Fesko.**

Preparing to take the Lord's Supper is an important aspect of the Christian life, but I suspect that many Christians are at a loss as to how to prepare for it. What should they think, pray, or meditate upon as they anticipate taking the Supper? Reformation Heritage Books has republished a little devo-

tional book written by eighteenth-century Anglican minister Thomas Haweis (pronounced *Haws*). In this book, Haweis presents seven brief chapters, ranging from the nature of a sacrament to the different ways people should prepare to take the Supper. The original context for this book was a Sunday afternoon series of catechetical lectures for congregants, so the book is aimed at the average person, which makes it readable and easily accessible to most in the church.

The book's strengths lie in the depths to which Haweis treats the Supper. He offers a chapter, for example, on the nature of the invitation to the sacred meal. How can Christians neglect an invitation from Christ to sit and share a meal at his table

(p. 23)? He also offers thoughtful reflection on how Christians should conduct their self-examination. He encourages the reader to mediate upon the grace of forgiveness in Christ, which should impact our comportment towards others (p. 52). In subsequent chapters, Haweis provides suggestions for thoughts during the administration of the Supper and then offers counsel for our conduct after we have received it. There is also a chapter with suggested forms for praying about pride, lust, guilt, temptations, affliction, love for God, charity, fear, humility, and so on. The book closes with a number of edifying meditations on various passages of Scripture.

Such a book can be useful and helpful for Christians who sometimes find themselves at a loss for words or thoughts regarding the Supper. Or perhaps some might find themselves in a rut and go through the same routine before and after the Supper.

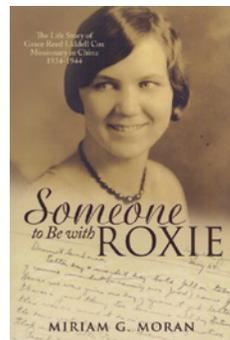
I think two caveats are in order, however. First, readers should not take Haweis's book as a list of things that a person should do each and every time he approaches the table. Haweis specifically warns against this (p. 55). Rather, this book is a guide and offers counsel, not binding prescriptions. Second, I get the impression that Haweis's church observed the Supper infrequently (quarterly or bi-annually), which would un-

doubtedly have led people to make more of their preparation. For Christians who participate in weekly communion, the counsel offered in this book might seem like a tall order. Once again, taken in small bites, this book can offer anyone edifying material for meditation and preparation.

This book was a favorite of former Westminster Seminary California president Robert G. den Dulk. He would undoubtedly be pleased that it has been republished and humbled to know it has been dedicated to his memory.

***Someone to Be with Roxie*, by Miriam G. Moran. Lulu Press, 2015. Paperback, 258 pages, list price \$18.99. Reviewed by**

OP minister's wife Patricia E. Clawson.



The trials the Lord leads us through rarely are foreseen. *Someone to Be with Roxie* tells the story of Grace Cox, an Iowa farm girl who could not have imagined

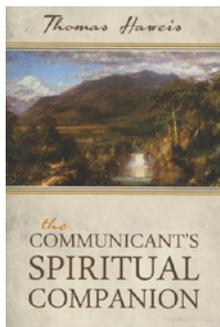
her future when she became a missionary to China in 1934. This unassuming saint learned different languages in order to serve in at least seven places in China, married a fellow missionary, and fled from the invading Japanese Army during World War II—all while trusting in God.

This account was written by one who was with Grace and her husband as they scurried along the Burma Road as Japanese shells screamed overhead. Miriam G. Moran, the wife of retired Orthodox Presbyterian minister Allen Moran, was seven months old when her parents sheltered her from the machine guns strafing the hillsides. She doesn't remember her mother, Grace, who died in 1945 when she was four. But in 1985—forty years after her mother's death—Miriam found a box of her mother's letters and memorabilia. By matching those letters with others of her father's, Miriam wove a beautiful narrative of her mother's walk of faith.

One of eight children, Grace graduated at sixteen, dedicated her life to Christian service, studied at Moody, and became a missionary with the China Inland Mission, founded by Hudson Taylor. No stranger to hardship, Grace sometimes lived in a bamboo hut among remote tribes, while at other times teaching or acting as hostess of a mission house.

After the Chinese communists released CIM missionary Alfred Bosshardt after two months in captivity, Grace recorded his story. She stayed with Roxie Fraser after her husband, CIM field superintendent James Fraser, died of malaria. That characteristically quiet service is reflected in the title of this book.

An extended visit for dental work gave Grace the opportunity to meet



fellow CIM missionary Eric Cox, a former British Merchant Navy officer. Although Eric was smitten, Grace “climbed into love.” Three days after they married in 1940, Japanese bombs exploded around them. The following year they grabbed a few nappies (diapers) and seven-month-old Miriam to escape to safety. Their son Philip was born on their third anniversary. Eric’s severe back problems brought the family to Iowa, where another son was born. Before their fifth anniversary, they received the devastating news that Grace, at thirty-nine, had a malignant tumor. Grace’s faith is revealed in a letter to her mother, “How sweet to be given the grace at *all* times to say, Thy will be done.”

While this story has tension-filled moments, what kept this reader turning pages was Grace’s wonderful example of faith and godliness, from her early years until she was received in glory. When I finally put the book down, I missed my precious time with Grace.

***Discovering Delight: 31 Meditations on Loving God’s Law*, by Glenda Mathes. Reformation Heritage Books, 2014. Paperback, 160 pages, list price \$10.00. Reviewed by OP pastor’s wife Holly Wilson.**

This is a sweet little gem of a book, presenting meditations for each day of the month. They are uplifting and nicely written. The book goes through Psalm



119, one section at a time. It also includes a few meditations on other passages in order to make a total of thirty-one chapters. Each day there is a series of three questions to help you reflect on the passage and how it applies to your own life.

Mrs. Mathes has compiled nicely thought-out chapters. They are long enough to be substantial in their content, but short enough to read for a daily quiet time. Her doctrinal base is sound and solidly Reformed. She doesn’t beat you over the head with God’s law, but rather



Boardwalk Chapel Opportunities

Churches: Contact us now to join us in the summer of 2017 at the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, N.J., for a week of exciting and intense ministry reaching people for our Lord Jesus. Individuals and youth groups are also welcome to consider two opportunities in 2016: a handful of volunteer staff positions are open, and several weekends in May and September are available for youth groups. See more information at www.boardwalkchapel.org or inquire at boardwalkchapel@gmail.com.

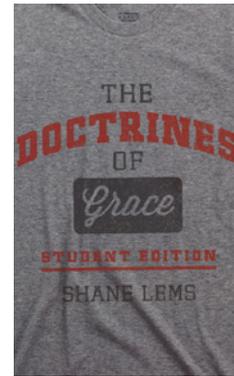
encourages a genuine love and appreciation for it, highlighting the way God shows his love in his law.

She makes excellent use of similes and metaphors. For example, she compares Psalm 119 and its complexities to a “trellis on which the vine of heartfelt prayer climbs and blooms with delight in God and His Word” (p. 27). At another point she says, “Scripture isn’t dry toast. It is like roast beef and mashed potatoes or filet mignon and sautéed mushrooms.... It’s a veritable feast of delectable delights” (p. 88). These word pictures, woven in and out of her writing, make it interesting and pleasant to read.

This would be a wonderful little gift book to use when you need a little something to take along as a thank-you present or for a special teacher or friend. It would be of interest to both men and women in any walk of life.

***The Doctrines of Grace: Student Edition*, by Shane P. Lems. P&R Publishing, 2013. Paperback, 143 pages, list price \$10.99. Reviewed by Prof. David C. Noe.**

Shane Lems set out to write a book that is suited to “a Sunday School or church education class” (p. 9). In this he succeeds admirably. The work contains twelve chapters and includes four appendixes. Lems helpfully structures the presentation of the material by the familiar TULIP acronym. As its cover design indicates, the book is aimed at middle and high school youth readying for profession of faith. For that reason, the writing is brisk and simple. Lems stresses that his book is meant



to provide the reader with “a basic knowledge of these doctrines and show you where they are found in the Bible” (p. 11).

Each chapter contains numerous scriptural references,

and there is an appendix with a complete scriptural index. Another appendix contains a brief list of recommended titles and a concise index of “TULIP in the Confessions.” This includes both the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards. The end of each chapter features both questions for group discussion and “Memory Work” (i.e., two verses to hide in one’s heart).

Two examples of Lems’s writing will illustrate the book’s overall tone, and thereby allow readers to gauge whether it would be useful to them. In chapter 7, Lems writes: “Arminians say that Jesus’ death unlocked the door of our prison cells. All that we have to do is open the door by our faith. In Arminian teaching, Christ is like a lifeguard who throws a rope out for people who are drowning. All they have to do is grab the rope.... But according to the doctrines of grace (TULIP), Christ’s atonement actually saved people” (p. 51). We read in chapter 8, “This is why we say preaching is so important. Some people think preaching is boring. Others think preaching doesn’t work. But the Bible says preaching is very important (2 Tim. 4:1–3). And it works!”

(pp. 65–66).

Lems's work is doctrinally sound, approachable, and in places quite winsome. He is aware of the limitations of his simple approach, and points to additional resources for further study. The work's great strength, its simplicity, is at the same time a possible weakness for covenant youth and their elders who may desire something deeper. The youth in some congregations may be ready for more meat and less milk. For other congregations, *Doctrines of Grace* will closely match the ma-

turity and understanding of their youth and be a great blessing.

***To Win Our Neighbors for Christ*, edited by Wes Bredenhof. Reformation Heritage Books, 2015. Paperback, 95 pages, list price \$10.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Jack W. Sawyer.**

To Win Our Neighbors for Christ is a compact, but compelling apologia for the missionary implications of the Three Forms of Unity. It is a volume in the series *Explorations in Reformed Confessional Theology*. Written by Canadian Reformed pastor Wes Bredenhof, the book rebuts the often heard claim that the Reformation and the confessional documents it produced have little or nothing to say about missions. Bredenhof helps Reformed believers to understand that their confessions compel them to care about a world lost in unbelief, and he shows how this confessional heritage leads to missionary activity.

In his preface, Bredenhof defines the mission of the church as “the official sending of the church to go and make disciples by preaching and witnessing to the good news of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.” He sees no point in a strict distinction between mission and evangelism. In his view, “The mission of the church is evangelism.” Arguably this definition is too narrow, for the Great Commission clearly has an educative dimension. But no doubt the author would acknowledge this, and he does in fact imply it throughout his brief work.

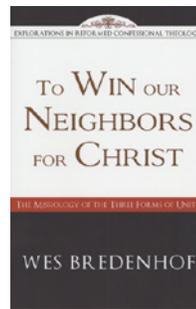
Since Calvinistic doctrine is some-

times twisted to discourage evangelism and missions, it is refreshing to find in this book an enthusiastic, cogent pushback against such views. Similarly, since the OPC rejected the chapter on “the Love of God and Missions” added to the Westminster Confession by the PCUSA in 1903, I found that Bredenhof provides a helpful impetus for reading our own Westminster Standards in a missional light. (Parenthetically, it is gratifying to note that the OPC has always been unequivocally committed to missions.)

Explaining each of the relevant parts of the Three Forms of Unity and their historical context, the author shows that

as the Reformed believer shares union with Christ, he is compelled to look with care and compassion upon the lost around him, near and far. Also helpful is the care the author has taken to consult active home and foreign missionaries, and he has throughout included their accounts of how they integrate the Reformed confessions into their work on the field. The consistent method of the book is nowhere better exemplified than on page 50, where Question 86 of the Heidelberg Catechism is cited, explained, and applied. This question has to do with the believer's sanctified service and good works. The catechism places in the mouth of the Reformed believer the statement that he does good, “so that by our godly walk of life we may win our neighbors for Christ.”

From there comes the title of a book that this reviewer is pleased to commend. It should prove to be a helpful tool for both individual and group study.



✓ Disaster Relief



As part of its Disaster Response work, the Committee on Diaconal Ministries is now accepting contributions for refugee relief. Diaconal gifts to refugees will be accompanied by the ministry of the Word. Send your check to OPC Administrative Offices, 607 N. Easton Road, Bldg. E, Willow Grove, PA 19090, designated for “Refugee Relief.” For more information, visit OPCSTM.org and click on “Disaster Response.”