

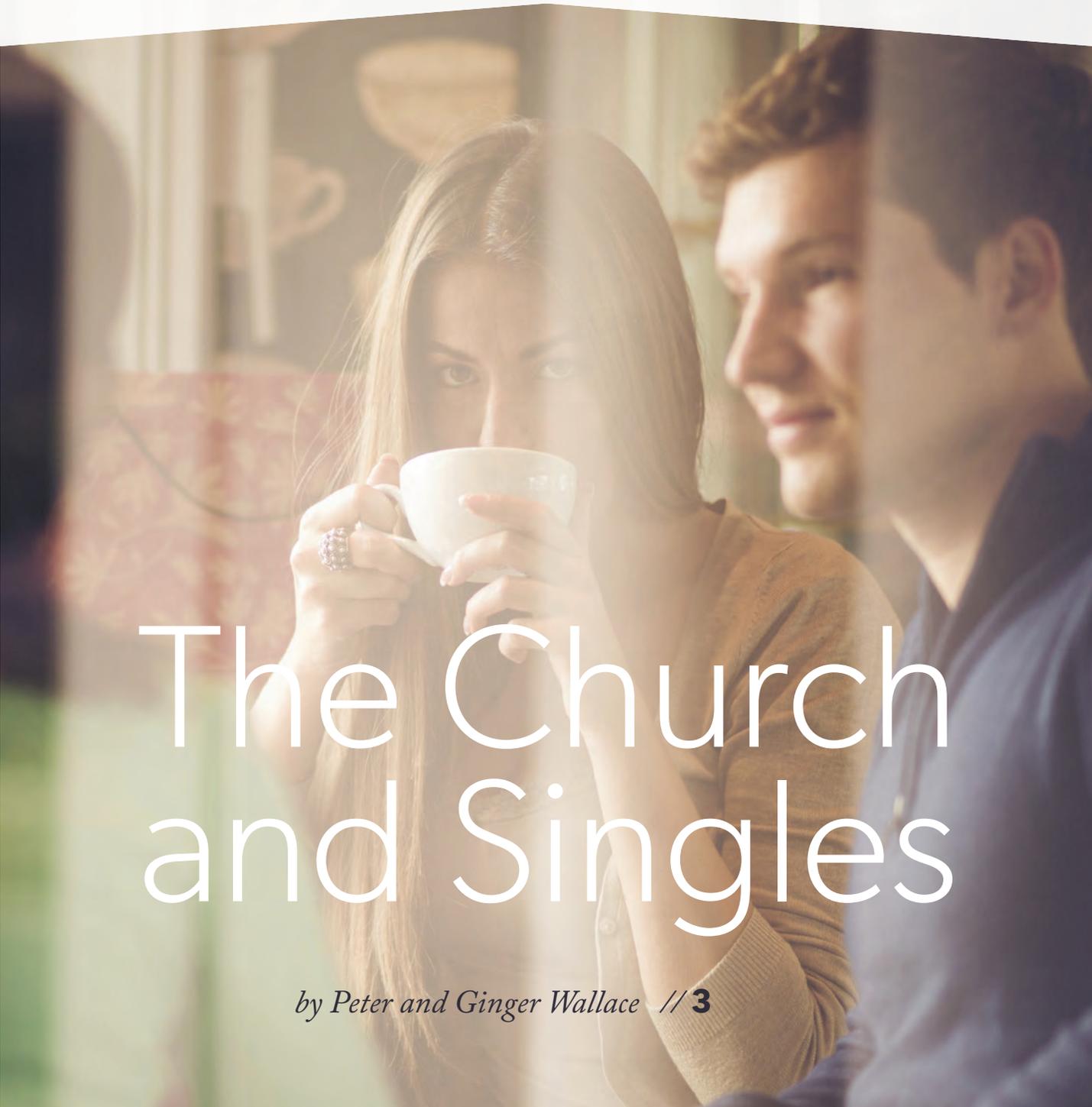
# NEW HORIZONS

≡ *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ≡

**5** Contentment in Singleness  
*// by A. Boyd Miller IV*

JANUARY 2016

**7** Parental Dating Guidance  
*// by Larry and Gail Mininger*



## The Church and Singles

*by Peter and Ginger Wallace // 3*

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## New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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As he has done once a month for more than a year, the Rev. Stan Sutton preached and administered the Lord's Supper at Calvary OPC in Ringoes, N.J., on November 8. He was ordained in the OPC in 1965 and has served congregations in Ohio, South Dakota, Maine, and most recently New Jersey (at Grace OPC in Westfield). His wife, Maureen, has had a career in biblical counseling. To celebrate fifty years of the Lord's mercy and goodness in the Suttons' continued service to the church, the congregation surprised them with a delicious cake and a message of gratitude from elder Jerry Sisto.



# THE CHURCH AND SINGLES



PETER AND GINGER WALLACE // **This is the first thing that the church needs to say to singles, repeating words of the apostle Paul: “To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am” (1 Cor. 7:8).**

Certainly marriage is an honorable estate, and, as Paul puts it, “if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion” (1 Cor. 7:9). Marriage is a fine thing, but “finding a spouse” should *not* be the focus of how singles function in the life of the church.

Notice how we said that: “how singles function in the life of the church”—*not* how “we” should incorporate singles into the life of the church (as though singles were somehow outsiders who need to be “brought in”).

At the same time, it is appropriate to talk about the church’s ministry to singles—just as we talk about the church’s ministry to those who are married. The purpose of ministry to singles in the church is to equip and strengthen them in their single-minded devotion to Christ. If God should happen to call them to marry along the way, that is fine (and we have helped some of our singles find spouses!)—but that is not the *goal* that Paul gives us.

Paul is very clear that “the unmarried man is anxious about the things

of the Lord, how to please the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:32). He can serve Christ with undivided focus—something that a married man cannot do. Let us repeat that: a married man *cannot* be single-minded in his efforts to please Christ. As Paul says, “the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided” (vv. 33–34). Notice that Paul does not say that this is wrong. It is right for a married man to have divided interests. And Paul says the same thing for single women: “The unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit” (v. 34).

Do our churches have this attitude toward singleness? Do we value the contributions and gifts of singles in the life of the body? Some of the most faithful and dedicated members of our congregation have been our single men and women who understand and practice this to great effect.

The key is for the whole people of God, whether single or married, to live as the body of Christ together. Since

we tend to gravitate toward “people like us,” the constant temptation is to separate into cliques. When we give in to this temptation, we fail to love one another as Christ has loved us. The solution is rather simple: repent and believe the gospel—and demonstrate our repentance and faith in our love for one another!

While there are lots of specific issues and challenges related to the various types of singleness (those who are widowed, those who are divorced, and those who have never married), we believe that these basic principles can be applied to each particular case.

## Leadership and Service

One way that the church can utilize the gifts of single men is by ordaining them. At Michiana Covenant Presbyterian Church, we had a lifelong bachelor, the late Rolf Caylor, as an elder for twelve years. The son of a Presbyterian minister, he had spent sixty-six years in the PCUSA, watching as his church (in his words) “downgraded the role of Christ, and upgraded the



*The Wallaces with some young people, including singles*

role of the human race in the work of salvation.” When he found MCPC, he found a home, and within five years he was ordained as a ruling elder. Psalm 113 speaks of how God gives to the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. There is a very real sense in which God gave Rolf Caylor a home, making him the joyous grandfather of the dozens of children in the church.

In the same way, five of the sixteen men who have served as deacons at MCPC were single at the time of their ordination. In the words of one formerly single deacon, “Singles should be treated like married people who happen to have more time on their hands.” On the one hand, the church needs to identify and train those men. On the other hand, single men need to pursue these opportunities to serve.

Likewise, there have been several single women whose gifts and service have profoundly shaped the life of our congregation. Our Women’s Ministry Team has often included single women because they have the time and energy to devote to this work. One of our divorcees has devoted herself to teaching a children’s Sunday school class for twenty years. She found a place where she was needed, and she filled it—and so generations of children have called her blessed.

We don’t pretend that we have figured out some special way to minister to singles. Quite frankly, there is noth-

ing special about it. Indeed, our goal has always been *not* to treat any group with special privileges—which requires us to be careful not to privilege our own “married with children” group! We highlight this because when the leadership of the church is all married with children, the tendency is to privilege families with children and orient church programs around them.

### Daily Life in the Church

So how does the church organize her daily life? First, we need to *decenter* the family. If Jesus has broken down the walls between Jew and Gentile and established one new family in himself, then the nuclear family should not be the center of church life. Rather, the family of God is the center. As Paul says in Ephesians 5:31–32, the whole point of Genesis 2:24 (“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”) is that it speaks of Christ and the church: “This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” Too often we become obsessed with having “family time,” by which we mean *only* the nuclear family.

One formerly single deacon describes it well: “I really liked the way Michiana tended to basically bring kids along for the ride for whatever the adults happened to be doing. If it was corporate worship, there they were. If it was a fellowship meal or cookout, the

kids were basically left to their own devices, which seemed to bother them not at all. This both keeps the focus away from catering to kids’ activities all the time, and treats kids as junior members of the church rather than alien potentates who must be catered to at every opportunity. That’s good for everybody.”

Here are some practical tips for married people: Include singles in what your family is doing! Invite them over for dinner, and ask them to stay for family worship. Welcome them into your household and treat them like just another adult in the family. To quote another MCPC single, “The main difference [between singles and married folk] is a heightened risk of loneliness, and heightened temptation to self-absorption, leading to selfishness. The cure for both of these is hospitality and incorporation: being invited to participate in everyday life, and being expected to contribute to everyday life—in the church and in particular families in the church.”

And two tips for singles:

(1) Look for ways to serve in the church. Can you take charge of such things as organizing church workdays or organizing the church’s ministry to a soup kitchen or food pantry? What are some ways that you can serve *because* you are single?

(2) Seek out families that you would like to be part of. Take an interest in the children around you! We will never forget two of our single men who came over for lunch one day. We went to the kitchen to get lunch ready, and when we came back to the living room, we found them reading books to our preschoolers! These children will be the singles of the church in a few years.

The point is that the church *is* the family of our Lord Jesus Christ. It *is the church* (not married people) that provides a home where all of us find the stability and rootedness that we need. □

*Peter Wallace, an OP minister, serves as stated supply for Michiana Covenant Presbyterian Church, PCA, in Granger, Ind. Ginger Wallace is his wife.*

# CONTENTMENT IN SINGLENES



**A. BOYD MILLER IV // What does a Christian woman do if she never marries, despite legitimate aspirations for a husband? What if you have prayed and tried to marry, only to find the door providentially closed? How does the Christian bachelor, with his share of rejections, continue to rejoice in the Lord always? What if you**

once were married, but tragedy brought an unexpected divorce or widowhood? Now you find yourself alone (maybe with children). Does God really expect you to be content?

Some people do choose singleness, but many times singleness chooses you without your permission. Jesus reminds us that while some are eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom, many remain unmarried as a by-product of the fallen human condition (Matt. 19:12). Congenital disorders, unfaithful spouses, same-sex attraction problems, premature death, war, disease, paucity of like-minded believers, and “bad luck” all complicate and exacerbate the matter. Yet through, above, and against all the secondary causes of singleness, the sovereign hand of God’s providence remains for our good and his ultimate glory.

Yet how do redeemed singles, with faith in Christ, remain content under divine sovereignty, especially when the Scriptures rightly celebrate marriage and refer to it as honorable (Heb. 13:4)? God instituted marriage in the garden

and declared it good (Gen. 2:18). Isaiah describes marriage as a picture of God’s grace and redemption (Isa. 62:4–5). Proverbs 18:22 declares that “he who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains *favor from the LORD*.” The single woman attends a wedding and hears that marriage is a metaphor of that glorious union between Christ and his people (Eph. 5:31–32), yet then wonders where that picture leaves her. If marriage portrays consummated glory with Christ in heaven, then what does singleness depict? Hell?

## **The Church’s Response**

The church’s response to such questions could be a series of sermons on contentment at the next singles’ retreat, to which the unmarried rightly drop their heads and think within themselves, “Oh no! Not again!” While contentment is an important Christian fruit, and discontentment is a spiritual malady that affects married and single people alike, the need for contentment is sometimes best addressed consequentially. Rare is the Christian who gains

assurance of salvation simply by studying the topic of assurance. Likewise, few singles will find soul-rest merely by burrowing into the subject of contentment. The discontented single may actually become more frustrated. The law’s demand for contentment can produce a rebellious response from us, for discontentment is at work within us (Rom. 7:8, 23). “Wretched (single) that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom. 7:24–25).

Therefore, when applying the tenth commandment, the church should direct her unmarried members to Christ, who willingly became single for us, that we (the church) might become married to him. In the fullness of time, the eternal Son of God became a single man, born under the commandment not to covet, and fulfilled that law with a life of sinless contentment. Now those who believe in him have a pardon for their discontentment and the graces necessary to endure suffering for him. When tempted to kick at the goads of providence or murmur against the unmarried

condition, the gospel gives us many soothing glances at our beloved Jesus. Our Lord Jesus Christ provides us with delight in his person, work, fellowship, and promises. He assures us that, as the single believer increasingly treasures him, she also finds moments of peace in accordance with the law.

If the Father has not withheld his only Son, will he not also give me all things for this single life and eternity (Rom. 8:32)? Indeed, he does. The Lord graciously gives the single Christian his Spirit to comfort, console, and sanctify (Rom. 8:15–17). The Lord also provides us with his church as our new family in Christ, where we find many mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters in the household of God (Matt. 12:50).

Thus, singles would do well to immerse themselves deeply within the life of the local congregation. Hospitality, visitation, fellowship, prayer meetings, and Lord's Day worship provide wonderful avenues of blessing to those who find themselves without a spouse. I cannot imagine the single life without the loving fellowship of my local congregation. But, unwisely, some singles abstain from the full fellowship of God's people and limit their blessings by remaining peripheral in the body-life of the congregation.

### A Battle of the Soul

Yet even with the help of the church and the regular means of grace, the process of obtaining sanctified contentment in Jesus alone can still be, for the single Christian, a terrible battle of the soul, with setbacks, fits, sighs, tears, discouragements, and even rebellious outbursts—if only privately. Still, by God's grace and through persevering effort, the child of God can find rest



*Boyd Miller (with the bow tie) and the Thoman family visiting and singing psalms with Covenant Church seniors Leland and Jane Brunson at a nursing home*

in the will of her heavenly Father. The apostle Paul, who himself was single, provides encouragement for the unmarried by noting that he himself had to *learn* the secret of contentment (Phil. 4:11). Paul was not born content, nor was his discontentment eradicated at conversion. Contentment is not a lesson easily or superficially mastered; rather, it is comparable to the battle of a strong-willed child weaned late from his mother (Ps. 131:2). Also, Paul did not write about contentment from a Mediterranean spa, but rather from a dark, damp, rat-infested Roman prison, with fresh wounds from corporal punishment.

How then did Paul learn this contentment? Like his Lord, he learned contentment through the things he suffered (Heb. 5:8). The apostle admits to the Corinthians that while under Satanic attack, he prayed three times for deliverance. Yet the Lord denied his requests and told him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:8–9). Singleness may be one of those afflictions tailored to you, but his grace is perfected in your weakness. The single Christian who suffers weakness through unrealized marital aspirations and the disappointments of unanswered prayer may yet find grace at work through the unhappiness.

I have a few final admonitions for my fellow singles:

We need perspective as singles. In view of my sins, who am I to complain about my sufferings (Lam. 3:39)? We must take care to have no other gods before us. Marriage is not a god to be served, but a vehicle to glorify him. Singleness strengthens my empathy for others. Knowing loneliness, rejection, and alienation, we serve others who are deeply affected by a broken

world. We look upon the homebound, the divorced, and the fatherless with compassion, as those who often view life ourselves from the outside.

Count it a privilege to serve as a single. Singleness can be a great blessing. Biblical and ecclesiastical history is replete with famous and eminently useful singles. Our minds are not divided between pleasing a spouse and pleasing the Lord (1 Cor. 7:32–34). During a season of trial for the church, Paul actually recommended that singles and widows not marry (1 Cor. 7:26–27). We do not know what a day may bring (Prov. 27:1). Distress and persecution by perverse and wicked men may visit the church in our nation and that may make singles an even greater asset to God's people.

Finally, as a single man or woman, do not say in your heart, "I am a dry tree." Rather, remember the Lord's promise that those who love him by keeping his sabbaths and covenant shall receive an eternal inheritance from the Lord that is better than children (Isa. 56:3–5). The present sufferings of singleness are not to be compared with the glory to come (Rom. 8:18). Our inheritance is eternal in the heavens as we travel to a perfect world where there is no marrying or giving in marriage (Matt. 22:30). □

*The author is the pastor of Covenant OPC in LaGrange, Ga.*

# PARENTAL DATING GUIDANCE



LARRY AND GAIL MININGER // “Don’t worry about finding a wife, Son. I’ll send our servant to my hometown. When he finds a girl who will draw water for him and the camels, he’ll give her jewelry, talk to her parents, and bring her home to your tent. It’s all in the Bible, a perfect plan.”

Well, most Christians realize that Abraham’s strategy for locating Isaac’s wife does not constitute a command for us today. But neither does the Bible specify a method of seeking a spouse. So where does that leave us as concerned Christian parents? What should parents tell their kids who are of dating age?

In our own youth, Gail’s mother gave us the most dating guidance. Benefiting from her wisdom, we prepped our children similarly. We were unaware of the courtship model, so it was not a consideration. Our intent was to follow general biblical guidance and work out a dating plan for our five children (now adults), with advice from trusted Christians, frequent collaboration between the two of us, and prayer. We share our experience with you, only because we were asked to. We are not OPC dating experts. So here goes! Take what’s useful, ignore the rest, and keep praying.

**Theology.** What should you tell your kids who are of dating age? First, don’t wait until then. Develop their theology of sex and marriage early. When teaching the Ten Commandments, we informed our small children that “Do not commit adultery” means a man should not live with a woman to whom

he is not married or sleep in the same bed with her like Mommy and Daddy do, or something to that effect, in an age-appropriate way for that child. We taught incrementally about sexuality, as when Mommy was pregnant and she explained that Daddy helped make the baby inside of her when they were loving each other. Details were added over time! The subject of sex and marriage was not reserved for one big talk, but eventually there were longer explanations.

**Modeling.** Training our children includes not only purposeful instruction, but also modeling biblical marriage roles. We consider it especially important in our liberated society for moms to affirm that the children are to obey Mommy, Daddy, and God; *Mommy is to obey Daddy and God*; and Daddy as our head is to obey God. When parents downplay these roles, children find license to dishonor parents. When we parents disrespected each other, we confessed not only to each other and to God, but also to the children who were watching. The more your marriage portrays the joys of unity, love, respect, and forgiveness, the more effective your words will be in dating years.

**Character Building.** Prepare children for marriage by nurturing them in delayed gratification, self-denial, and self-control—in little things like waiting patiently for dinner, accepting that we cannot have everything we want, and being willing to wait a long time even for things we can have (eventually applicable to abstinence before marriage). Emphasize contentment with God’s plans, which may or may not include marriage. Tutor them to become out-facing, service-minded, generous, caring spouses or singles. Esteem God, not the children, as the center of the family, demonstrating that marriage is about serving God and one’s spouse, not about demanding rights.

**Storytelling.** Share stories with your children—how you met, why you married, why you did not marry others, what character qualities are essential in a spouse, how God kept you from temptation, or how he has forgiven you for sins you regret. Listen to their observations about other families—good, bad, mediocre—and discuss what to avoid and what to emulate.

**Guidelines.** Before the teen years, begin describing how dating or courting will look in your family, in a

purposeful yet understanding, cheerful, and sometimes fun manner. Build an understanding that you will guide them in dating, that they will need to cooperate with your leadership. Prayerfully develop relationships of trust and teamwork with your children.

We can distill our chief dating strategies into two categories: *God's ways* and *our family plans*.



The Mininger adult children (from the left): Lucas, April (Murphree), Marcus (in back), Linda (Sanders), and Abigail (Starke)

### God's Ways (Essential)

**Please God first**—before you please any boy or girl (Col. 3:23).

**Promises**—God has plans for you; you don't need to worry or go your own way (Jer. 29:11).

**Pray**—Pray about your relationships and your future (Phil. 4:6–7).

**Parents**—Honor them and seek their advice (Ex. 20:12).

**Protect your heart**—Scrutinize your thinking, media influences, etc. (Prov. 4:23).

**Priorities**—Date Christians. Dating non-Christians can lead to heart-breaking marriages (2 Cor. 6:14 ff.).

**Proper roles**—Could *he* lead you spiritually; would *she* follow your leadership (Eph. 5:22 ff.)?

**Purity**—No sex outside marriage (1 Cor. 6:18–20).

**Protect yourself and others from temptation**—Dress modestly (1 Tim. 2:9).

### Our Family's Plans (Optional outside Our Family)

**Postpone commitment until you are mature enough for marriage.**

We taught our children to develop friendships with both genders, but not to be committed to a “boyfriend” or “girlfriend” in their teens. Sometimes youthful commitments lead to re-

peated breakups, patterning a kind of marriage-divorce-marriage syndrome during the single years. Later, when actually married, some spouses divorce, seeking the freedom they yearn for, but never allowed themselves before marriage. Other young relationships get stuck out of insecurity and fear of change, leading to weddings fueled by habit and convenience rather than discernment and love.

Our children were allowed approved group or one-on-one dates to approved places with approved curfews, not before age sixteen, but only when we deemed them spiritually and socially mature enough to support our guidelines. This no-boyfriend/no-girlfriend strategy was not always popular with our kids or their friends. But our daughter Linda, now a mother of five, reflects, “My parents, by removing the option of having a boyfriend in high school, freed me to get to know boys and figure out how to relate to them, while relieving me of the social pressure of a committed relationship until I was more mature, confident, and discerning.”

As we walked our children through those years, and we, together with them, eventually began to deem their relationships worthy of committing to engagement and marriage, the guidelines nuanced.

#### **Postpone physical contact.**

It is not easy for our culture to understand dating for friendship, with

freedom to date others as well. But, with the understanding that holding hands and kissing are best reserved for the one we marry, we have found friendship dating a healthy way to avoid intimacy before marriage.

**Wait for God to bring him to you (no boy chasing!).**

We taught our girls that the Bible always speaks in terms of the man finding the wife, not vice versa. Boy-chasing often results in marriages where the wife leads or is frustrated that her husband does not.

#### **Keep talking to your parents.**

It may be awkward, but parents are the God-ordained leaders. Marriage involves one of life's most crucial decisions. A healthy marriage needs parental blessing, which is best preceded by parental dating guidance.

**If you want to date our daughter, you must get permission from her Dad.**

That step scares away some guys immediately, and is often a relief to the daughter! Dad will scrutinize his faith and instruct him to respect her and not to touch her or expect to own her. What a great foundation this is if the guy eventually seeks permission to marry her! Dad has established a relationship in which giving away his daughter is not a mere wedding formality, but a happy transfer of leadership.

What should you tell your kids who are of dating age? Lots of things. A good core might be the words on the calligraphic plaque we passed on to each child upon entering high school: “Those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed” (1 Sam. 2:30).

May God grant you wisdom as you prayerfully lead your children to honor our God. In relationships. In life. ☐

*Larry G. Mininger, pastor of Lake Sherwood OPC in Orlando, Fla., and his wife Gail have five adult children and thirteen grandchildren who worship in OPC and PCA congregations in five states.*

# INTERNET DATING



GREGORY P. HOADLEY // Romance isn't what it used to be.

Long ago, it was rare for a man and a woman who lived far apart to meet and marry. But with the advent of the Internet, that has changed. You can meet your future spouse on dating sites, even if he or she lives in a different area of the country (or even the

world). In fact, over a third of the couples getting married today met online.

But as with any venue for meeting one's future spouse, there is some risk involved with using the Internet, and caution is needed. What, then, are some of the common mistakes to avoid? And what are the proper steps to take, if you look for a future spouse in cyberspace?

What follows are some steps that my wife, Stella, and I took in our journey of meeting one another.

## 1. Trust the Lord.

While Internet dating is exciting, it is only going to work if the Lord blesses it. He may lead you to your spouse through, say, eHarmony or Sovereign Grace Singles. Then again, he may not. Either way, you have to trust that he will provide for you in his perfect timing.

Providentially, it worked for us. When we got matched on eHarmony, I was living in Florida, and she was living in Pennsylvania.

Stella initially enrolled, not for herself, but to check out eHarmony before referring it to a friend. And so, Stella stayed up late one night to fill out a profile. When she woke up the next morning, she already had several matches, most of whom were pastors (not me, yet)! When she told her friend, her friend encouraged her to do it for herself. Stella eventually agreed, and

signed up for three months. When that was about to expire, she thought to herself, "If I'm going to take this seriously, I should do it for a year."

She also opened up her options. Previously, she only requested matches in her local area. But Stella concluded that she should expand her search to the continental United States (other people might choose other countries as well, but Stella knew that wouldn't work for her, financially and logistically). It was then that we were matched up.

## 2. Be Honest and Thorough.

Most dating sites require you to fill out a profile, detailing who you are, what your likes and interests are, and what you are looking for in a potential spouse. It is a wonderful opportunity, not only to put your best foot forward, but also to learn more about yourself and your walk with the Lord.

When you fill out your profile, you should always be honest about who you really are. It is wise to ask your family and friends at church whom you respect to read it. Ask them if it is accurate and how you can improve it.

Additionally, you need to be forthright with potential matches. This is particularly important on a site like eHarmony, which constantly sends you matches. Anytime you think a match has great potential, focus only on that

person. Just like real dating, you have to be honest. If you see a profile that is intriguing, let your other potential matches know right away; you do not want to lead them on and give them false hope. When I saw Stella's profile, I had to let another potential match know right away, and she appreciated my honesty.

But don't forget to have fun in filling out your profile. For instance, I stated that strong biblical preaching was something I cannot live without; but I followed it by listing my favorite coffee drink and sports team. While you should take your profile seriously, it's also good to show some personality.

You should also be thorough. While filling out your profile can be tedious, it is well worth your effort, given that this may be what the Lord uses to connect you to your future spouse. If you need to finish it later, be sure to note that you are "still working" on it; if you don't, you may unwittingly communicate that you are not serious.

When I first read Stella's profile, she was up-front about who she is: Reformed and a member of an Orthodox Presbyterian church. This piqued my interest right away.

## 3. Be Discerning and Get Good Counsel.

When you get sent potential  
[Continued on page 19]

# THE WRIGHTS IN KARAMOJA— AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS

// MARTHA WRIGHT



Bob and Martha Wright with son Bobby and daughters (from the left) Mary, Rachel, Anna, and Kipsy

Just last month, Bob and I—and our children Rachel, Bobby, Anna, Mary, and Kipsy—celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of our arrival in Uganda. This year our family is spread across three different countries—Uganda, Kenya, and the U.S.—but we all still call Nakaale home. Bob and I are deeply grateful for the support of the OPC all these years and hope to continue our work in diaconal ministries and education with the Orthodox Presbyterian Uganda Mission for many years to come.

Life for all of us in Karamoja, both Karimojong and expats, has changed a great deal since 2000, especially since the Ugandan government's disarmament campaign in the mid-2000s. We no longer see warriors and shepherd boys with AK-47s slung over their shoulders, and new homesteads are springing up all over the countryside as people appreciate the relative security of the region. Our nearest trading center, Namalu, has grown from a ragged string of mud-hut shops to a bustling town with many brick buildings and concrete market areas. It is overflowing with shoppers and consumer goods, and even boasts a supermarket (of sorts), a cell phone store, a copy shop, and an Internet café.

Of course, in those intervening years, life in the Western world has also changed drastically, and we in Karamoja may not be quite as up-to-date as we think. However, thanks to having Bob the Builder on our team, we have enjoyed a comfortable life in Nakaale, despite living in the bush of East Africa. We are very thankful for our visitors and teammates, who have helped us in various aspects of our lives over the years—construction, vehicle repair, medical care, ministry, and the education of our children. All this help has made it possible for the OP missionaries to stay in Karamoja and continue to bring God's word to our Karimojong neighbors through village studies, school programs, and staff devotions. We can look around us and see people who have been hearing that

word for fifteen years—for some, since they were children—and while we may not know exactly what God will do in their lives, we can be encouraged every day, confident that his word will not return void.

Now the Wright family finds itself in a new phase (like many of our friends both in Africa and the U.S.): our children are growing up and moving in new directions in their own lives. Rachel is a senior at Houghton College in upstate New York, majoring in art and inclusive education, and is looking into work and graduate study over the next few years. Anna is also at Houghton College, a sophomore this year, majoring in communications and international development, and is considering working in journalism overseas. Bobby is following in his father's footsteps and is the "keeper of the keys" at the Nakaale mission station, having spent most of the past ten years as an apprentice in construction, maintenance, farming, solar power, and just about everything he can learn—and there is always something new. Mary, a senior at Rift Valley Academy (RVA) in the highlands of Kenya, is looking into studying elementary education at Rowan University in Glassboro, N.J., next year. Kipsy, *ingororit ka akimat* ("the lastborn of the old woman"! ) in Ngakarimojong, is a junior at RVA and is thinking about college in the U.S. as well.

Our children have spent most of their lives in East Africa and have been through countless changes and transitions, some of which have certainly been challenging. We hope they know how thankful we are for their patience, their humor, their singing, and even some of the craziness of a houseful of teenagers.

We appreciate all that they have contributed to the work of the mission—being out in the villages at Bible studies, helping to teach the little kids, befriending our Karimojong neighbors, leading singing and participating in VBS and school programs, and hosting visitors, and we look forward to their coming back and sharing a bit of the lives they now lead in far-flung places like New York, Philadelphia, and Kijabe.

Now that our own children are doing so much on their own, I have enjoyed some of the new tasks that God has put before us at the mission.

### The Karamoja Education Outreach (KEO): Reaching the Next Generation in Schools and Villages

I often tell people that I have the best job in the world: teaching unbelievably cute little children to count, recognize letters, play games, build with blocks, do puzzles, and sing. I get to read fun stories like *The Lazy Lion* and *Wangari's Trees of Peace* and Bible stories—and I always have an amazingly enthusiastic audience that never seems to tire of listening. Even our Karimojong teachers enjoy the stories and games with, at times, an almost childlike joy. I continue to look forward to learning with and from our teachers and children.

It has been two years since KEO started its weekday preschool. As we've gone along, we have adjusted our academic goals for the children and teachers because most come from homes where there is no reading material, and few of the parents have had much, if any, schooling. But when I step back and look at how much our teachers can do, and how many children and families we reach, I think our staff—both *mzungu* (white) and Karimojong—are accomplishing a great deal.

These days, KEO operates four different sites each day: our base preschool, called *Moru a Grace* (Grace's Mountain), two "under the tree" preschools in the nearby villages of Moru Asia and Kopetatum, and then (two days a week each) at our two nearest primary schools, Nakaale and Alamacar, where the mission has also held VBS-type programs since 2004. In the afternoons, children and teenagers who can't attend school (because their parents keep them home to help with housework) come to *Moru a Grace* for their own lessons. Altogether, we interact with probably 250–400 children each week, plus other villagers and schoolteachers who are also hearing our teaching. And people are clamoring for more. We have at least another half-dozen villages asking us to open learning centers for them. The head teachers of our public schools would like us to come in the afternoons to practice reading. A nearby primary school with a variety of handicapped children would like us to help teach them. Many parents have asked us to start adult literacy classes.

In addition, the Nakaale mission has pro-

duced a large body of Christian literature and Bible study materials in both English and Ngakarimojong. Mission and KEO staff have edited and printed these booklets and take them to the schools, as readers for the students' Christian religious education class, which is part of the Ugandan public school curriculum. This means that every week in South Karamoja, hundreds of primary school students are reading OP pastors' teachings! Our pastors and other Bible teachers also take texts of sermons and Bible studies to our mission clinic and to the villages for our Karimojong neighbors to study and share with their families. Who knows how many people are being reached through these printed materials?

Over the past two years, I have also had the opportunity to work with members of Wycliffe Bible Translators on a USAID-funded mother-tongue literacy project, which has brought a basic Karimojong reading program into our local public schools. Our KEO staff encourage children to attend these schools, even if the education there is weak, in the hope that at the very least they will acquire some basic skills and be able to read the Scriptures in their native language.

There is no end to the opportunities in Karamoja for education. Even if it seems that what we accomplish each day is barely a drop in the bucket, we know that the gospel is reaching many people. We look forward to seeing the seeds that we are planting grow and flourish in the years to come.

Special thanks to: Amy DeWit Wright, who was one of our children's first teachers; missionary associates Emily Pihl and Erika Bulthuis Angel, who got our preschool group started; Erika and Taryn Dieckmann, the first two missionary associate KEO teachers; our many short-term volunteers, including Rachel, Anna, Mary, and Kipsy Wright; and our current missionary associate KEO teachers, Fiona Smith, Angela Voskuil, and Rachel Turner.



Martha Wright teaching "under the tree"

# REVIEW: *THE TWILIGHT OF THE AMERICAN ENLIGHTENMENT*

// D. G. HART

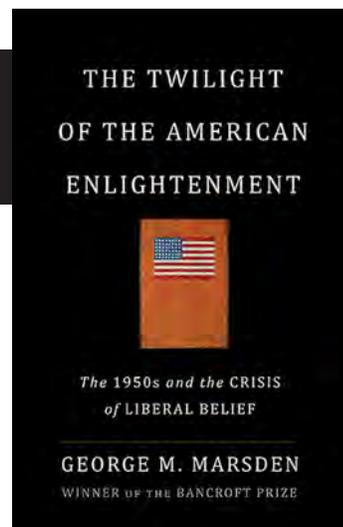
George M. Marsden once laughed when I suggested, almost twenty years ago, that he should write a memoir. He did not think his life lived up to the stuff of memoirs. With *The Twilight of the American Enlightenment: The 1950s and the Crisis of Liberal Belief*, Marsden comes the closest yet in his many books to reflecting on his own past. Granted, it is a window with a small opening: the mid-twentieth-century decades of his youth. But the book's introduction has the ring of nostalgia for an America that no longer exists:

I remember well how, in the spring of 1949, when I was ten years old, the fields near my home where we used to roam were suddenly marked off with patterns of stakes. A building project was launched with some fanfare.... By the next spring, our town had a full-fledged suburb, where I would soon be delivering newspapers. In such places, more and more young families could participate in the American dream of owning their own homes endowed with up-to-date modern conveniences.

In those new suburbs, fathers went to work, mothers reared children, children rode bikes, and families watched television and went to church on Sundays. "There was little reason not to believe that," Marsden recalls, "if peace could be maintained, progress would continue."

That sense of optimism and how it failed is the subject of Marsden's book. In it he analyzes the assumptions of mainstream American culture in the 1950s, where religion figured in those assumptions, and what the collapse of the postwar consensus meant for Christianity in America.

The 1950s outlook that Marsden explores was two cups Enlightenment and two tablespoons liberal Protestantism. The roots of this combination went back to the founding of America and the belief that reason was an adequate basis for fair government and individual rights, along with the recog-



nition that a free society depended on virtuous citizens who needed religion to provide a sense of moral duty. Americans in the 1950s could read many public intellectuals who worried about the fragility of this consensus. Some, like the literary critic Dwight MacDonal, fretted about the effects of mass culture (television, radio, and other such middlebrow expressions) on American character. Some, like the op-ed writer and political advisor Walter Lippmann, feared that the American consensus lacked an adequate philosophical basis. Others, like the sociologist William Whyte, cautioned that the application of science to the nation's organizations might destroy American individualism and personal autonomy. Even so, Americans were still united in defending individual freedom, free speech, civil rights, equality before the law, due process, economic opportunities, and civic-mindedness.

Marsden's observation is not that these commitments are still strong among Americans, but only that they applied differently. What he does point out, which may explain the differences between the 1950s and today, is that the consensus after World War II rarely included minorities. American commitments to freedom also assumed sexual restraint and the value of families as part of the social order. The sexual experimentation that surfaced in the 1960s seriously undermined that part of the 1950s consensus. Another segment of the American population that mainstream society in the 1950s neglected consisted of religious conservatives: fundamentalists, evangelicals, and Roman Catholics. These believers did not necessarily experience discrimination, but were clearly on the sidelines of mainstream opinion. The Protestantism of the mainline denominations did enjoy a place at the table, whether it was the moralistic optimism of *Time* magazine's Henry Luce, who promoted an American exceptionalism rooted in belief in God, or the chary pessimism of Reinhold Niebuhr, who reminded Americans of the selfishness that afflicts all societies because of original sin. Even so, the mainline churches achieved their centrist status by avoiding statements and actions that might look dogmatic or intolerant.

The 1960s saw the collapse of this consensus and provoked a militant Christianity to clean up the debris. With so-

ciety having only a pragmatic justification for political liberty and reliance on science, the Christian Right tried to fill the vacuum that the sexual revolution, the civil rights movement, and anti-war protests exposed. Marsden detects in much of the Christian Right's agenda nostalgia for the pro-family and patriotic 1950s. With Francis Schaeffer, evangelicals found a leader who sought to supply America with a Christian foundation. But Marsden faults Schaeffer for offering a Christian outlook that was fundamentally divisive and partisan. It alienated and threatened non-Christians and failed to provide an inclusive pluralism.

Inclusive pluralism is in fact the point of Marsden's book. It is the subject of his last chapter and even the last two words of the story. Unlike the 1950s synthesis of the Enlightenment and liberal Protestantism, or the Christian Right's blend of fundamentalism and partisan Republican politics, Marsden reflects on the pluralism that Abraham Kuyper proposed during his political career between 1880 and 1915 in the Netherlands. What distinguished Kuyper's project from other efforts to accommodate modern society's diversity was a commitment to principled pluralism—one that did not treat science as objective or neutral, but considered it an equal competitor with other outlooks, including faith. According to Marsden, Kuyper's "richly pluralistic society" reduces government to a "sort of referee, patrolling the boundaries among the spheres of society, protecting the sovereignty due within each sphere, adjudicating conflicts, and ensuring equal rights and equal protections for confessional groups." Marsden's sketch of Dutch diversity is as enticing as it is brief. Unfortunately, he does not explain how this outlook provides a foundation for all of society when so many groups disagree about basic truths. Nor does he consider the sort of social homogeneity required for mobilizing a nation to fight a Cold War or to overcome racial discrimination. If the Netherlands had emerged from World War II as the West's superpower, and if it had needed to address racial segregation in one of its provinces, would pluralism have been as attractive as Marsden depicts it?

More puzzling is the book's silence about J. Gresham Machen and the OPC. After all, Marsden grew up as a member of the OPC and in a household where Machen's name was highly regarded. Yet Machen's ideas about pluralism, civil liberty, and the spirituality of the church make nary a dent in Marsden's reflections on American society. Machen's ideas about civil liberty showed remarkable toleration for diverse groups; a lifelong Democrat, Machen defended the rights of Communists, Roman Catholics, and fundamentalists at a time when the ties between the Enlightenment and liberal Protestantism were solidifying. At the same time, Machen's idea of a church set apart from the civil arena to pursue spiritual ends with spiritual means, provided a way for confessional groups to retain theological fidelity without compromising religious convictions for political gain. Machen's version of principled pluralism makes good sense of the American Presbyterian experience and does not require the United States to reinvent

## ABCs of PRESBYTERIANISM Authority in the Church (2)

Larry Wilson

Our Lord Jesus is the only lawgiver of his church. Rather than inventing laws and imposing them on the church, the elders are to apply Christ's law. They are to apply God's Word, which is found in the Bible, without adding to it, subtracting from it, or in any way altering it.

Their authority is declarative, not legislative. This is because Jesus alone is the King of the church, and he runs it by the agency of his Spirit working through the instrumentality of his Word. The Bible is our only infallible rule of faith and practice. As our Confession of Faith 1.10 says,

The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.

To be sure, the leaders of the church need to make certain rules, like setting the time and place for public worship or developing procedures for finalizing church budgets. Indeed, there are all sorts of judgment calls that the overseers must make. But this is only so that Christ's rules may be followed decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40).

Such rules may never compete with God's Word; instead, they must always comport with God's Word. They may never seek to supplement God's Word; instead, they must simply implement God's Word. They may never supplant God's Word; instead, they are only to apply God's Word to specific circumstances.

itself as the small, intriguing, and demographically homogeneous country that the Netherlands used to be. Had Marsden proposed Machen instead of Kuyper, his critique of the thinness of the 1950s consensus might not have been substantially different. But that might have connected his mature reflections on the 1950s to his experience as a boy growing up in the OPC.

*The reviewer, an OP elder, teaches history at Hillsdale College. The Twilight of the American Enlightenment is published by Basic Books, 2014 (hardback, 258 pages, list price \$26.99).*

### ● Out of the Mouth . . .

During a sermon, I asked, "Who's in charge here?" My daughter, Annalise, 5, called out, "You!"

—Markus Jeromin  
Manistee, Mich.

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

# THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL HOME MISSIONARY

// SEAN D. GREGG



*Regional home missionary Jim Bosgraf (right) with Gerry Malkus, the representative of the Presbytery of New York and New England*

Every November representatives from the presbytery home missions committees gather at Lake Sherwood OPC in Orlando, Florida, for the Regional Church Extension Conference. This year, fifteen of the seventeen presbyteries were able to send representatives. This gathering includes presentations and discussions of a specific issue related to church planting, presentations about the new works that are beginning in each presbytery, and substantial time for prayer.

This year both the Presbytery of the Southwest and the Presbytery of Philadelphia have called regional home missionaries: Mark Sumpter and David Holmlund, respectively. (Regional home missionaries serve new groups within their presbytery that hope to become new churches, and they support church planters in their labors.) Both presbyteries have had RHM's in the past, but not for several years. With these men joining the six full-time RHM's and one part-time area home missions coordinator, this year's topic was "The Role of the Regional Home Missionary."

General Secretary John Shaw says, "The Regional Church Extension Conference is a highlight each year for those involved in the work of home missions in the OPC. We enjoy times of great fellowship and prayer. We are encouraged as we hear how the Lord is building the church in each of our presbyteries. We learn from each other.

"It is exciting to see more presbyteries calling regional home missionaries, since these men provide significant help and support in the start of new churches. This year we all benefitted from hearing about the experiences of two new regional home missionaries. Mark Sumpter and David Holmlund were encouraged as they begin their new labors, but all of us were challenged to more carefully and effectively serve our church plants and church planters."

There is no denominational blueprint for the RHM position, and each of the nine men leading their presbytery's

church planting efforts has a different job description. Some RHM's can drive from one end of their presbytery to the other in just a few hours, while others have benefitted from church members who are private pilots. Still, there is much to learn from how other presbyteries have used the RHM in church planting.

This year Jim Bosgraf and Lacy Andrews, both seasoned regional home missionaries, told their fellow laborers of some of the successes and failures they've had over the years. Jim Bosgraf agreed to serve as the Presbytery of the Midwest's regional home missionary for three years. That was nearly a quarter of a century ago, and he's still at it. That means he's had a lot of time to make mistakes. In fact, he told the group that he made "Mistakes to Learn From" the last topic of his talk because he'd never get to the other topics if he started there.

The first thing Bosgraf stressed is that "there is no one way to do the regional home missionary's work," adding, "there are a variety of ways that God has blessed." As an example, he mentioned that he used to look at Chip Stonehouse (a former regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Philadelphia) and wonder, "How did God use him to start a church?" He quickly added, "And he thought the same thing about me."

Bosgraf said that he tries to get a church planter involved in the work as quickly as he can, but the regional home missionary is often the first contact for a group. He wants the church planter to be involved in the development of the work. When a group contacts Bosgraf, his first question is, "Why do you want to start a church?" He then begins studying Ephesians with the group and leads them to state positively (rather than negatively) why they want a new church.

Lacy Andrews pointed to Jim Heemstra's model of "hooking up his travel trailer and setting up shop, beginning to work with a group of people." He said, "I could no more do things the way that Jim did it than he could do things the way we do it, but he was very influential for me." Andrews also remembered the time when he learned that Dick Ellis

was going to be the regional home missionary in the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic. Ellis was going into the role in a part-time capacity. "I thought, 'He's lost his cotton-pickin' mind,'" Andrews said. "How in the world could he possibly do that? But he has extraordinary gifts and was able to function that way."

"We're all very, very different, but there's one thing we have in common, and that's a passion to see the Lord Jesus Christ plant and establish Orthodox Presbyterian Churches," Andrews said. Andrews and Bosgraf also talked about how their roles have changed over the years. They play an advisory role with young church plants. They also serve as encouragers to church planters who often labor a great distance from their overseeing sessions.

Mark Sumpter summed up the themed portion of the conference this way: "When you combine around forty years of regional home missionary experience between the Rev. Jim Bosgraf and the Rev. Lacy Andrews, be ready to take copious notes. Winsomely, and with understanding about the blend of faithful Presbyterian order and genuine, authentic pastoral care, Jim and Lacy provided six hours of instruction, which, most of the time, felt like fatherly mentoring, reminiscent of a journeyman looking over the shoulder of an apprentice working at the lathe."

The whole group also participated in discussions about how to design and fund a regional home missionary program. Unlike a local pastor, RHM's do not have a local session to oversee their work. Rather, the local presbytery oversees and supports the work, which requires significant planning and time from already busy pastors and elders. We discussed various ways to approach that responsibility.

In addition to the featured topic, there are parts of the Regional Church Extension Conference that deal with the nuts and bolts of church-planting work throughout the country.

Each presbytery representative is given time to tell what new works are in the planning stages or are waiting for organizing pastors, and what new churches, if any, have come into, or are considering coming into, the OPC. If there is any time left, the representative reports on the men serving at current presbytery mission works. As General Secretary John Shaw says, these presentations "give a unique perspective on OPC home missions that enables us to celebrate what the Lord Jesus is doing among us, and enables us to ask him to provide the needed resources (both men and dollars) to press ahead in the work he is laying before us."

### **Home Missions Today**

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail [HomeMissionsToday@opc.org](mailto:HomeMissionsToday@opc.org).  
New editions: January 6, 20.



*Regional home missionary Lacy Andrews speaking at the Regional Church Extension Conference*

Several hours of the conference are devoted to prayer. At three points during the conference this year, the men split into four groups for times of directed prayer. They gave thanks for God's provision for church planting in 2015, and they prayed for each other, for the new works that they had learned about earlier in the conference, for the ministry of evangelism and outreach in the OPC, and for more opportunities to plant churches.

Perhaps the most lively part of the conference is the final session on the schedule: "Charting Our Course." During this part of the meeting, more commonly known among regular attendees as "dividing the pie," each presbytery presents its request for denominational support for the next year. While some representatives trade friendly barbs during this portion of the meeting, the excitement is palpable as each man presents his presbytery's requests for financial assistance for budding church plants. In the Lord's providence, we added only five new church plants in 2015. Praise him that plans are being made to add twelve new church plants in 2016. The Lord has blessed your giving to Worldwide Outreach, and there is enough money in the budget for each of the expected works in 2016.

Praise God for

- The faithful labors of our RHM's
- Adding two new RHM's
- A good working relationship among the presbyteries
- New groups forming around the country

Pray for

- The new RHM's as they begin their work
- Church planters for existing groups that are searching for one
- New core groups to work with
- Safety for the RHM's as they travel

# USING EVERY GIFT ENTRUSTED TO US

// ALAN J. DUECK

When we hear the word “stewardship,” we often think of money. Some churches may have a stewardship month, or even a whole “season,” dedicated to generating financial support. Churches depend on faithful giving, and Christian stewardship includes the wise management of our financial assets for kingdom purposes. But the biblical concept of stewardship involves much more than money. It includes the judicious use of all our resources.

In Peter’s first epistle, the apostle teaches us about stewardship. “As each has received a gift,” he writes, “use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace” (1 Peter 4:10). Observe three things from this verse: First, that “each has received a gift.” The sense is not “if you have received a gift,” but “since you have received a gift.” The point is that all of God’s people have received gifts in Christ, not just a select few. The gifts vary in kind, number, and magnitude, but all Christians have received them.

Second, at the end of verse 10, we see that the source of these gifts is “God’s varied grace.” In the original, “gift” and “grace” are closely related words. Grace is the disposition to show favor, while gifts are the expression of that favor. The abundance and variety of the gifts mirror the abundance and variety of the grace—an infinite spectrum of blessing!

Third, at the heart of the verse, we learn the purpose of these gifts: to serve one another. While God may, by his infinite power and wisdom, accomplish his gracious purposes directly, he ordinarily chooses to work through “second causes”—like you and me. One of the ordinary ways our Lord works to bless his people is *through* his people! As his people use their gifts to serve one another, his gracious

purpose of blessing his people is achieved.

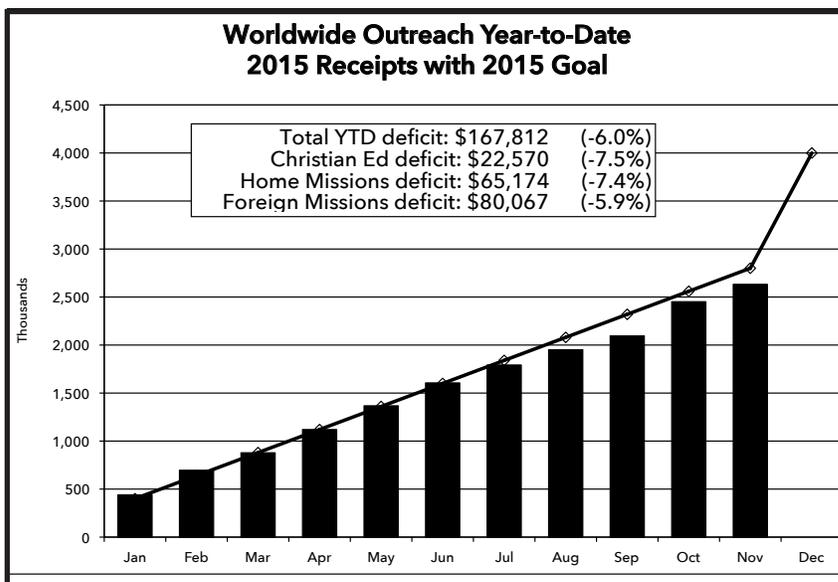
It’s here that we see the importance of stewardship. We have the gifts, and we have the grace. Now we have a duty to use them. That is the sacred trust of stewardship. The biblical steward was a trusted household servant. The master put the resources of the household under his care. We are likewise stewards of God’s gifts. Those gifts are not granted to serve ourselves, any more than the household resources were for the steward’s private use or enrichment. Our responsibility as stewards is to manage and employ every resource entrusted to us to accomplish the Master’s purposes.

We are reminded of our Lord Jesus’ parable of the talents. The Master entrusts talents (financial resources) to his servants while he is away. When he returns, he will expect not only the original deposit—whether five talents, two, or one—but also the gain, as well as an accounting! The stewardship of which Peter speaks is the same. As stewards, we are not to lock our gifts away, merely protecting them from loss, but are to increase them and use them!

Use them for the good of one another in the church. Use them according to the Master’s word, speaking “as one who speaks oracles of God.” Use them “by the strength that God supplies,” which will never fail. And use them “in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 4:11)! Use your gifts—that is stewardship.

All our gifts, whether intellectual, spiritual, physical, or financial, have been entrusted to us for a time. Let us then take hold of these riches and put them to work as faithful stewards, serving one another for God’s everlasting glory.

*The author is the pastor of Grace OPC in Battle Mountain, Nev.*



## JANUARY

1. **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for wisdom as Bob makes daily decisions impacting life and work at the Karamoja Station. / **Joshua and Jessica Lyon**, Carson, Calif. Pray for continued development in the ministry of Grace OPC. / **Benjamin (and Emily) Gordon**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.
2. **Mika and Christina Edmondson**, Grand Rapids, Mich. Praise God for his continued blessing on New City Fellowship. / Missionary associates **Jesse and Hannah Van Gorkom**, Nakaale, Uganda. Praise the Lord for their labors and testimony to the Karimojong. / Air Force chaplain **C. Phillip (and Melanie) Hollstein III**.
3. **David and Rashel Robbins**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the family as they prepare to move to the mission field next month. / **Jim and Tricia Stevenson**, Tulsa, Okla. Pray for growth in numbers and in love for our Savior and the saints at Providence OPC. / **Tim (and Jeni) Son**, yearlong intern at First Presbyterian Church, North Shore in Ipswich, Mass.
4. **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Andover, Minn. Pray that the preaching at Immanuel OPC will exalt Christ and be applied wisely to people's lives. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. / **Matthew (and Elin) Prather**, yearlong intern at Harvest OPC in San Marcos, Calif.
5. Missionary associate **Leah Hopp**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for those in local villages who receive medical care and hear the gospel. / **Kim and Barbara Kuhfuss**, Eau Claire, Wis. Pray for new visitors at Providence Reformed Church. / **Lou Ann Shafer**, music editor for the Psalter-Hymnal Committee.
6. Home Missions general secretary **John Shaw**. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Dave as he establishes and strengthens relationships with group leaders in the local villages. / Pray for travelling mercies for **Danny Olinger**, Christian Education general secretary, as he visits churches and presbyteries.
7. Missionary associates **Fiona Smith, Rachel Turner, and Angela Voskuil**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for teachers and students at the Karamoja preschool. / **Chris and Megan Hartshorn**, Anaheim Hills, Calif. Pray for boldness among the people of Anaheim Hills Presbyterian Church to share their faith. / **Doug Watson**, part-time staff accountant.
8. **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for the ministry to children and young people in the churches around Mbale. / **Paul and Sarah Murreale**, St. Louis, Mo. Pray for Gateway OPC's outreach efforts. / Short-term missions coordinator **David Nakhla**. Pray that churches will have wisdom as they consider short-term missions in 2016.
9. **Jeremy Logan**, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Pray that the Lord would raise up deacons at Knox Presbyterian Church. / **Charles and Connie Jackson**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Charles as he encourages the pastors and elders of the OPCU. / **Wayne (and Suzanne) Veenstra**, yearlong intern at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Mich.
10. **Jonathan and Lauryn Shishko**, Queens, N.Y. Pray that the people of Reformation Presbyterian Church will continue to learn to observe all that God has commanded. / **Church in the Horn of Africa**. Pray for small groups that meet for worship each week. / Air Force chaplain **Cornelius (and Deidre) Johnson**.
11. Pray for **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay, arriving in the U.S. today to begin a yearlong furlough. / Pray for **Larry and Kalynn Oldaker**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Ohio, that God would provide more opportunities to establish OP churches. / *Ordained Servant* proofreader **Diane Olinger**.
12. **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray for God's blessing on San Antonio Reformed Church's officer training class. / **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray that St-Marc's teen group will grow in number, in Christian fellowship, and in depth of faith. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Pat Clawson**.
13. Missionary associates **Jennifer Nelson**, Quebec, Canada, and **Sarah Jantzen**, Mbale, Uganda. / **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. (downtown). Pray that more people will come to Gospel Life Presbyterian Church's outreach Bible studies. / Pray for the work of the **Special Committee on Marriage and Sexuality**.
14. **Phil Strong**, Lander, Wyo. Pray that the Lord would be glorified at Grace Reformed Fellowship. / **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for spiritual growth in the Christian families attending the church in L'viv. / Pray for the **Subcommittee for Internet Ministries**, which oversees the OPC.org website.



Eric and Dianna Tuininga and family

**15.** Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Czech Republic. Pray that those attending the Saturday night youth group will grow in their commitment to the Lord. / **Ron and Carol Beabout**, Gaithersburg, Md. Pray for Trinity Reformed Church's Sunday school and outreach activities. / Army chaplain **Paul (and Mary) Berghaus**.

**16.** **Brad and Cinnamon Peppo**, Springfield, Ohio. Pray for Living Water OPC's efforts to reach local college students with the gospel. / Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he continues to press for the advancement of OP foreign missions. / *New Horizons* managing editor **Jim Scott**.

**17.** Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson**, as he speaks at a conference for pastors and elders in Vietnam. / **Robert and Christy Arendale**, Houston, Tex. Pray for the Word and Spirit to build up and sustain Cornerstone OPC. / **Chris Tobias**, *New Horizons* cover designer.



*Robert and Christy Arendale*

**18.** **Mike and Katy Myers**, Hartwell, Ga. Pray that Heritage Presbyterian Church will be a congregation marked by love for God and neighbor. / **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for safety in travel to and from La Gonave, as well as on the island's roads. / Pray for the health of *New Horizons* proofreader **Sarah Pederson**.

**19.** Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray for Octavius as he trains potential church officers. / **Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, Ky. Pray that the Lord would add several new families to Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church. / **Daniel Adams**, yearlong intern at Calvary OPC in Glenside, Pa.

**20.** Pray for **Chris Walmer**, area home missions coordinator for the Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania, as he does exploratory work in the region. / Pray for affiliated missionary **Linda Karner**, Chiba, Japan, as she teaches courses to high school students. / **Lowell (and Mae) Ivey**, yearlong intern at Covenant Community Church in Taylors, S.C.

**21.** Pray for affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne**, Urayasu, Japan, as they work to develop relationships with their neighbors. / **Tom and Martha Albaugh**, Pittsburgh, Pa. Pray for more new visitors at Redeemer OPC Mission. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.

**22.** **Christopher and Ann Malamisuro**, Cincinnati, Ohio. Pray for Good Shepherd OPC, that God's elect will be brought in. / **Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa. Pray for their efforts to witness for Christ. / **Janet Gregson**, assistant to the finance director.

**23.** **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for more Uruguayans to attend worship services. / **Brian and Sara Chang**, Cottonwood, Ariz. Pray for opportunities for Verde Valley Reformed Chapel to make known the name of Christ. / **Darryl and Anita Kretschmer**, yearlong intern at Lakeview OPC in Rockport, Maine.

**24.** Home Missions staff administrator **Sean Gregg**. / Pray for missionary associates **Markus and Sharon Ruth Jeromin** and their children, Montevideo, Uruguay, as they adjust to their new living and working situation on the field. / Pray for Stated Clerk **Ross Graham** as he begins preparations for the 83rd General Assembly in June 2016.

**25.** Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Katrina Zartman**. / Pray for **Dave Holmlund**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Philadelphia, as he begins exploratory work in the region. / **Winston Maddox**, president of the trustees of Great Commission Publication.

**26.** **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray that God would add new people to Keys Presbyterian Church. / Pray that retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Greet Rietkerk**, and **Young and Mary Lou Son** will be an encouragement to those around them. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund administrator.

**27.** **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia. Pray for wisdom and energy to prioritize and manage many ministry demands. / Pray for **Jim Bosgraf**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Midwest, as he follows up on contacts and visits Bible study groups. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.

**28.** **Jim and Eve Cassidy**, Austin, Tex. Praise God for recent visitors to South Austin Presbyterian Church. / Missionary associates **M. D.** and **D. V.**, Asia. Pray for the witness through the English Corner outreach in January and February. / **Charles Williams**, yearlong intern at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, Mich.

**29.** Tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia. Pray for good health during this bitterly cold time of year. / **Jonathan and Kristin Moersch**, Capistrano Beach, Calif. Pray for continued growth and harmony at Trinity Presbyterian Church. / **Brian Guinto**, yearlong intern at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.

**30.** **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, Fla. Pray that the preaching of the Word at Christ the King Presbyterian Church will bring edification and conversion. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray for special English outreach programs conducted in the city during winter break. / **Mark Stumpff**, OPC office assistant.

**31.** Pray that missionary associates **Mr. and Mrs. C.** and **S. Z.**, Asia, will have many opportunities to share the gospel. / Pray for Home Missions associate general secretary **Al Tricarico** as he begins his ministry with the Committee, and as he and his family get readjusted to life in the U.S. after eleven years in Uganda. / **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.

## INTERNET DATING

[Continued from page 9]

matches, read their profiles thoroughly. If someone is not a Christian, then that is not a match for you (2 Cor. 6:14). If someone is in a different denomination, great discernment may be needed. If you are interested in someone, find out if he or she is teachable.

Many times, Stella and I received matches who said, "I believe in God" when it came to their religious beliefs. This revealed a lack of seriousness (i.e., no mention of Christ). If someone isn't willing to elaborate on such an important question, then he or she is probably not God's intended for you.

At the appropriate time, you will also want to ask some important questions: Has that person been previously married? If so, was it a biblical divorce? Does he or she have any children? Is he or she a church member in good standing? While it may be awkward to ask, you need answers to these and other important questions before you get emotionally attached. So be sure to guard your heart, and don't provide any personal contact information until you know these crucial facts.

If you live far apart from each other, one of you should eventually be willing to move, if the relationship gets serious.

In addition to asking your parents and trusted friends, ask your pastor or elder(s) what they think. They are often left out of this process, but their counsel is very important, since they must give an account of how they watched over your soul (Heb. 13:17).

### 4. Guys, Take the Initiative.

Gentlemen, even though both of you are paying for the online dating service, take the first step in contacting the woman. When the time is right, you define the relationship, and take the initiative to talk to her parents. Ask for their permission to court their daughter. This shows proper respect. It will demonstrate that you are not hiding, and that your intentions are honorable.

And when you take her out for a date, you pay for it (unless it's your birthday!). Getting flowers is always a good idea.

Also, go to her pastor. Let him know your intentions. This will show that you want to do what is right in God's eyes. It will also demonstrate that you are taking the lead in the relationship.

When I did this with Stella's pastor and parents, it made them want to help us. Her pastor was very helpful to us during the courting process and then in premarital counseling. Her father enthusiastically allowed me to court her, even though they had not yet met me in person (since they live in Korea).

### 5. Have Fun.

After we were matched up, the process went very quickly. We had our first telephone conversation nearly two weeks later. Our interactions gradually became more frequent. I visited

her for the first time in April 2007. After that, we visited each other almost on a monthly basis. We met each other's friends, worshiped at each other's churches, and eventually met each other's parents (mine live in California).

We also read books together on the phone, did a Bible study, prayed, and emailed each other daily. She also drilled me on the Shorter Catechism as I studied for licensure. In short, we learned that while long-distance relationships are challenging, they can work if both parties are willing and have the right mind-set.

Stella and I have now been married for nearly eight years. It has been a wonderful journey. Looking back, we are thankful that this is how the Lord brought us together. We hope that he might graciously do the same for you. □

*The author is a minister in the OPC. His wife, Stella, contributed to this article.*

## 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](http://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](mailto:olinger.1@opc.org).

# NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

## WESTFIELD'S NEW PASTOR

*Bob Reith*

After more than two years, Grace OPC in Westfield, New Jersey, once again has a shepherd. On October 24, the mutual leading of Timothy Ferguson and the congregation culminated with the new pastor's ordination and installation at the church.

Mr. Ferguson's journey toward the pastorate began at the age of nineteen, when he first heard the gospel at the Boardwalk Chapel. He placed his trust in Jesus Christ for salvation just prior to entering law school. In the 1990s, he began what would become a successful, twenty-year law practice in southern New Jersey.

During that time, he and his wife, Leslie, began raising their family at Immanuel OPC in Bellmawr, where the Rev. Tom Church is pastor. Mr. Ferguson eventually became a deacon at Bellmawr, and later a ruling elder at Grace OPC in Pennsville.

Sensing a call to pastoral ministry, Mr. Ferguson enrolled at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia. He served a summer internship in 2014 at Emmanuel OPC in Wilmington, Delaware, under Pastor Michael Matossian, and was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Jersey in November. After graduating in May 2015, he was unanimously called to Westfield on June 19.

At the ordination and installation service, led by the Rev. Ross Graham, moderator of the Presbytery of New Jersey, Mr. Church delivered the sermon, Dr. Matossian gave the charge to the pastor, and the Rev. Dr. Jeff Waddington gave the charge to the congregation.

Organized in September 1936, Grace OPC is one of the oldest congregations in the OPC, having a rich history with pastors Donald Graham, John Galbraith, Robert Atwell, Edmund Clowney, Leslie Dunn, Jay Adams, Albert Edwards, Mack Harrell, and Stanford Sutton. The congregation rejoices in the Lord's continuing faithfulness, and looks forward to



*Ministers and ruling elders at Tim Ferguson's ordination: Elders Bob Reith, Ian Parkin, Jon Stevenson, Pete Veenema; Revs. Michael Matossian, Ross Graham, Neil Lodge, Stan Sutton, Tim Ferguson, Jeff Waddington, Tom Church, Todd Smith; Elder Rob Kafka; Revs. Steve McDaniel, Travis Yonkman; Elders Ed Kauffman, Victor Bonssrah; Rev. John Keegan*

participating in the gospel under the leadership of Pastor Ferguson.

## MICHAEL CHAPA ORDAINED

*Archibald A. Allison*

After graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1989, Michael J. Chapa served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force until 2009. He served as a fighter pilot and test pilot, and taught at the Air Force Academy. During his service as a pilot, the Lord brought him to embrace the Reformed faith. After not being chosen to serve as an astronaut, Mike decided to pursue the gospel ministry.

Mike joined an OP church in Colorado and became a ruling elder. He worked as an aerospace/defense consultant while working on his Master of Divinity through Reformation International Theological Seminary from 2009 to 2015. The Presbytery of the Dakotas licensed

him to preach the gospel as a probationer in September 2013. In May 2014, he and another elder became part a mission work in Castle Rock, Colorado, where he had an opportunity to develop his gifts.

After the Presbytery of the Dakotas organized Emmanuel OPC as a new congregation in April 2015, Mike was called to serve as its first pastor. Presbytery ordained and installed him on October 3. The moderator, the Rev. Gregory L. Thurston, preached. The Rev. Kevin P. Swanson gave the charge to the minister. The Rev. Archibald A. Allison instructed and gave a charge to the congregation.



*Michael Chapa being ordained*



*The congregation of Christ Church; Pastor Nathan Tomlinson (tenth from the right) with his wife, Holly*

### NATHAN TOMLINSON ORDAINED

*Nathan Tomlinson*

Christ Church of Franklin County, Massachusetts, is an independent Reformed church that was founded in 2000 by the Rev. Jerry Bricker, his family, and more than ten other families. Rev. Bricker preached the Word faithfully at Christ Church for fourteen years, and was taken home by his Savior in June 2014 at the age of 67.

Nathan Tomlinson was called by Christ Church as their second pastor in the summer of 2015. On October 31, he was ordained as a minister by the Presbytery of New York and New England to labor out of bounds as the pastor of Christ Church. He is the son of OP pastor Allen C. Tomlinson.

Christ Church worships at the Guiding Star Grange Hall in Greenfield.

When Jim retired in the early 1990s from Lockheed, he enlarged his ministry by joining the Home Missions Committee of the Presbytery of Northern Cali-



*Jim and Audrey Huizinga*

### ELDER HUIZINGA HONORED

*Jeffery Landis*

On Saturday evening, October 24, the congregation of Covenant Presbyterian Church in San Jose, California, held a dinner in honor of ruling elder James Huizinga. After 49 uninterrupted years of service, Mr. Huizinga retired from active status as an elder. Jim had served with every pastor at Covenant since its inception in 1965. In addition to his many years as a ruling elder, he served for over four decades as a trustee at Covenant; most of those years he held the elected position of either church treasurer or board president.

fornia and Nevada. While on the committee, Jim was involved in establishing seven mission works: Hanford, Eureka, Salinas, Hughson, Las Vegas, Rockland, and Reno. During that time, Jim also served on the sessions of Hanford, Eureka, and Las Vegas while they were mission works.

On Sunday, October 18, the congregation of Covenant held a special congregational meeting and unanimously conferred upon Jim the status of “Elder Emeritus” for his long and faithful service to the church. The congregation expressed its thanks for the Lord’s gracious gift of Jim Huizinga and for his faithful and enduring service.

### LADIES RETREAT

The sixteenth annual Ladies Retreat at the Machen Retreat and Conference Center in Highland County, Virginia, was held October 9–10. Paula Taylor spoke on “Prayer: Aligning Our Hearts with God’s Purposes.” Twenty-four ladies attended from five churches in Virginia, Maryland, and Kentucky.



*Participants in the Ladies Retreat at the Machen Retreat and Conference Center*

## UPDATE

### CHURCHES

- **Big Bear Valley OPC**, a mission work in Big Bear Lake, Calif., held its last service on September 6.
- On November 14, **Reformation Presbyterian Church** in Queens, N.Y., was organized as a particular congregation of the OPC by the Presbytery of Connecticut and Southern New York.
- **Trinity Presbyterian Church** in Huntington, W.Va., a mission work of the Presbytery of Ohio, has closed down.

### MINISTERS

- **Matthew D. Cole** was ordained as a minister and installed as associate pastor of Immanuel OPC in Bellmawr, N.J., on November 21.
- **David M. Cornette**, formerly the pastor of Grace Church in Pennsville, Pa., was installed as pastor of Calvary OPC in Cedar Grove, Wis., on November 20.
- On September 23, the Presbytery of the Dakotas dissolved its call to **Gregory P. Hoadley** to serve as an evangelist at Grace OPC in Fargo, N.D., a mission work that has been closed down.
- **Matthew H. Patton** was ordained as a minister and installed as pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Vandalia, Ohio, on November 13.
- The call of **Alan R. Pontier** to be an evangelist serving at Big Bear Valley OPC in Big Bear Lake, Calif., was dissolved by the Presbytery of Southern California as of September 6.
- **David J. Robbins**, formerly an evangelist serving as pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Huntington, W.Va., was installed by the Presbytery of Ohio on

### Correction

Christ Presbyterian Church in Grove City, Pa., belongs to the ARP (Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church), not to the PCA, as stated in the November issue, p. 23.

October 30 as a missionary evangelist to Uganda, called by the Committee on Foreign Missions.

- On November 14, **Jonathan W. Shishko**, formerly the organizing pastor, was installed as the pastor of Reformation Presbyterian Church in Queens, N.Y.
- On October 31, **Nathan A. Tomlinson** was ordained as a minister by the Presbytery of New York and New England to serve out of bounds as pastor of Christ Church in Greenfield, Mass.

## REVIEWS

*A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible*, by **Leland Ryken**. Crossway, 2014. Paperback, 224 pages, list price \$19.99. Reviewed by **Prof. Susan M. Felch**.

Leland Ryken's latest book begins with "Abundance, Story of" and ends with "Worship Psalm." As advertised, it is a short encyclopedia of literary forms that occur in the Bible, arranged in alphabetical order with brief definitions and descriptions. The half-page entry on "Worship Psalm," for instance, tells us that Jerusalem and the temple, as the actual places for Old Testament worship, feature prominently in worship psalms, along with "snapshots" of the worship experience, exclamations of strong feelings, and a pilgrimage motif. What the description doesn't tell us is how this definition helps us better understand such psalms. And therein lies the difficulty with this book.

The author, a retired professor of literature at Wheaton College, notes that the purpose of knowing literary forms is to "uncover a great deal of the meaning that is in the texts but that remains hidden from view if we do not know about the forms and how they function" (p. 9). I could not agree more. If we understand poetic parallelism, we will not create an exegetical mystery out of the difference between "three" and "four" or "tread" and

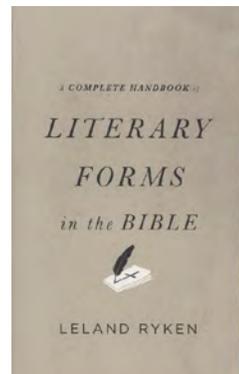
"stride" when we read that "Three things are stately in their tread; four are stately in their stride" (Prov. 30:29). "Tread" and "stride" are synonyms; "four" is as close a synonym to "three" as you are likely to get. The literary form of Hebrew poetry does not use rhyme as an organizing structure, as we might in an English psalm paraphrase, but rather plays with synonyms and with ways to compare, contrast, and intensify words. To read the Bible well is to read its literary structures well.

But an alphabetical list of literary forms is not the best way to become more attentive to these forms and their significance. It may be fun to know the definition of "epizeuxis," but would you go looking for it? And once you knew the definition, "a word [that] appears twice in succession for the sake of emphasis" (p. 84), would it help you better understand a biblical passage? It would be far better to invest in Ryken's earlier book, *The Complete Literary Guide to the Bible*, edited with Tremper Longman III, or in his son Philip Ryken's contributions to the Reformed Expository Commentary series. *The Complete Literary Guide* is uneven in quality and exegetical carefulness, but it does walk readers through each book or section

of the Bible, showing how literary structures open our eyes to understand the biblical text. The commentaries are sensitive to the ways in which meaning is conveyed through rhetorical choices. Once your eye has been trained to look for literary structures, you may find the *Handbook* to be a useful tool to expand your vocabulary and put names to what you now can see.

*Sanctification: Explorations in Theology and Practice*, edited by **Kelly M. Kopic**. InterVarsity Press, 2014. Paperback, 275 pages, list price \$28.00. Reviewed by **Prof. J. V. Fesko**.

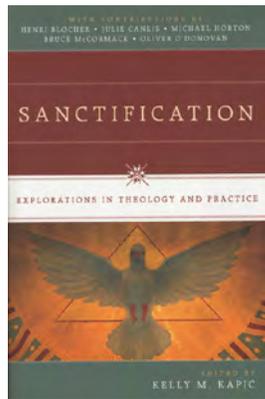
This book is a collection of essays from the 2011 Edinburgh Dogmatics Conference; other contributions were subsequently added to the book. Contributors include Oliver O'Donovan, Bruce McCormack,



Ivor Davidson, Kelly Kopic, Michael Horton, Rick Lints, Henri Blocher, and Brannon Ellis. Kopic, the book's editor, states that no effort was made to present a unified perspective on the topic (p. 11). Hence, as one can imagine, there is some overlap and unevenness to the book. Moreover, given that most of the book's essays originated at an academic conference, the book is largely aimed at an academic audience. I believe that professional theologians, seminary professors, pastors, and seminarians would profit most from this book, given its technical nature at a number of points. I suspect, for example, that few in the pew will take great interest in McCormack's essay on Barth and Wesley on the conception of Christian perfection (pp. 103–26).

There are, however, several noteworthy essays. The first is by Brannon Ellis on union with Christ. He offers and defends the thesis that being in Christ and belonging to the church are materially equivalent ideas that describe our participation in the covenant of grace (p. 81). He presents thoughtful ideas that deserve careful consideration. Two other notable essays are those by Rick Lints and Henri Blocher. Both write on the much-needed topic of sanctification by faith alone (pp. 35–78). Pastors should read and carefully meditate on these chapters. All too often, people believe that good works sanctify, rather than union with Christ by faith alone, through use of the means of grace: word, sacrament, and prayer. Our own Confession of Faith makes this very point: "The principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, *sanctification*, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace" (WCF 14.2).

By far the most powerful essay comes from Kelly Kopic, which is on suffering and sanctification. He writes informed by his own experience with his wife's bout with cancer and subsequent struggle with polyneuropathy (p. 212). His chapter focuses on the ideas of faith, hope, and love, and drawing strength from Christ in the



midst of profound suffering. Kopic writes academically, but pastorally, as he draws upon the insights of Martin Luther and the Reformer's own physical sufferings. Kopic encourages suffering Christians to focus on the images of the cross, resurrection, and feast: "Suffering can be like a famine: a famine of comfort and peace, a famine of joy and health, a famine of community and self-worth. To this famine Christ offers the feast of himself" (p. 231). This essay should be read by everyone in the church and is alone worth the price of the book.

***A Treatise on True Theology: With the Life of Franciscus Junius*, by Franciscus Junius, translated by David C. Noe. Reformation Heritage Books, 2014. Hardback, 247 pages, list price \$40.00. Reviewed by Prof. David VanDrunen.**

This volume consists of an English translation of *A Treatise on True Theology*, written by early Reformed theologian Franciscus Junius (1545–1602), preceded by a translation of Junius's autobiography and an introduction by the late Willem van Asselt, an eminent Reformed historical theologian.

Translator David Noe has provided the Reformed community with a valuable service. Junius was quite an important Reformed theologian, and many later Reformed luminaries embraced his understanding of the nature of theology as explained in this *Treatise*. Yet in recent years most Reformed theologians have been only vaguely aware of Junius's work, and most Reformed believers have been completely unaware of his existence.

Junius's autobiography alone almost makes the book worthwhile. Written about ten years before he died of the Black Death, it recounts a life story that makes the experience of almost every contemporary



## Refugee Relief

The Committee on Diaconal Ministries is now receiving gifts for ministry to refugees. Checks may be made out to "Orthodox Presbyterian Church" and noted for "Refugee Relief."

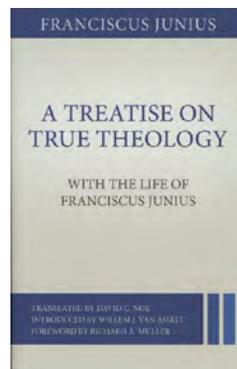
Reformed pastor and theologian seem dull by comparison. Junius's frank recollections of his family life (a mob murdered his father, a prominent French civil official), education, temptations, self-deprivation, persecution as a Protestant, and ministerial labors display a piety, discipline, and love of learning that should be an inspiration for us today.

Ordinary readers will find the autobiography interesting and easy to read, but the *Treatise* itself requires slow and careful reading that those without a good theological education may find difficult. The translator, however, has provided many helpful footnotes that explain not only some of his translation decisions but also

a number of Junius's obscure words and references.

The *Treatise* is organized around thirty-nine theses answering the question, What is theology? The question is important. Disputes between the Reformed tradition and other traditions revolve not only around different views of sin, salvation, the church, etc., but also around different views of theology itself.

I have space to mention only a few highlights of the *Treatise*. Junius says that true theology is divided into the *archetypal* (the wisdom of God himself) and the *ectypal* (the wisdom finite creatures have about God). Junius goes on to distinguish different forms of ectypal theology, including that communicated to Christ as the God-Man, that of the angels and saints in heaven, and that of revelation communicated to human beings here and now (which he calls "our theology"). He divides revealed theology, furthermore, into natural and supernatural. Another important distinction is between our



## NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS *Continued*

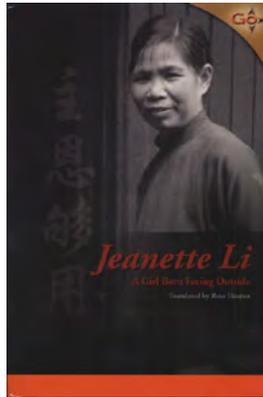
theology stated *absolutely* and stated *relatively*. The former refers to the wisdom of divine matters sealed infallibly in Scripture through the prophets and apostles, while the latter refers to theology as present imperfectly in us. It is in this latter sense that we may be called theologians.

While readers may wish to engage Junius critically at one point or another, this is an illuminating book that enriches our understanding of classic Reformed theology and promises to sharpen our own views of what theology is. If nothing else, the *Treatise* encourages both a confidence that our theology probes the truth about God and a humility about the limits of our knowledge in this present age.

***Jeanette Li: A Girl Born Facing Outside*, by Jeanette Li, translated by Rose Huston. Crown & Covenant, 2014. Paperback, 321 pages, list price \$14.00. Reviewed by Miriam G. Moran, wife of OP minister Allen P. Moran.**

Crown & Covenant has done the church a great service by reissuing this autobiography, first published in 1971 by Banner of Truth. This edition is larger than the original, although the text remains the same. Chapter titles are delightfully illustrated. The foreword to the previous edition is included, as is the translator's preface, along with a new foreword. Appendixes are similar: a brief history of China in the twentieth century, a chronology of Jeanette Li's life, and a sketch of the life of Rose Huston, Jeanette Li's great friend and translator. While it includes a generous selection of pictures, this book omits the map from the first edition.

The subtitle of the new edition is *A Girl Born Facing Outside*. God brought Jeanette Li to himself through the staff



at the Reformed Presbyterian Mission hospital in Guangdong Province, and used her as a Bible woman in the evangelization of her own people.

Even when she was a child, it was evident that she possessed “the breath and blood of courage.” She questioned the superstitions of her Buddhist parents, and one night dared to rush at a

“ghost” with a stick to see what it really was.

As she learned of the one true God, she became fearless in her devotion to him. With childlike faith, she trusted him to keep her through a lifetime of trials: alienation from her family, an arranged and loveless marriage, estrangement, brutal living conditions in Manchuria (where she was caught in the war with Japan and imprisoned by the Communists), serious illness, persecution, and brainwashing. But when commanded by the Communist authorities to renounce her faith in Jesus, she replied with a statement that typified her life: “I cannot, as many have done, reject the grace of God to me. I cannot refuse his love to me, which is like the love of father and mother.”

We can be grateful that her testimony to God's presence and power lives on in this new edition, to inspire and challenge another generation of readers.



### Short-Term Missions

Now is the time to start thinking about short-term missions plans for the summer of 2016! Stay tuned to OPCSTM.org for opportunities to serve at home and abroad. Contact OPCShortTermMissions@opc.org if your church could use a team to help you with a summer project.



*Girls at the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, N.J., in 2015*