

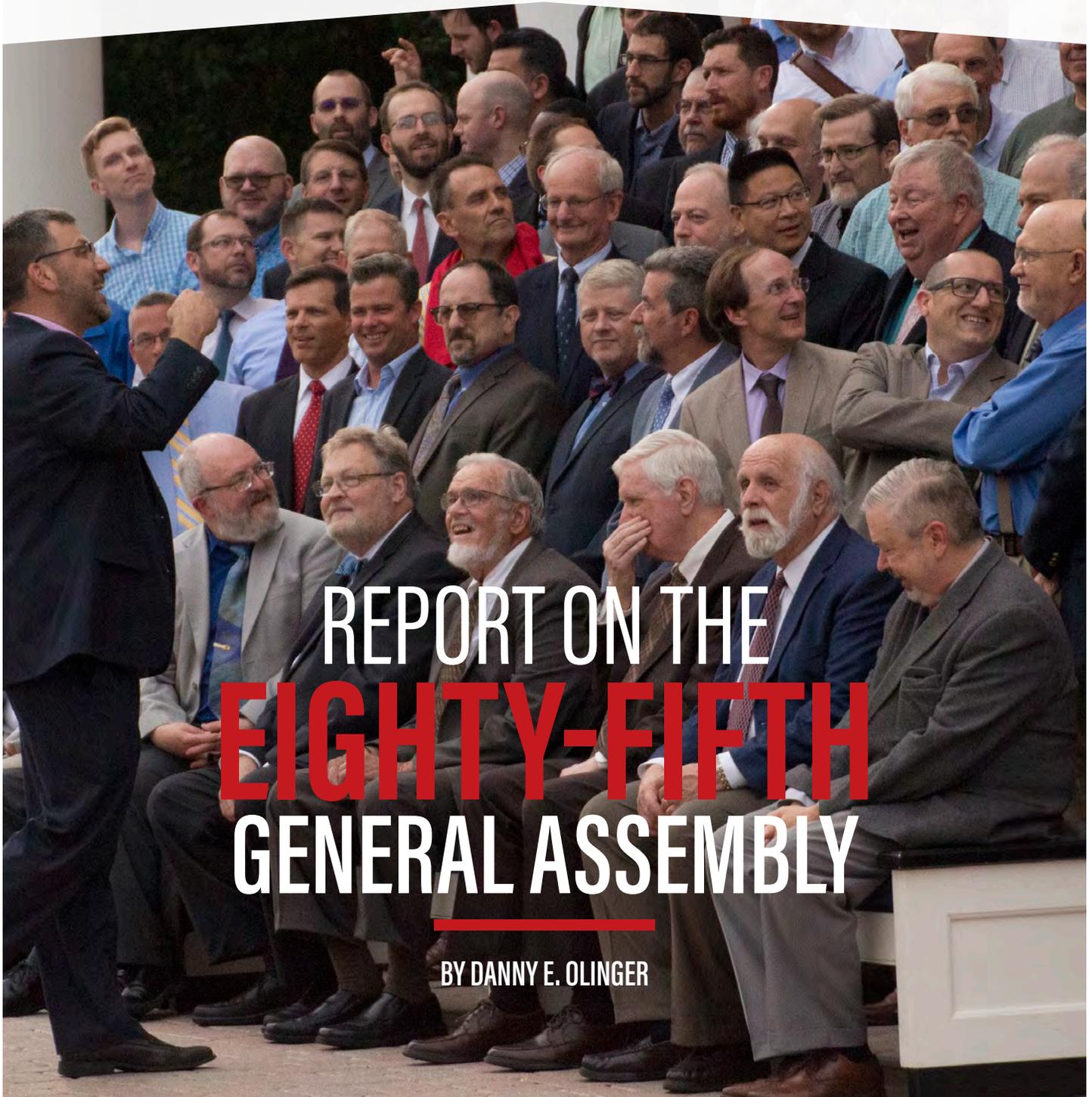
# NEW HORIZONS

in the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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AUG-SEPT 2018

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## REPORT ON THE **EIGHTY-FIFTH** GENERAL ASSEMBLY

BY DANNY E. OLINGER

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## New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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Presbytery of the Midwest commissioners (left to right) Bruce Stahl, John Hartley, and Paul Mourreale at the Eighty-fifth General Assembly on the campus of Wheaton College. The assembly marked the twenty-third consecutive time that Mr. Stahl, ruling elder at Covenant Family Church, Wentzville, Missouri, has attended as a commissioner.



# REPORT ON THE EIGHTY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY



**DANNY E. OLINGER // After the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) was formed on October 1, 1996, members of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, especially senior saints, sympathized with the new federation's courageous stand for the straight teaching of the Bible.**

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) had determined to ordain women to the offices of minister and ruling elder and could not be persuaded to repent. Because this change affected the biblical marks of the church, some CRCNA members believed that they had no choice but to depart, forming the URCNA. The senior saints of the OPC knew from their own experience in joining the OPC that this action meant leaving behind family members, and almost always church buildings and church saving accounts, too.

But, these older OPC members also knew firsthand the relationship that had existed between the OPC and the CRCNA. When the OPC was formed on June 11, 1936, the CRCNA was the first church to recognize it two days later. For decades, the OPC

and CRCNA shared Christian education resources, ran summer camps together, and gladly recommended their members to seek out the other church when travelling or undergoing a job transfer. The two churches even engaged in ecumenical discussions on how they might become one. The basis of this fellowship was a shared commitment to a Bible-based, confessional Calvinism that did not shy away from acknowledging the sinfulness of humanity and the good news of Christ's

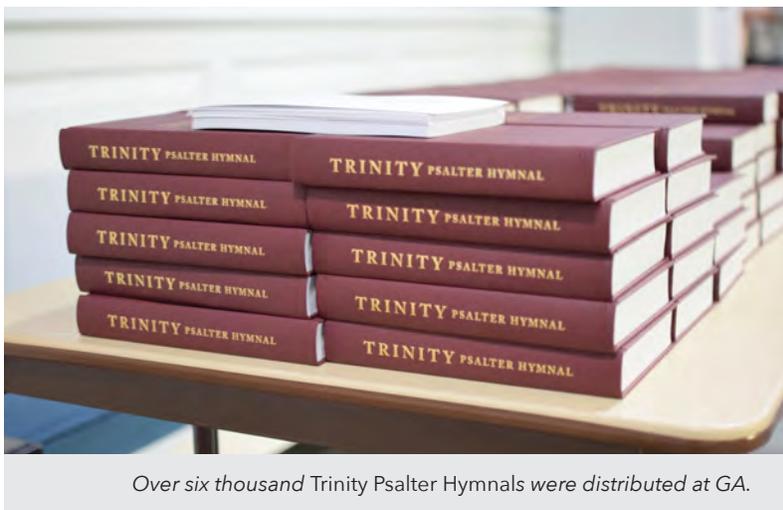
death and resurrection.

It was with sadness, then, that the OPC witnessed the CRCNA's turn, but hearing of the URCNA's formation brought joy. Through its Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations, the OPC at its Sixty-fourth (1997) General Assembly officially recognized the creation of the URCNA. The declaration expressed the OPC's thankfulness to God for the URCNA's love for the truth of God and the purity of the church of Jesus Christ, welcomed

them to the family of Reformed churches, and promised to pray for the blessing of God on their ministry.

## **A Joint Meeting**

Now, twenty-one years later, URCNA Synod Wheaton 2018 and the Eighty-fifth General Assembly of the OPC met on the campus of Wheaton College in Wheaton,



*Over six thousand Trinity Psalter Hymnals were distributed at GA.*

Illinois. Together, the URCNA delegates and OPC commissioners celebrated their joint labors on the newly produced *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*. The two ecclesiastical bodies furthered the bonds of unity with shared meal times, devotional periods, presentations on

were attending an assembly for the first time. Over half of the commissioners had been ordained for fewer than fifteen years. Three commissioners, ministers Thomas Tyson and George Cottenden and ruling elder Donald Jamieson (San Jose, California), were ordained in the decade of the 1960s.

John Van Meerbeke, pastor of Living Hope OPC in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, was elected as moderator. He faced the challenge of allowing full deliberation on issues without falling behind in the docket to the

of shared thankfulness to the Lord that marked the meetings for the days to follow. Mr. Dengerink recalled growing up in the CRCNA. He said, "This was the church of my family and friends. This is the church of which I can still hear my grandma say, 'If you get a job promotion in another town that does not have a CRC church and CRC school, it doesn't matter how good the promotion is. You don't take it.'" But, what sin destroys and divides, Christ heals and unites. He thanked the Lord for the "taste of heaven" that those present would experience during the week, "as we your people, by your grace, join in praise of your name and serve you in your church."

The OPC commissioners then turned to the work of the advisory committees before hearing from Statistician Luke Brown. Mr. Brown reported that at the end of 2017 there were 281 local churches, 40 mission works, and 31,377 members in the OPC. The "average" size of an established congregation is 105 members, he stated, but approximately 65 percent of congregations are smaller in size than the average.

The Assembly and Synod gathered on Tuesday evening for a song service led by URCNA pastor Christopher Folkerts. Alan Strange, coeditor with Mr. Vander Meulen, officially presented the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* (see pages 8–9), and the evening finished with URCNA members John Bouwers and

Todd De Rooy and OPC members Jack Sawyer, Tony Curto, and Danny Olinger participating in a colloquium on the pursuit of unity in OPC and URCNA relations.

### Wednesday, June 13

On Wednesday, the Assembly engaged in a daylong debate concerning the recommendation



Incoming moderator John Van Meerbeke (left) shakes hands with outgoing moderator Larry Westerveld (right) while Alan Strange looks on.

home and foreign missions and ecumenicity, and a closing worship service.

URCNA pastor Derrick Vander Meulen, coeditor of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, welcomed everyone to the opening prayer service on Monday, June 11. He had the privilege of introducing the first psalm, Psalm 148A, "From Heaven O Praise the Lord," and the first hymn, "I Sing the Almighty Power of God," sung publicly from the new psalter hymnal. During the week, David and Susan Winslow helped distribute over six thousand volumes for those who had taken advantage of the pre-publication offer and saved shipping costs by picking up their orders at the assembly.

Later that night, the Eighty-fifth General Assembly convened. Out of the one hundred and thirty-nine commissioners that were enrolled, thirty

point where the work of the Assembly could not be completed.

At the end of the week, the commissioners gave Mr. Van Meerbeke a well-deserved standing ovation for his gracious but decisive voice in guiding the Assembly through its business.

### Tuesday, June 12

The next morning, Michael Dengerink, pastor of Delta Oaks Presbyterian in Pittsburg, California, led the devotional service, which set the tone



Stephen Tracey, Tony Curto, and Jack Sawyer confer.

of the Committee on Christian Education that the Assembly elect a committee to propose specific linguistic changes to the doctrinal standards (Confession of Faith and Catechisms) without changing the doctrine or meaning of the standards.

The kind of changes that the committee would be authorized to consider would be morphological (e.g., “hath” to “has”), the replacing of archaic pronouns (e.g., “thou” to “you”) and words (e.g., “stews”), and substituting a modern translation of the Scriptures for the text of the Ten Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer. The recommendation ended with the admonition that the committee should aim with every change to preserve the cadence, memorability, and dignified style of the standards.

The Assembly passed the recommendation and elected to the committee ruling elders David Noe, James Gidley, John Muether, and Mark Bube, and ministers Alan Strange, Glen Clary, and John Fesko. The Assembly also moved to notify the member churches of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council and other appropriate church bodies that it has erected a special committee to propose linguistic updating of the doctrinal standards of the OPC and that it welcomes any input that such churches might desire to give.

During the report of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension (CHMCE), General Secretary John Shaw paid tribute to John Hilbelink, who was retiring from work on the committee but not from the ministry. Shaw said that Mr. Hilbelink would be deeply missed after having served on the CHMCE for thirty-three years, the past twenty-seven years as president. He assured Mr. Hilbelink that he and the members of CHMCE would “pray for the Lord’s continued blessings on you, your dear wife—Lois, your church

in Rockford, and your continued service of Christ and his church.” The Assembly responded with a standing ovation



*John Hilbelink recognized for his years of service*

tion in appreciation for Mr. Hilbelink.

The evening joint service continued the theme of home missions in the OPC and URCNA. Mika Edmondson, OP church planter at New Life City Fellowship in Grand Rapids, Michigan, stressed that his goal was to present “accessible orthodoxy” to a diverse group. He explained that at New City Fellowship, “our God in Christ has been able to bring together people of every tribe and nation, something government and politics could not do.” Every week after morning worship at New Life City Fellowship, everyone breaks bread together at a shared meal as coequals in Christ.

Bradney Lopez (Arroyo, Puerto Rico) told of a young father after Hurricane Maria coming to *Iglesia Presbiteriana Sola Escritura* (“Scripture Alone Presbyterian Church”) and asking, “How can I know about infant baptism?” After going through membership classes,

the man and his wife professed faith in Christ and their daughter was baptized.

Jim Cassidy (South Austin, Texas) testified that robust, historic Reformed worship had led to Providence OPC being classified as “weird.” Christopher Cashen (Clarkston, Georgia) spoke about ministry to refugees in what is labeled “the Ellis Island of the South.”

Daniel Doleys (Springfield, Ohio)

emphasized that church planting involves the entire congregation, not just the pastor. David Graves (Coeur d’Alene, Idaho) praised the Lord for the opportunities for an “odd duck” such as himself to meet individuals in everyday life who were interested in learning more about Jesus. URCNA Missions director Richard Bout then prayed for these OP church planters and the gospel endeavors of OPC home missions.

URCNA church planters then shared their work in taking the gos-



*Mika Edmondson speaking on the ministry of New Life City Fellowship*

pel to diverse groups of people. Thabet Megaly spoke of Muslim outreach in St. Catharines, Ontario. Tony Zekveld reported on the joys of ministry

to Sikhs and Hindus in Toronto, and Mitchell Persaud talked about bringing the gospel to Muslims and Hindus in Scarborough, Ontario. Sam Perez reported on inner city ministry in Jersey City, New Jersey. Nathan Brummel spoke about prison ministry through the Divine Hope Bible Seminary in Michigan City, Indiana, whose faculty includes OP minister Brett Mahlen. CHMCE Associate General Secretary Al Tricarico then prayed for the Lord's blessing on Mr. Bout and URCNA domestic missions labors.

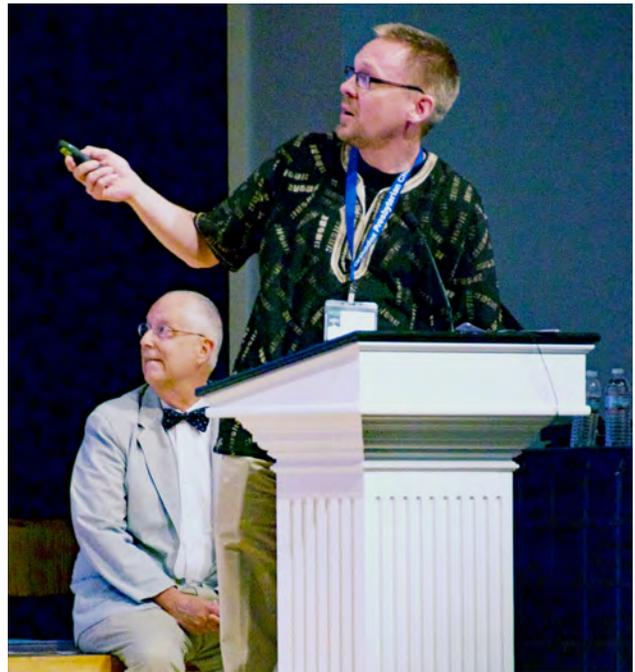
#### Thursday, June 14

Committee on Foreign Missions General Secretary Mark Bube had attended the start of the Assembly on Monday but had then flown to California for the burial of his father and former OP ruling elder Richard H. Bube, who had died on Saturday. The general secretary returned in time for the Thursday evening joint presentation on foreign missions. He expressed an enthusiasm for potential opportunities for the OPC and URCNA to work together in bringing the gospel to the nations.

In one of the most poignant moments of the joint meetings, Eric Tuininga, OP missionary to Mbale, Uganda, addressed the two churches, both of

which he has known intimately. Prior to being appointed as an OP missionary in 2012, Mr. Tuininga had been ordained to the gospel ministry in the URCNA and served as pastor of Immanuel Reformed Church in Salem, Oregon. Mr. Tuininga reflected on the fact that his father, URCNA minister Calvin Tuininga, was present to hear his presentation while his sister and brother-in-law, Carla and Mark Van Essendelft, members of the URCNA, were serving as OP missionary associates at the Karamoja station in Uganda.

Thursday, however, also marked the bittersweet dissolution of the Presbytery of the Central United States. Representing the presbytery, James Stevenson, pastor of Providence OPC in Tulsa, Oklahoma, reported that the presbytery enjoyed wonderful fellowship, but by 2017 the number of congregations in the presbytery had dropped



*Eric Tuininga presents on his labors in Uganda, sharing the stage with CFM General Secretary Mark Bube.*

below the minimum of four required in the OPC *Book of Church Order*.

The Assembly transferred Faith OPC in Lincoln, Nebraska, to the Presbytery of the Midwest, and Westminster OPC in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and Providence OPC to the Presbytery of the Southwest. Mr. Stevenson urged the brethren to pray regularly that the Lord would raise up OP congregations in the central portion of the United States so that, in time, a new presbytery could be established.

In the report on the Committee on Diacnal Ministries, Administrator David Nakhla focused on the disaster response efforts in 2017 in Houston, Texas, and Puerto Rico. Mr. Nakhla expressed thanksgiving for the \$620,000 that had been donat-



*URCNA and OPC church planters, from Puerto Rico to Georgia to Toronto, presented together on their labors.*

ed to hurricane relief in Houston and Puerto Rico. “The Lord always proves faithful in supplying sufficiently for all needs through the generous giving of his people,” he said. Earlier on Tuesday, Steve Larson, the regional disaster response coordinator after Hurricane Harvey, and Bradney Lopez on behalf of members living in Puerto Rico who were affected by Hurricane Maria, had thanked the Assembly for showing compassion and helping many who had suffered greatly.

Lendall Smith, chairman of the less-than-one-year-old Committee on Ministerial Care (CMC) and its vice-president, Gregory De Jong, ruling elder at Bethel OPC in Wheaton, Illinois, introduced David Haney as the new director of CMC.

In appointing Mr. Haney as director, the committee saw a unique opportunity to combine professional counsel with a personal touch. Mr. Haney, in his role as Director of Finance and Planned Giving, has worked in one way or another with nearly every pastor and/or congregation for over a quarter of a century. Mr. Haney explained the committee’s three-pronged goal: managing the OPC retirement fund (306 participants), providing counsel and assistance in financial planning, and informing sessions and presbyteries of tools available for care of their ministers. In assuming his new responsibilities, Mr. Haney is hopeful of visiting every presbytery in the next eighteen months in order to share CMC’s vision of expanding care of pastors throughout their ministry, not just as they near retirement.

The Synod and Assembly gathered for a group photo on the steps of the Edman Memorial Chapel. The sheer number of 350 delegates, commissioners, and fraternal representatives challenged the photographers, but there was also evident joy in how the Lord had worked in bringing the members of these two sister churches to such close fellowship.

### Friday, June 15

On Friday at 4:00 p.m., the Assembly and Synod combined one last time for a closing joint worship service led by Larry Westerveld, moderator of the Eighty-fourth (2017) General



*Joel Ellis and David Haney singing praises from the new Trinity Psalter Hymnal  
(Photo by John Van Dyk, courtesy of Christian Renewal)*

Assembly. Mr. Westerveld proclaimed God’s Word from Amos 9 and John 4, encouraging those gathered from the OPC and URCNA that, through Jesus Christ, there will be an abundant harvest.

It was an appropriate message for two churches who have taken stands for biblical orthodoxy and suffered earthly consequences. Cornelius Van Til was a son of the CRCNA who joined the OPC at its beginning. Responding to a man who had asked Van Til what he should do now that his church had embraced the tenets of theological liber-

alism, Van Til wrote, “I hope that you and a group of faithful people will seek admission to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a separate congregation. I do not know of any other Presbyterian body in which you would have such loyalty to the Reformed Faith.” Van Til then added, “I need not boast to say this. The O.P. church has plenty of faults. We are all petty human beings with plenty of sins to fight against daily. But I do think that you would find the fellowship you want and need for your work.”

Van Til was writing as an Orthodox Presbyterian to a Presbyterian who had asked for his opinion, but, in this writer’s judgment, his sentiments today could be applied to the United Reformed Churches in North America. For those Reformed believers who find themselves in denominations that are straying openly from the Bible, the URCNA, like the OPC, is a church that should be sought out. It knows its faults and sins but is self-consciously seeking to be loyal

to the Reformed faith. In it, Christians can find the fellowship they want and need for their work.

May we in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church continue to pray for and work with these dear brothers and sisters in the Lord, even as we look forward to that great day in heaven when we will join together to sing God’s praise eternally. □

*The author is the editor of New Horizons. Photos provided by Tricia Stevenson, Rachel Stevenson, and Sara Grace Baugh.*

# PRESENTATION OF THE TRINITY PSALTER HYMNAL



ALAN D. STRANGE // *The Trinity Psalter Hymnal* is hereby presented to the church to aid her in fulfilling the mandate of Psalm 150:6: “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!”—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who created and sustains all things, and who is, from first to last, the one who grants eternal salvation.

All praise, honor, and glory be rendered unto our great and gracious God for all that he is and has done, particularly for the Father bringing his own from death to life by the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, in and by the power of the Holy Spirit, through all the appointed means. And singing his praise forms no small part of that worship that we render to him in the appointed means of Word, sacraments, and prayer.

In the liturgy and worship of the church in the last century and more, especially in North American evangelicalism, hymns have eclipsed psalms. Actually, in many communions, hymns themselves have given way to ubiquitous Scripture songs and choruses.

This comparatively recent loss of psalm-singing is quite remarkable, especially in Reformed and Presbyterian churches, whose liturgies historically consisted either mostly or exclusively of psalms. We intend for the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* to assist in the recovery of psalm-singing for all those churches. At the same time, by the publication of the *TPH*, we want to foster a recovery of first-rate hymnody.

## Music for Worship

Music, which the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines, in part, as “one of the fine arts which is concerned with the combination of sounds with a view to beauty of form and the experience of emotion,” is one of the greatest gifts that God ever gave us. It is especially suited to the expression of those sentiments that pertain to all the parts of the soul. We can understand why one of the ancient church fathers said “*Qui bene cantat bis orat*” (“he who sings well prays twice”). Not only are the words of our psalms and hymns *prayers* (at least quite often, and they are always the outpouring of the soul to God), but music *itself* is a sort of prayer, giving expression to the emotions which accompany our prayers (joy, sadness, grief, etc.), so that singing becomes something that speech by itself never could be.

We offer this volume, then, to the church, containing not only settings of all 150 psalms (more than one setting for some psalms—278 altogether) but also 458 of what we deem to be the best hymns, old and new, of the Chris-

tian church.

We believe that Christ is present in all the Word and certainly in the psalms, even the imprecatory psalms. In those, our Lord Jesus Christ in his own person, particularly at the cross, receives God’s wrath against us for our sin and, in and by the gospel, makes many former enemies to be friends. (In this way, his enemies are vanquished even as Israel often pleaded for their defeat.) We also sing hymns that explicitly mention the Lord Jesus Christ and speak of his glorious person and finished work.

## Developing the *TPH*

Perhaps it would be good at this point to step back and reflect on where this all began. The Presbytery of Ohio brought an overture to the Seventy-third (2006) General Assembly requesting the production of a psalter hymnal. That Assembly tasked the Committee on Christian Education “to seek to develop a Psalter-Hymnal by 2011 (our 75th anniversary)—which includes musical settings of all 150 Psalms, in their entirety, with as much accuracy and as little archaic language and confusing

syntax as possible—for use in our congregations.”

Immediately following the 2006 Assembly, the CCE erected a special committee of its membership to direct the work: Alan Strange, chairman; Darryl Hart; Danny Olinger; and Stephen Pribble.

The special committee erected two subcommittees that would do the bulk of the work in these early years of the project, the primary being the Composition Subcommittee (CS). It ultimately had in its membership the present and past CCE general secretaries (Danny Olinger and Larry Wilson), the pastor whose church furnished the working document for the psalter (Peter Wallace, pastor of Michiana Covenant PCA in Granger, Indiana), our Hebraist (Bryan Estelle), musicologist (Timothy Shafer), music editor (Lou Ann Shafer), a PCA brother (Terry Johnson of IPC in Savannah, Georgia), and two special committee members (Stephen Pribble and Alan Strange, chairman). Dr. Dale Grotenhuis (URCNA) also served as a musical consultant to the CS.

The CCE reported to the Seventy-fifth (2008) General Assembly that it had determined to develop the *TPH* through its special committee and that the CCE had committed \$200,000 of its own funds to this project. No objections were raised, and the CCE proceeded full-steam ahead.

The subcommittee then began the actual initial task of putting together the *TPH*. From the *Trinity Hymnal* and other sources, we made a number of initial hymn selections. Sensing, however, that the heavy-lifting would be on the psalter, we shortly thereafter plunged into that section. Using Michiana Covenant PCA's project as a default, we began working systematically through the psalms, with fresh translations provided by our Hebraist, a variety of options provided by our musicologist, and the music editor working to check inflections, suggest new harmonizations, and make a host of editorial suggestions. We spent much time working through the psalms, seeking to achieve a congruent affect between music and text and

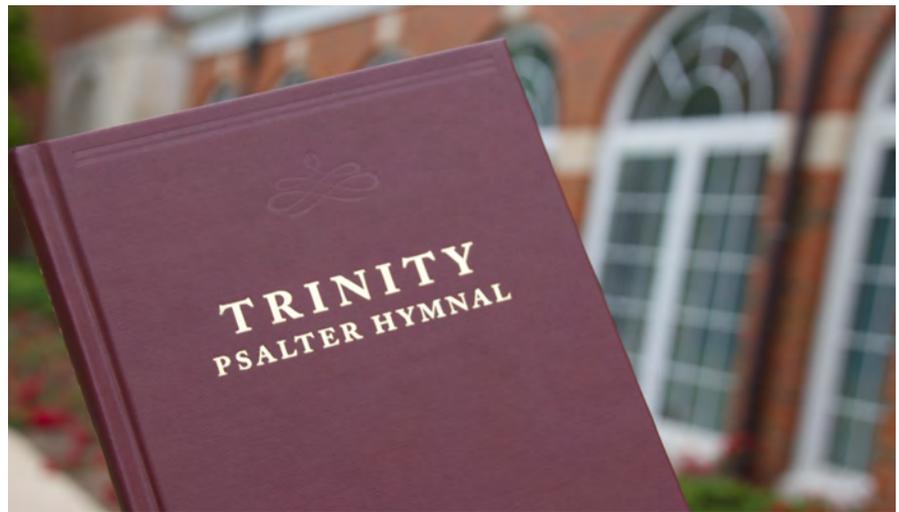
adopting a fairly detailed set of principles to guide us in this project.

### Joining Forces with the URCNA

Following the Seventy-seventh (2010) General Assembly, the unexpected happened. Contact with the URCNA Songbook Committee led to a discussion with them of sharing the fruits of each other's labors and entering into a working arrangement. The CCE recommended to the Seventy-eighth (2011) General Assembly that it approve the two committees working together and that it extend an official invitation to the next URCNA Synod

approved the psalter and then the hymnal, requesting and receiving significant input from both churches (and beyond, in a few cases), particularly by posting on the web all the psalms and hymns for inspection by our respective churches and members.

Finally, in 2016, both bodies gave overwhelming final approval for the production of the *TPH*. Much work remained in terms of securing copyrights and further editing, layout, and other production and printing concerns. From December 2017 through February 2018 we ran a special prepublication offer, working with our outstanding distribu-



*The new Trinity Psalter Hymnal, available for order at [gcp.org](http://gcp.org)*

to work together with the OPC to produce “a Psalter Hymnal for use in a wide range of confessional Presbyterian and Reformed Churches.”

The Assembly took these historic steps and a new day in Reformed and Presbyterian ecumenicity dawned as the URCNA Synod in 2012 gladly accepted the invitation and the two bodies began the hard yet sweet labor that led to the *TPH*. My colleague Derrick Vander Meulen, coeditor and my counterpart on the URCNA side, will speak in a bit about the members of his committee and the progress to recent times that has witnessed the erection of a Joint Venture Board, consisting of three each from the OPC and the URCNA, responsible for the publication and ongoing maintenance of the *TPH*.

Subsequent assemblies and synods

tor, Great Commission Publications of Atlanta. We had hoped to sell 15,000 copies. We sold over 30,000 copies (and more since).

We thank all of you for this great partnership that has already made this project such a success and a testament to the oneness that we enjoy in our Lord Jesus Christ, in answer to his prayer in John 17 for unity as he faced Calvary. We present the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* for the edification of the people of God and the glorification of our Lord Jesus Christ. All praise be to our blessed triune God! □

*The author is coeditor of the Trinity Psalter Hymnal. This presentation, given to the Eighty-fifth General Assembly on June 12, 2018, has been edited and condensed for print publication.*

# MOVING TOWARD A PRESBYTERY IN HAITI

// OCTAVIUS DELFILS



*Men working on the Book of Church Order for the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Haiti*

During his third missionary journey, the Apostle Paul, after visiting several cities and churches, stopped at Miletus in Greece and asked the Ephesian elders to meet him. When they came, he prayed with them, encouraged them, and warned them against false teachers who would come after his departure and who would not spare the flock. He reminded them that, during his ministry among them, he had declared the whole counsel of God to them. The Holy Spirit had made these men overseers to care for the church of God, which Jesus Christ had bought with his own blood. Therefore, they had tremendous work to accomplish in feeding the flock with sound teaching and in remaining alert to guard the church against twisted teaching.

## The Work of the Elders

The work of the elders is still essential to the health of the church today and to the overall good of the people of God. Whenever it is possible and when the time is appropriate, the local church has an obligation to train, elect, and appoint elders as overseers. It is similarly part of the missionary's prayer, work, and hope that faithful indigenous churches be planted

and self-governed with ordained elders. Furthermore, it is the elders' duty to unite in sessions and presbyteries to serve the church under the great Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

This goal of having a self-governing and self-propagating church has been a major focus of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Haiti. We have never envisioned remaining as individual, independent churches. Rather, since the beginning, we have sought to form a presbytery and an indigenous denomination that is biblically oriented and solidly Reformed. We have been praying for this since the beginning of the church-planting endeavors on La Gonâve and in Port-au-Prince and have worked to join the efforts of all of the Reformed missionaries.

After the devastating earthquake in January 2010, the initiative to develop a presbytery in Haiti faltered. However, we praise the Lord that the Reformed churches in Haiti are gathering again to start a presbytery and a project for a Book of Church Order.

## Presbytery Planning Meeting

During the last two years, four ordained Reformed pastors and missionaries working in three different ministries in Port-au-Prince, on the island of La Gonâve, and in Go-naïves, have met several times. We



*March 2018 meeting in Port-au-Prince of pastors, elders, deacons, and others*

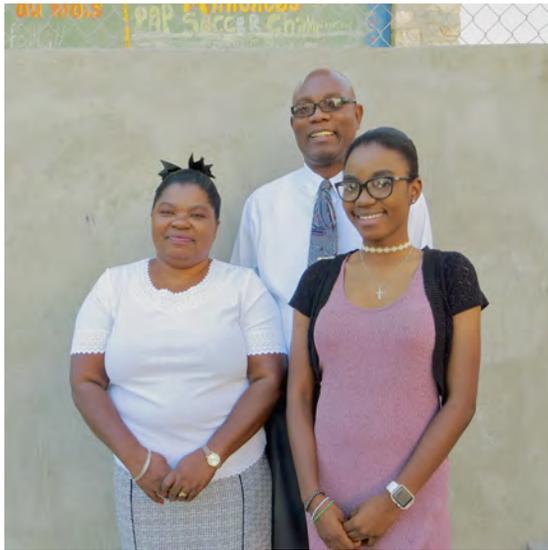
have shared information about the churches and set goals toward the formation of a presbytery in Haiti. The Lord has blessed our planning. In December 2017, we had our first meeting in Port-au-Prince with about thirty men from all the Presbyterian and Reformed churches of these three different ministries.

It was the first time the pastors, elders, deacons, and candidates for these offices met together for fellowship and training. The teacher was Arie van Eyk, pastor of Providence Presbyterian Church (OPC) in Greensboro, North Carolina, who has trained men in the church in Port-au-Prince since its beginning and is a faithful supporter of the church in Haiti. He taught the doctrine of the church and laid down for the group the biblical foundation for Presbyterian church government.

Four other meetings were scheduled for training, discussions, and fellowship with these men in 2018. The Lord again blessed our plans. The first session of the year was held on March 22–23 in Port-au-Prince as a follow-up to the December meeting. This time, the same churches from the three different Reformed ministries laboring in Haiti sent about forty men to gather for two days to continue to consider the idea of forming a presbytery in Haiti. We had a profitable time in worship and discussion of church polity.

### A Book of Church Order for Haiti

We also began to address the need for a Book of Church Order for the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Haiti. We are



Octavius and Marie Delfils with their daughter, Farah

mainly adapting the *Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church of Uganda*. It was translated into French for the understanding of the French-speaking brothers in Haiti. What a privilege that the church in Haiti and the church in Uganda—so

far apart in distance—can work together in Christ to use each other's resources for the work of the kingdom!

As we work through the translated text, it takes time to make sure that everyone agrees on the terms used and that they make sense to the church in Haiti and the culture around us. We are moving slowly in adapting the Book of Church Order in order to make it easily understood.

We hope to continue with two or three other meetings in the same format of working and worshipping together. The next meeting is scheduled for later this summer.

We will meet in Gonaïves, a little more than two hours north of Port-au-Prince. In each session, we are blessed to have representatives from the Committee on Foreign Missions of the OPC as well as from the mission agencies and sending presbyteries of the other Reformed ministries and churches.

We are praying that the Lord will allow us to complete the Book of Church Order project this year and move closer to the formation of a new presbytery in the beginning of 2019. We are so grateful to the Lord that we are getting close to the goal that we have cherished for a long time. We appreciate your prayers for these important upcoming events and for this key moment in the history of the church in Haiti.

*The author, a missionary of the Calvary Presbytery of the PCA, is an associate missionary of the OPC, laboring with the OPC Haiti Mission and serving as pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Delmas, a church plant in Port-au-Prince.*



The three areas of ministry in Haiti: the small city of Gonaïves, the capital city of Port-Au-Prince, and the island of La Gonâve

## What's New

### // Comings/Goings

Completing thirty-one-and-a-half years of service with the Committee on Foreign Missions, **Miss Linda R. Posthuma** retired from her labors as the Foreign Missions administrative assistant at the end of July 2018.

**Miss Schylie J. La Belle** (Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod, OPC, West Barnstable, MA) concluded her one-year term as a missionary associate in Karamoja, Uganda at the end of July 2018.

**Mr. Donald P. Owens III** (Christ Covenant Church, OPC, Midland, MI) has been appointed to serve as a missionary associate for six months, beginning in September 2018, in Karamoja, Uganda.

# A CHURCH AT CALVIN COLLEGE

// DAVID C. NOE



Marylynn Gaastra and Alli Zielstra during a fellowship time at Reformation OPC

When J. Gresham Machen died in January 1937, Classis Grand Rapids East of the CRCNA sent a sympathetic telegram to the OPC, mourning the passing of a man who, more than anyone else, had worked to distinguish between the biblical faith called Christianity and that other religion known as liberalism. Also in Grand Rapids, but seventy years later in 2015, three OPC families began meeting for Bible study, prayer, singing, and fellowship.

The group, including my family and me, grew in fellowship and purpose. A year later, we met with Steve Igo of the Church Extension Committee. Igo quickly saw an opportunity to plant a church on the campus of Calvin College, making use of my position as a longtime professor there. The session of Hillsdale OPC—a congregation with experience in planting near a college—agreed to oversee the work.

Calvin College is a mission field. In the last twenty-five years, the number of CRCNA students at Calvin has diminished from 80 percent of the student population to 29 percent. The rest are broadly evangelical, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or of no faith affiliation. This presents an excellent opportunity to help these young people discover the whole counsel of God, which the Reformed faith teaches.

Our church, Reformation OPC, intends to gather those in and around the Calvin College community to worship. We seek to welcome students who may be completely unfamiliar with the Reformed faith as well as those from a variety of Reformed communions looking for a church away from home.

Because many students do not make an effort to leave campus for Lord's Day worship, we are bringing the church to them. In spring 2017, Raybrook Manor retirement home, which is next to Calvin's campus, became the site for our outreach. A handful of students began to attend as we studied John Calvin's teaching on self-denial, cross-bearing, and meditating on the future life. Raybrook residents also visited, in-

cluding Leona DeWaard Klooster (daughter of OP founding pastor John DeWaard). Through the summer, we studied the Old Testament sacraments and their fulfillment in the New. And in September, by which time we had grown to five core households, we started to meet on Sunday afternoons.

As a licentiate, I began teaching from the book of Acts, taking Acts 2:42 as the foundation for the work along with the words of Westminster Shorter Catechism question 88. Together, the core group attended the Calvin College church fair, inviting incoming students to attend our fellowship. Reformation was also publicized in Calvin's student newspaper, *The Chimes*, via both a feature on our fledgling church written by Juliana, a regular attendee, and a series I wrote on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. In addition, God sent faithfully attending students like Ryan, Alli (pictured above), Dan, Anne, Rachel, and Amelia.

### A Mission Work of the PMO

At their April 2018 meeting, the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario (PMO) voted to receive Reformation OPC as a mission work, to the great joy of our core group, and they appointed a provisional session of men from the Grand Rapids area to oversee the plant. The session of Hillsdale OPC, which had faithfully shepherded the effort, was pleased to see the work placed on a solid footing.

Reformation OPC looks forward to holding its inaugural worship service on July 22 in the Prince Conference Center on the campus of Calvin College. Everett Henes of Hillsdale OPC will preach, new members will be received, a covenant infant baptized, and the Lord's Supper celebrated.

We are presently seven households committed to the work, with an average attendance of twenty-five. Please pray with us that God will continue to build his church and that we would grow in unity, maturity, and love for one another.

*The author is a licentiate of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario.*

# OUT OF OUR MINDS

*M. Jay Bennett*

People thought they were out of their minds! That's how Paul describes the apostles in 2 Corinthians 5:13: "If we are 'out of our mind,' as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you" (NIV). It is not difficult to imagine the same invective being directed toward men like J. Gresham Machen when they risked losing their prestigious teaching and ministerial positions in the influential and well-funded mainline Presbyterian church nearly a century ago. But those who continued after him understood that faithfulness is better than worldly significance and that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men" (1 Cor. 1:25).

When the Presbytery of the Southeast took in a small group of believers and began holding services in the one-light Appalachian town of Neon, Kentucky, on April 1, 2000, some may have thought they were out of their minds. The region was not wealthy, its economy was in decline, and its culture was acutely different from those where successful churches were being planted. All the usual markers said no, but God said yes.

Lacy Andrews led the first worship service of what would eventually become Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (NRPC). Fifteen people came. At that meeting, elder Seth Long recalls praying for God to provide local men to be ministers and elders in the OPC. Sunday, April 1, 2018, marked the eighteenth anniversary of that meeting. Forty-six people attended—including thirty-six members and six visitors from the community. One of the members in attendance was a young man named Corey Paige. Corey recently came under care of presbytery and began MDiv studies at Greenville Seminary. It may have taken eighteen years, but it appears as though the Lord is answering the prayers of his people in Neon with another yes!

Much has happened in the past eighteen years. The core group was formally established as a mission work in October 2000. John Belden was installed as evangelist four years later, serving faithfully for six years. In 2012, I was installed as

evangelist. When I arrived, there were twenty-five members, including my own family. Over the last six years, the mission work has lost twenty-four, but it has also gained thirty-five.

## Outreach at ALC

One of our most fruitful ministries has been our outreach to Alice Lloyd College (ALC), a Christian liberal arts college in Pippa Passes, Kentucky, that offers a work-study program for regional students. Nine students have embraced the Reformed faith, seven joining NRPC and two joining a PCA church in South Carolina.

I've been asked how I got the outreach "going" at ALC, but there was no slick method. It fell into my lap like every other good thing in my life! A few months after arriving in Neon, I received a call from a gentleman named Richard Bowers who was working part-time in a local Bible Church and



*Jay Bennett teaching at a conference at NRPC*

full-time in the music department at ALC. He invited me to teach at a student ministry he had recently begun. I agreed and met several students who were hungry for God's Word. I asked if I could come to every meeting and was welcomed. Within a year, I had become the regular teacher of the big group and was leading a small group. Richard will not be returning to ALC next year, so there is some question about what the outreach will look like moving forward. We anticipate

continuing with a small group of about eight to ten students along with walk-up evangelism on campus.

The ALC outreach produced many relationships that led to the formation of two new Bible studies about forty minutes from NRPC. One is near Hazard, Kentucky. It includes five to seven young men and women. The other is in Pikeville, Kentucky. We have seen more than ten under-churched and unchurched people in it. God is working among these young men and women!

For the last five years we have consistently prayed for the Lord to bring us to organization by 2020, and the session believes he may be doing just that. We have had several new visitors recently, giving has increased, and our triune God seems to have renewed the work's vitality and hope for the future. His foolishness is indeed wiser than men! Please join us in giving thanks to him for these blessings and asking that his mission in the mountains of eastern Kentucky might continue to flourish, and the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ might be advanced.

*The author is evangelist of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church in Neon, Kentucky.*

## Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail [HomeMissionsToday@opc.org](mailto:HomeMissionsToday@opc.org). New editions: August 1, 15, 29, and September 12, 26.

# IN FOND RECOGNITION OF PATRICIA CLAWSON

// JAMES W. SCOTT



Recently retired CCE office secretary Patricia Clawson

On June 1, Patricia (Pat) Clawson took an early retirement from her position as office secretary for the Committee on Christian Education (CCE) in order to devote her time and energy to the care of her daughter Katie, who has Hodgkin's lymphoma that has not been responding to treatment.

Pat moved to the Philadelphia area with her husband, Douglas, when he began serving as the associate general secretary for the Committee on Foreign Missions in 2002. Actually, they were returning to the area; they had also lived in Philadelphia while Douglas was a student at Westminster Seminary. Pat became the CCE office secretary when the position opened up in April 2005.

Pat brought to the job more than the usual secretarial skills, such as typing in triplicate at sixty words per minute, taking shorthand, and serving coffee. Having been a pastor's wife for many years (at Grace OPC in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, and then at Grace OPC in Hanover Park, Illinois), she also came with a knowledge of, and appreciation for, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and many people in it. She brought in addition an understanding of self-sacrifice and frugality.

While living in the Chicago area, Pat had been a freelance journalist, writing for no less a newspaper than the *Chicago Tribune*. This experience was well utilized in her new position as editor Danny Olinger put her to work writing articles for *New Horizons* magazine. Her biggest assignment was being the coeditor (with Diane Olinger)

of *Choosing the Good Portion*, an inspirational account of the lives and labors of many women who made important contributions to the OPC over the years.

Pat's administrative skills were put to work as the coordinator of the Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC. She processed applications, reports, and other paperwork, made the arrangements for the intensive training sessions, and handled the finances. For the internship program, she managed both the finances and the paperwork involving interns and churches. Each year, when a list of the interns and families, along with photos, was needed for the Thank Offering issue of *New Horizons*, she had it all ready.

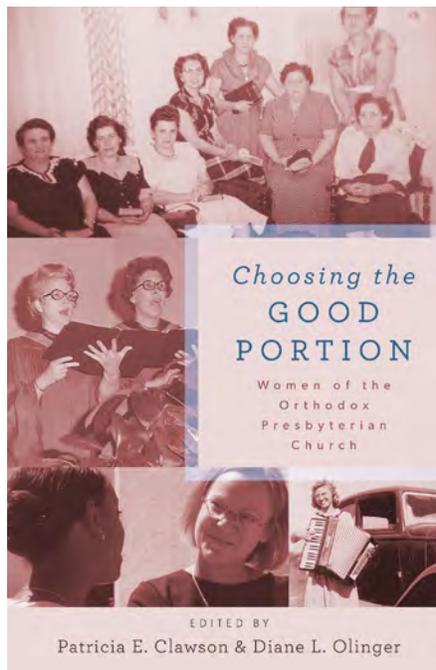
Her work for *New Horizons* included putting together the prayer calendar, with contributions from Foreign Missions and Home Missions.

Pat's servant's heart was manifest in all her dealings as CCE office secretary. She was—and is—a peacemaker and a deeply caring person. Her love for others compels her to bring the needs of many people before the throne of grace on a regular basis.

When asked what she wanted to be said about her, she replied that she was thankful for the blessing of being able to work with fellow Christians and for the church. It was a privilege, she said, to get to know so many people in the OPC.

And when asked what she didn't want to be said about her, she couldn't think of anything.

Pat went about her work faithfully, often while dealing with physical weaknesses. A breast cancer survivor, she also had to fend off colon cancer and battled chronic conditions. Despite an uncooperative hip, she carried all but the heavi-



est boxes of ordered CCE literature up and down the hall for processing and mailing. This spring—only after the CCE meeting was over—she finally had her needed hip replacement.

When Pat retired, she was one of four women in the OPC office building (out of eight) in the vicinity of six feet tall. I don't know when I have ever been around so many women I've had to look up to!

Pat will be missed at the OPC offices, but she will continue to coordinate MTIOPC from home and write articles for *New Horizons*. Right now, her ministry to her daughter, fighting for her life, must take precedence. Your prayers for Katie, Pat, and the rest of the family would be much appreciated.

*The author is a member of Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pennsylvania.*

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## ☆ Congratulations

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

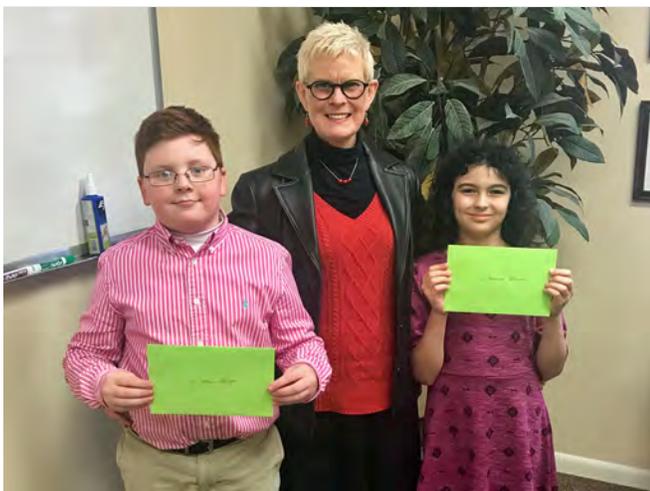
- **Timothy Robbins**, *Covenant Presbyterian Church of Monterey Bay, Marina, CA*

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

- **Hannah Olivier**, *Pineville Presbyterian Church, Pineville, LA*
- **Ethan Bolyer**, *Pineville Presbyterian Church, Pineville, LA*

The **Children's Catechism** has been recited by:

- **David McCabe**, *Grace Presbyterian Church, Vienna, VA*
- **Benjamin Borg**, *Providence OPC, Bradenton, FL*



*Ethan Bolyer and Hannah Olivier, coached by their teacher Carolyn Sawyer, successfully recited the First Catechism*

## OUR MEMBERSHIP VOWS

### True Repentance

*Glen J. Clary*

The Shorter Catechism defines repentance as:

...a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience. (Q. 87)

When the Holy Spirit gives the gift of repentance to sinners, they respond by recognizing and confessing their guilt, grieving over their offenses, turning away from their sins, and turning toward God with a desire to serve him in the newness of the Spirit (Rom. 7:6).

Repentance begins at our conversion, but it doesn't end there. From that moment on, our whole life is one of repentance. Every day, we turn away from sin and endeavor, by the grace of God, to serve him through Spirit-empowered obedience. Our need for repentance will not end until we enter heaven. Only then will we be made perfect in holiness (Shorter Catechism Q. 37).

The third membership vow of the OPC requires us to confess that because of our sinfulness, we abhor and humble ourselves before God. The word "abhor" means to hate, detest, or despise. However, the vow does not mean that we should abhor ourselves as human beings but that we should abhor ourselves as sinful human beings; that is, we should abhor our fallen and corrupt nature.

Repentance also leads us to reject the notion that we are able to save ourselves or that we are good enough to be accepted by God on our own. There is absolutely nothing that we can do to make ourselves acceptable to God.

Because of our sinful condition, we are utterly unholy, unrighteous, and unable to do any spiritual good in the sight of God. We must, therefore, not trust for salvation in ourselves but in Jesus Christ alone. True repentance requires nothing less.

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## ● Out of the Mouth . . .

The Sunday school teacher was telling the story of Adam and Eve's disobedience. He asked the class, "Why did bad things happen when Adam ate the fruit? My five-year-old son answered, "Because the fruit was not washed." The teacher rejoined, "No, back then the fruit was all organic."

—Stan Liao  
Saratoga, CA

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

# NEW COURSE OFFERED AT FALL MTIOPC

Patricia E. Clawson

The Ministerial Training Institute of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church for the first time offers an offshoot of Rev. Dr. A. Craig Troxel's popular Ecclesiology class with his newly developed Ecclesiology: Pastoral Theology course.

Taking Ecclesiology's theoretical approach and foundational principles one step further, Troxel will look at the doctrine of the pastoral ministry in the church known as Pastoral Theology. Like a seminary course on preaching, this Pastoral Theology course will combine both the theoretical and the practical. The goal of the Pastoral Theology course is to help equip ministerial candidates and pastors to better understand



May 2018 MTIOPC participants at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, MI

and perform their ministerial responsibilities to the flock, said Troxel.

The Ecclesiology and Ecclesiology: Pastoral Theology courses will have minimal overlap in content. "Pastoral Theology will be more focused upon how a minister should conceive of his work and what principles guide him as he conducts his ministry," said Troxel.

Ecclesiology: Pastoral Theology will join this fall's slate of MTIOPC courses, comprised of Reformed Worship, taught by Rev. Dr. Glen J. Clary, and A Hebrew Re-

resher, taught by Rev. Dr. Matthew H. Patton.

The fall semester begins on August 20, 2018, with on-line reading and writing assignments. MTIOPC culminates with three days of mandatory, in-person Intensive Training from November 6 through 8 at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio. Students, excluding commuters, should plan to arrive on Monday, November 5, and leave after classes conclude at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 8.

The MTIOPC courses are primarily designed for OPC ministers, licentiates, and men under care of a presbytery. OPC elders and ministers from related ecclesiastical bodies may enroll in Reformed Worship or A Hebrew Refresher.

## Returning Courses

The Reformed Worship class will learn the biblical and theological foundations of Reformed worship as well as the history and practice of Christian worship. The students should become equipped to plan and lead worship services that accord with Scripture and the OPC's Directory for Public Worship.

A Hebrew Refresher course is designed for ministers and licentiates who seek to deepen their knowledge of Hebrew. The students should gain confidence in reading Old Testament Hebrew and understanding how to use this skill in their preaching and teaching.

Registration deadline is July 31, 2018.

Lodging, food, rides to and from the airport, and local travel are provided for free during Intensive Training. Travel scholarships are available to OPC pastors, licentiates, and men under care of a presbytery.

All students pay a \$50 registration fee, which is fully refundable upon successful completion of the course. While tuition is free for OPC ministers, licentiates, and men under care, OPC elders pay an additional

\$50 and non-OPC ministers pay \$100 in tuition.

Applications and course descriptions are available at [www.opc.org](http://www.opc.org). Go to Worldwide Outreach, then Christian Education, then Ministerial Training. Click on MTIOPC.

For questions, contact Pat Clawson, MTIOPC coordinator, through her new contact information: (215) 896-6825 or email [pat.clawson.opc@gmail.com](mailto:pat.clawson.opc@gmail.com). MTIOPC Director Danny Olinger may be reached at [danny.olingier@opc.org](mailto:danny.olingier@opc.org).

*The author is the coordinator of MTIOPC.*

## Fall 2018 MTIOPC Quick Facts

**STARTING DATE:** August 20

**INTENSIVE TRAINING:** November 6-8 at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE:** July 31, 2018

**CLASSES:** Reformed Worship, Ecclesiology: Pastoral Theology, and A Hebrew Refresher

**INSTRUCTORS:** Glen Clary, Craig Troxel, and Matthew Patton

AUG-SEPT

*Items pertaining specifically to September are in italics.*



T. D.



The Medcalfs

- 1 Pray for the labors of **MR. AND MRS. M. M., MR. AND MRS. J. M.,** and tentmaking missionary **T. D.,** Asia. / Summer intern **JOSH VALDIX,** Immanuel OPC, West Collingswood, NJ.
- 2 **DAVID AND REBEKAH GRAVES,** Coeur d'Alene, ID. Pray for a new facility to accommodate the growing congregation. / Praise the Lord for the publication of the **TRINITY PSALTER HYMNAL.**
- 3 **BEN AND HEATHER HOPP,** Haiti. Pray for opportunities to share Jesus Christ with many grieving over recent deadly accidents. / **GREGORY REYNOLDS,** editor of *Ordained Servant*, and part-time staff accountant **DOUG WATSON.**
- 4 **JAY AND ANDREA BENNETT,** Neon, KY. Pray that NRPC would be organized by 2020. / **MR. AND MRS. F.,** Asia, give thanks for time with their daughters before their daughters return to the US for school.
- 5 **MATT AND ELIN PRATHER,** Corona, CA. Pray that God would prepare the men in officer training to shepherd Corona Presbyterian Church. / Pray for CCE general secretary **DANNY OLINGER** as he oversees the intern program.

- 6 **MR. AND MRS. K.,** Asia. Pray for opportunities for Mr. K. to share the gospel with his language study classmates. / **CHRIS AND GRACE ANN CASHEN,** Clarkston, GA. Pray for children in the summer program to truly hear the truth about Jesus.
- 7 Pray for missionary associates **E. C., E. K.,** and **M. S.,** Asia, as fall semester classes begin at the university. / **JANET BIRKMANN,** communications coordinator for Short-Term Missions.
- 8 **LACY (AND DEBBIE) ANDREWS,** regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southeast. / Summer interns **BRENDAN WESTERFIELD,** Lakeview OPC, Rockport, ME, and **BRYCE (KELCIE) SOUVE,** Escondido OPC, Escondido, CA.
- 9 **BEN AND MELANIE WESTERVELD** and missionary associate **JANINE EYGENRAAM,** Quebec, Canada. Pray for good participation in the August Teen Camp. / Pray for **DAVID HANEY** in his new responsibilities as director of the Committee on Ministerial Care.
- 10 **CHRIS AND MEGAN HARTSHORN,** Anaheim Hills, CA. Pray that Anaheim Hills Presbyterian would see conversions and growth. / **RAY AND MICHELE CALL,** Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for their son Jeremiah as he prepares for college life in the US.

- 11 **KEVIN AND RACHEL MEDCALF,** Cumming, GA. Pray that the Spirit would multiply the Word through the church. / Army chaplain **DAVID (JENNA) DERIENZO** and Navy chaplain **CORNELIUS (DEIDRE) JOHNSON.**
- 12 Summer intern **AARON (JACQUELINE) MIZE,** Trinity OPC, Easton, PA. / **MARK AND JENI RICHLINE,** Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for good involvement as they prepare the new church facility.
- 13 Missionary associates **MARKUS AND SHARON JEROMIN,** Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray that the English Club may bring new visitors to church. / Home Missions administrative assistant **KATIE STUMPF.**
- 14 **LARRY AND KALYNN OLDAKER,** Huron, OH. Please pray for the conversion of several witnessed to at Grace Fellowship. / Pray for **STEPHEN PRIBBLE,** senior technical associate, and **LINDA FOH,** technical assistant for OPC.org.
- 15 Affiliated missionaries **CRAIG AND REE COULBOURNE** and **LINDA KARNER,** Japan. / Pray for stated clerk **ROSS GRAHAM** as he works on the minutes and yearbook of the Eighty-fifth (2018) General Assembly.

# AUG-SEPT

*Items pertaining specifically to September are in italics.*



The Hacquebord family

**16** Pray for **NATHAN (AND ANNE) STROM**, church-planting intern, Andover, MN. / **HEERO AND ANYA HACQUEBORD**, L'viv, Ukraine, give praise for the spiritual growth of new members in their congregation.

**17** Home Missions associate general secretary **AL TRICARICO**. / Summer interns **NICHOLAS (TESSA) THOMPSON**, Harvest OPC, Wyoming, MI, and **DAMON (ELISABETH) YOUNG**, Grace OPC, Middletown, DE.

**18** Associate missionaries **OCTAVIUS AND MARIE DELFILS**, Haiti. Pray that the translation of Sunday school materials may reach many local children. / Yearlong intern **YING-JU CHEN**, Emmanuel OPC, Kent, WA.

**19** Affiliated missionaries **JERRY AND MARILYN FARNIK**, Prague, Czech Republic. Pray for the training of biblical counselors. / **DAVID (JANE) CRUM**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern CA.

**20** **BILL AND SESSIE WELZIEN**, Key West, FL. Pray that the Lord would bring many hungry hearts yearning for his truth. / MTIOPC instructors **CRAIG TROXEL**, **GLEN CLARY**, and **MATTHEW PATTON** as online coursework begins.

**21** Retired missionaries **BETTY ANDREWS, CAL AND EDIE CUMMINGS, GREET RIETKERK, YOUNG AND MARY LOU SON**, and **BRIAN AND DOROTHY WINGARD**. / Yearlong intern **ETHAN (CATHERINE) BOLYARD**, Covenant, Taylors, SC.

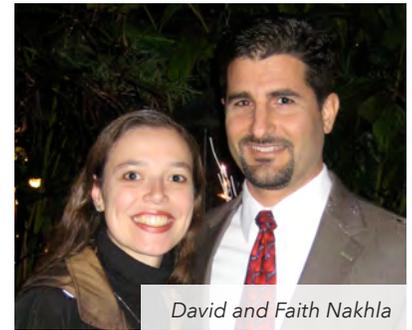
**22** Pray for **BROCK (JENNIFER) PAVIER**, church-planting intern, St. Augustine, FL. / *Foreign Missions administrative assistant* **LING LEE** and secretary **KATRINA ZARTMAN** as they prepare for committee meetings.

**23** **BOB AND GRACE HOLDA**, Oshkosh, WI. Pray that God's Word at Resurrection Presbyterian would strengthen faith. / Pray for the staff of **GREAT COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS** as they seek to produce solidly biblical resources.

**24** *Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary* **MARK BUBE** and *associate general secretary* **DOUGLAS CLAWSON** as they report to the Committee on Foreign Missions this week. / **JAN GREGSON**, assistant to the finance director.

**25** **ERIC AND DIANNA TUININGA** and **CHARLES AND CONNIE JACKSON**, Mbale, Uganda. / **JIM AND EVE CASSIDY**, Austin, TX. Pray for South Austin Presbyterian as they support the mission work in New Braunfels.

**26** **MATTHEW AND LOIS COTTA**, Pasadena, CA. Praise God for a well-attended officers' training class and growing member participation. / Summer intern **JOSEPH (ANDREA) POLLARD**, Harvest OPC, San Marcos, CA.



David and Faith Nakhla

**27** Pray for **DAVID NAKHLA**, administrator of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, as he travels to Colombia (Aug. 27-Sept. 4) to give talks on "The Ministry of Mercy." / *New Horizons* managing editor **JUDITH DINSMORE**.

**28** Pray for **DAVID AND RASHEL ROBBINS**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they help those affected by the heavy rains. / **LOWELL AND MAE IVEY**, Virginia Beach, VA. Pray that the Lord would prepare officers from Reformation Presbyterian.

**29** **JASON AND AMANDA KIRKLIN**, Waco, TX. Pray for continued peace and love at Trinity OPC. / **MARK AND CARLA VAN ESSENDELT**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for safety as flooding compromises roads and construction.

**30** **DR. FLIP AND ANNELOES BAARDMAN**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the local staff at the clinic. / Summer interns **TIMOTHY BROUSSARD**, Faith OPC, Grants Pass, OR, and **MASON DEPEW**, Falls Church, Menomonee Falls, WI.

**31** Missionary associates **LEAH HOPP**, **PAIGE VANDERWEY**, **CHRISTOPHER AND CHLOE VERDICK**, and **ANGELA VOSKUIL**, Uganda. / **RON AND CAROL BEABOUT**, Mifflintown, PA. Pray that God would bless and grow Grace and Truth OPC.

# NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

## MEDCALF INSTALLED IN BUFORD, GA

On June 1, 2018, Kevin L. Medcalf was installed as associate pastor of Covenant OPC in Buford, Georgia, in order to serve as organizing pastor of Covenant's daughter church, Providence Presbyterian, in Cumming, Georgia. Chris Strevel, pastor of Covenant, gave the sermon, Zecharias Weldeyesus gave the charge to the pastor, and Ken Montgomery, pastor of Geneva OPC in Buford, Georgia, gave the charge to the congregation. At one point, Strevel was Medcalf's pastor in the RPCUS, of which Covenant was then a part. Now, they are serving side by side in the OPC.



At the installation of Kevin Medcalf: (front row) Zecharias Weldeyesus, Wallace King, Kevin Medcalf, Sid Dyer, Bob Boyd; (back row) Bob Baily, Lenny Auton, Ken Montgomery, Mike Myers, Richard Hastings, Jeff Cunningham, Chris Cashen, and Chris Strevel

## UPDATE

### CHURCHES

- On May 4, the **Presbyterian Church of Flower Mound, TX**, formerly a congregation of the PCA, was received by the Presbytery of the Southwest.
- On June 8, **Redeeming Grace OPC** in Port Angeles, WA, was organized as a particular congregation.

### MINISTERS

- On May 7, the pastoral relationship between **Robert A. Lotzer** and Covenant Presbyterian Church in Abilene, TX, was dissolved upon Lotzer's resignation.
- On May 31, the pastoral relationship between **Robert S. Arendale** and Cornerstone OPC in Jersey Village (northwest Houston), TX, was dissolved. Arendale has accepted an executive position at Reformed Theological Seminary in Houston.
- On June 1, **Ryan S. Cavanaugh** was ordained and installed as an evangelist of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario to serve as the organizing pastor of Northwest Indiana Church, a mission work meeting in Merrillville, IN.

- On June 8, **Andrew M. Elam**, formerly the organizing pastor, was installed as pastor of Redeeming Grace OPC in Port Angeles, WA.
- On June 17, **Gregory E. Reynolds** preached his last sermon as pastor of Amoskeag Presbyterian Church in Manchester, NH. His pastoral relationship

with the church was dissolved by the Presbytery of New York and New England, at his and their request, and he is now designated pastor emeritus.

- On June 22, **Michael T. Spangler** was ordained as a minister and installed as Teacher of the Word at Providence Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, NC.



On June 22, 2018, Michael Spangler (front row, third from right) was ordained and installed as Teacher of the Word at Providence Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, NC.

• **Thomas A. Tkach** was ordained as a minister and installed as pastor of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Rio Rancho, in Rio Rancho, NM, on June 29.

• On June 30, the pastoral relationship between **Mark R. Brown** and Westminster OPC in Hollidaysburg, PA, was dissolved by action of the Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania, upon Brown's retirement and with the concurrence of the congregation.

• At the request of **Rodney T. King**, and with the concurrence of the congregation, the Presbytery of the Southeast dissolved the pastoral relationship between King and Garst Mill OPC in Roanoke, VA, on July 1, 2018, upon King's retirement.

• **Jeffrey S. Carter**, formerly the associate pastor of Trinity Reformed OPC in Wilmington, NC, was installed as pastor of Sovereign Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church in Hickory, NC, on July 6.

#### MILESTONES

• **Dorothy Anderson Barker**, née Partington, 91, author of *Bible Doctrine* and other Christian educational materials, died on June 30. She was a member of the OPC since 1936.

## LETTERS

#### A FAITHFUL SAINT

Editor:

At this year's General Assembly, two fine books were introduced that have a historical connection to the late OP ruling elder Scotty Neilands.

In Davis Young's truly enjoyable and edifying biography of his father, *For Me to Live Is Christ: The Life of Edward J. Young*, he notes that in 1935, during Young's licensure and ordination exam, Young was being raked over the coals for his support of Machen and Westminster Seminary when a ruling elder named Neilands stood up to defend the orthodoxy of Westminster, Machen, and Machen's student, Young.

Some seventy years later, Neilands's generosity in death to Worldwide Outreach enabled the Committee on Christian Education to begin the huge finan-

cial undertaking of creating what was just published with the United Reformed Churches in North America: the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.

A young Neilands had the courage not to go with the flow, but to stand up and be counted. An old Neilands had the vision to encourage the church he loved to continue to worship God with reverence and awe.

David Winslow  
Westminster, CA

#### VALUABLE LESSON IN TITHING

Editor:

My thanks to Roger Schmurr for demonstrating that the presentation of our tithes and offerings is an important part of public worship ("Is It Biblical to Tithe Online?" June 2018). I raise one additional factor: Presenting our offerings during public worship is a valuable lesson for our children and grandchildren. Small children can be given a coin to place in the offering plate, and older children can be taught to present a part of their allowance or earnings. By so doing, valuable lessons are communicated, and important biblical habits formed. As the children mature, they can see and understand that presenting our tithes and offerings is part of how we worship God publicly.

Arthur Thompson  
Atchison, KS

## REVIEWS

*Embodied Hope: A Theological Meditation on Pain and Suffering*, by **Kelly M. Kopic**. InterVarsity, 2017. Paperback, 197 pages, \$14.32 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor **Jeffrey B. Wilson**.

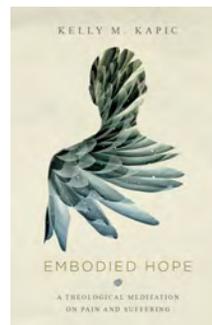
In order to give Christian care to someone who is suffering, one must find a way through therapeutic vacuity and theological-philosophical pat answers. Kelly Kopic in his book invites the reader into a conversation about the incarnation of Jesus Christ. He wends the reader through a discussion of stoicism, achievement-driven goals, triumphalism,

distorted expectations of our health, disregard of our finitude, a fractured view of what a human being is, and a more nuanced understanding of the effect of sin on our well-being. Of particular concern is the tendency for Christians to minimize Christ's humanity—his weakness, hunger, fatigue, pain, suffering, etc. The assumption often is that he externally carried our brokenness, but, according to Kopic, Jesus absorbed it in order to redeem it. By way of the incarnation, God enters into our fallen humanity.

The title gives it away, but throughout Kopic's conversation the incarnation must be kept in mind. Incarnational thinking, he argues, is essential for the Christian undergoing chronic pain and suffering as well as for the church's care for that person. I believe he is right about this. The incarnation, the Word becoming flesh, cannot be reduced to a concept or explanation, nor is it shallow and trite. The incarnate One is divine presence, mystery, redemption, and meaning altogether. Jesus Christ took up our pain and suffering in solidarity with us, but not just so he could experience what we experience. The incarnation of Christ is a redemptive solidarity. The words of Irenaeus come to mind, "Wherefore also he passed through every stage of life, restoring to all communion with God."

Kopic concludes his book with some wisdom for the church, because when we think incarnationally, the community of Christ has a place. "Our brothers and sisters in Christ are the means of a grace that I cannot channel to myself, namely, the physical presence of someone who is not me" (141). With the popularity of being a Christian "on my own" or with a few close friends, we must come back to the ways God mediates his grace to us. One of those ways is the fellowship of the church. For Kopic, the communion of the church allows for the much-needed practice of "confession." Other Christians are helpful—

I would say vital—for confession. Here confession is understood more broadly as confession of what is wrong and what must be made right by God. We are broken by sin, and that sin ruins life in this



world. In many ways, we delude ourselves about sin, suffering, and pain. Therefore, having another member of Christ's body hear our confession brings the gospel in an experiential way into our lives. This kind of confession requires Christians with the maturity to listen and bear mutual witness to the brokenness in the sufferer's life but also to express the forgiveness and grace of Christ in the midst of pain.

***Refresh: Embracing a Grace-Paced Life in a World of Endless Demands*, by Shona and David Murray. Crossway, 2017. Paperback, 208 pages, \$8.20 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP member Meredith Proctor.**

Do you have a grace-paced life? Are your daily habits sustainable? Or, are you over-committed, overstretched, and heading for burnout?

Shona Murray, originally from Scotland, is a mother, a doctor, a homeschooler, and the wife of a pastor. She wears many hats, as do most women. In *Refresh*, Shona (with the help of her husband, David) shares her struggle with depression, a sense of being overwhelmed, and the consequences of suppressing the warning signs in her life. These warning signs included a decrease in her appetite; disinterest in everything around her; taking no comfort in the Scripture, the Word preached, or God's people; panic attacks; and disinterest in the baby she was carrying. Shona invites us on a very arduous journey of recovery that helped her to finally feel as if she could hear her Master's voice again and live out his prescription for her life.

"Refresh Gym" is the tool Shona uses to help us experience the joyful refreshment of the gospel of grace. There are ten stations in the Refresh Gym, each of which is a stepping-stone to the next station. Station 1, "Reality Check" is where we begin, and, as the title of the chapter suggests, it calls for a very pointed survey of our lives and the need for change. The second, "Replay," reorients our focus on God as our Creator and reminds us that we are limited creatures. Echoing Psalm 127:2, "Rest" proclaims that "sleep brings

strength and healing" (52). This is a concept that is often overlooked in our society. Station 4, "Re-Create," drawing from 1 Corinthians 9:10–20 and the fourth commandment, encourages us to find "the wise balance between inactivity and over-activity" (67) and to exercise both body and soul. Five, "Relax" focuses on calming down the clamor of the world by seeking God daily (devotions), by weekly worship (Sabbath), and by annual refreshment (vacations with family). In station 6, "Rethink," Shona guides us to reorder our priorities. "God defines people first by their spiritual state and then by their spiritual character" (107). "Reduce" provides us with the perspective of not being victims of life's events. "Christ lived a well planned life but left room for summoned life events" (120). He was always

well balanced and the perfect example for us. Station 8, "Refuel," discusses the role of good food in helping us think and process properly. Here Shona also notes that medication is a "God given provision" when an extra measure of balance is needed (141). In 9, "Relate," we focus on our relationships with God and with our husband, children, and friends.

The final station is "Resurrection" and centers us on a "grace-paced" life, implementing all that has been learned in the previous chapters.

I found this book to be particularly helpful in my current walk of life. For those already struggling with the demands of a fast-paced life, the prescriptions of this book may seem to be a bit overwhelming. But the "stations" are extremely relatable and easy to implement. I highly recommend this book for either personal growth or group study.

***Prayers of the Bible: 366 Devotionals to Encourage Your Prayer Life*, by Gordon J. Keddie. Crown & Covenant, 2017. Paperback, 764 pages, \$18.00. Reviewed by OP minister Bill Shishko.**

Those who have benefited from the many popular studies of Bible books produced by Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America minister (now retired)

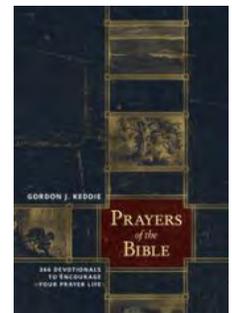
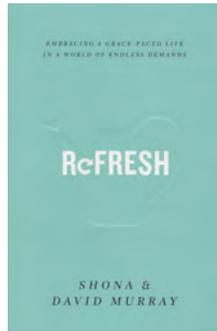
Gordon J. Keddie are well aware of the solid content coupled with rich devotional matter that mark his works. This volume is not only no exception; it is in many ways a compendium of the author's finest theological insights developed over his more than four decades of pastoral ministry, and channeled through lessons from biblical prayers and the Bible's specific teaching on prayer.

This massive book offers far more than most traditional Christian devotionals. For each day of the year, we meet a text, a passage of Scripture to read, a study related to the text (with the helpful bold highlighting of the pithy main points), a psalm to sing as a prayer that is an outgrowth of the study (use this alongside your new *Trinity Psalter Hymnal!*), and a section to write things that you wish to pray for in that day. And all that on two pages for each day of the year! The book breathes the spirit of the weekly church prayer meetings in which Dr. Keddie originally gave these presentations.

The devotional study titles alone are inviting: "Praying for Children," "Big Problem: Brief Prayer" (text: Matt. 14:30, "Lord, save me!"), "Wrong Prayer: Right Answer," "Praying for Unsolved Murder," "Praying Against Our Enemies." And these are just a few from the January readings. Imagine topics like this for every day of every month of the year!

Keddie mines hundreds of quotations and citations from the Reformers, the Puritans, Christian hymnody, and modern sources—both secular and Christian. That alone makes this volume worth its very reasonable price. I was particularly impressed with how these studies—reflecting the Scriptures themselves—span the breadth of prayers we are meant to offer: for ourselves, for our families, for our neighbors and friends, for the church, and (so often neglected) for our nation and the nations. We are stretched to pray as the whole Bible calls us to pray.

While these daily spiritual exercises are eminently suitable for personal devo-

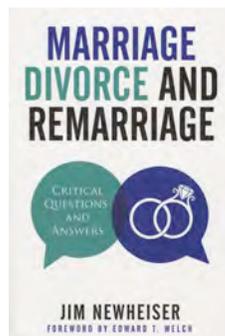


tions, they would also be ideal for family worship with older family members. Pastors would profit by committing themselves to work through this pastoral treasure over a year. Keddie, as a pastor, provides a superb model of opening up a text, applying it, and showing how it grows out of and is related to Jesus Christ and the gospel. *Prayers of the Bible* is an aid to help its readers pray according to the will of God given in Holy Scripture. It is also a valuable tool to help us foster that true heavenly mindedness that is of the most earthly good.

***Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: Critical Questions and Answers*, by Jim Newheiser. P&R, 2017. Paperback, 336 pages, \$13.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Danny Patterson.**

What is marriage? How can you know whom you should marry? Does Scripture justify divorce on grounds other than abandonment? Is abuse grounds for divorce? Is cohabitation permissible apart from marriage? These are just a handful of the forty questions that are answered in this book. And not only are they answered, but they are answered well.

Newheiser tackles difficult questions with clarity and balance, rooted in the teachings of Scripture. He almost never falls into over-generalization, unlike many authors writing on this topic, and he never falls into over-simplification when addressing some of the more controversial



questions regarding divorce and remarriage.

Among these questions is the permissibility of divorce and remarriage. In the Christian community, there are essentially two positions here. The majority view is that the Bible allows for divorce and remarriage under certain circumstances, while the minority view (or permanence view) holds that a Christian may never initiate divorce and may never remarry as long as his or her spouse is still alive. Newheiser defends the majority view and thoroughly, yet humbly, dismantles the permanence view, supporting such a stance through careful exegesis of the most significant biblical texts.

Newheiser reminds his readers of the importance of the local church in the making and dissolving of marriages. This emphasis echoes the teaching of our *Confession*, which reminds us that those contemplating divorce should not be “left to their own wills, and discretion” (WCF 24.6).

Furthermore, Newheiser is quick to remind us that the church has the responsibility to protect the vulnerable and discipline offenders for the glory of Christ. “Church leaders,” Newheiser contends, “who send a woman back into a situation in which she is likely to be beaten have failed to fulfill their call to protect Christ’s sheep (Acts 20:28) and are unworthy of their office (Ezek. 34:1–10).” To this we say, “Amen.” God is concerned with the oppressed, and officers of the church are responsible to protect those who are afflicted by abuse.

Because of the format of this book, readers may use it in a few different ways. First, it can be read straight through, in order to get an overview of the biblical teaching on mar-

## Mt. Carmel Anniversary

Mt. Carmel Church (OPC) is holding a fortieth anniversary celebration on Saturday, September 15, at 11:00 a.m. at 350 Franklin Boulevard, Somerset, New Jersey.

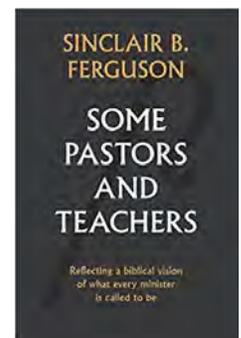
riage, divorce, and remarriage. Second, for those who are seeking to tackle a specific issue, the question and answer format of the book allows it to be used as a reference book of sorts. However, the reader should be aware that the sheer number of questions that are tackled allows only general answers to these questions. For example, if you are looking for an exhaustive treatment of the issue of abuse as it relates to divorce and remarriage, you will not find it here. This should not be seen as a criticism of the book, but simply a limitation.

Third, this book is a gem for the purposes of premarital and marital counseling. Counselors will find the question-and-answer format helpful because it will enable them to assign certain chapters to couples who are working through specific obstacles in their marriage or who are preparing for marriage.

***Some Pastors and Teachers*, by Sinclair B. Ferguson. Banner of Truth, 2017. Hardcover, 824 pages, \$35.19 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP minister Arthur J. Fox.**

This book can be described as a toolbox. Ferguson himself says in his introduction that he hopes readers will feel free to dip into it “here and there” (xiv). It is a collection of his own articles published in the last thirty or more years of his career. Its purpose is to provide pastors and teachers with guidance about what to focus on in their ministries.

It contains thirty-nine chapters, plus



## Position Available

**Faculty:** Westminster Seminary California announces a new faculty opening in Practical Theology. This is a full-time, tenure-track position that begins July 1, 2019. Your curriculum vitae should be submitted by October 1, 2018. For further information, visit our website at [www.wscal.edu](http://www.wscal.edu) or contact J. V. Fesko, Academic Dean, at [academicdean@wscal.edu](mailto:academicdean@wscal.edu).

## Billie Georgia Conference for men and women

October 19-20, 2018

• **Topic:** The Risks of Repudiating Reality: Timely Lessons from C. S. Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*

• **Speaker:** Ken Myers, host and producer of *MARS HILL AUDIO Journal* and author of *All God's Children* and *Blue Suede Shoes: Christians and Popular Culture*

• **Contact:** Tamara Kelly at (248) 651-0900 or [bg.conference4women@gmail.com](mailto:bg.conference4women@gmail.com) (member of Providence OPC in Southfield, MI)

• **Location:** Oakland Hills OPC, Farmington Hills, MI

an epilogue, in five sections. It is a very big book, containing lessons from men like John Calvin and John Owen and showing how the Puritans ministered as pastors and teachers.

In a section on "The Pastor and Teaching," Ferguson covers essentials like the Bible's view of itself and biblical theology, and also gives an overview of Reformed theology and its relationship to biblical theology. Finally, there is a section on "Preaching" that begins with a transcript of a sermon by Ferguson, by which he demonstrates how to preach a Christ-centered sermon.

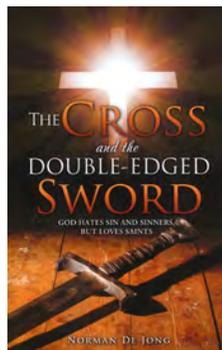
I cannot say enough about how practical this book is and how easy to understand. I found my own preaching critiqued. I learned things that will help me to counsel people and how to preach Christ-focused, expository messages that center on the gospel every time. One example will have to do: Ferguson urges the preacher to make sure our people see that there is no good thing in them by nature (Rom. 7:18), but that in Christ they have been justified and cleansed so that their glorification has begun (543).

Pastors and teachers: This book is full of Christ and his gospel. Pick it up and read it, and be encouraged. Lay people,

you can read it too, with profit for your own growth in Christ. You just might find ways to understand your own pastor's sermons and encourage him to be faithful. (Why not give it to him as a gift?)

*The Cross and the Double-Edged Sword: God Hates Sin and Sinners, but Loves Saints*, by Norman De Jong. Xulon, 2017. Paperback, 164 pages, \$14.49. Reviewed by OP pastor Peter J. Moelker.

The primary purpose of this book, as stated by the author, is "to search the Scriptures for pictures of Jesus Christ, both in the Old and the New Testaments" (2) and, in particular, to give attention to what De Jong believes to be an often neglected image, that of Jesus as a "doubled-edged sword." This concern arose out of a study of the Book of Revelation. Though the Scripture never attributes such an image to the person of Jesus but rather to the possession of Jesus, the concern of the author is more focused on what this image, along with the cross, represents—both the saving love of God towards his people and the holy wrath of God towards unrepentant sinners, the latter being the main theme of the book.



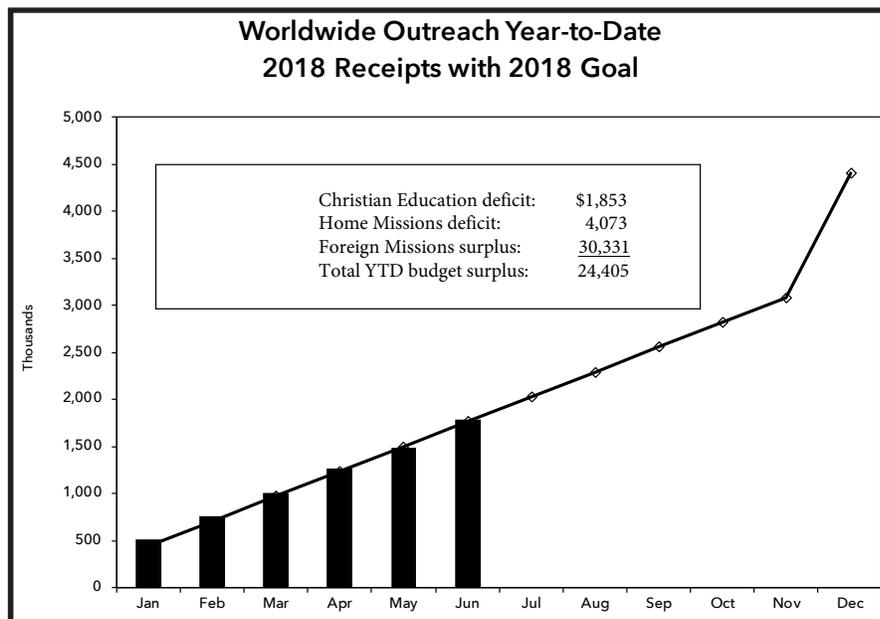
"The cross, like the double-edged sword, cuts two ways" (11).

Because this image has been neglected, the author argues, our contemporary evangelical community "readily proclaims the love of Christ, while failing to recognize the justice and holiness of God. Love is popular, but wrath is ugly, ignored, and often condemned" (6). As a result, the double-edged sword of the gospel is often dulled on one side.

Too many churches, says De Jong, proclaim "God loves you," but does Jesus really love sinners? "If God hates sinners,

should we then not also hate sinners?" (51). The end of the book strikes a different chord, however, when he takes up the question of whether or not God, in any sense, loved Pharaoh. "Did God love Pharaoh? Did God express a deep-seated concern for his temporal and eternal welfare? The answer has to be a resounding 'Yes!'" (120). This book seems to be motivated by the genu-

ine and commendable desire to alert the church to the need to not be ashamed of the doctrine of God's wrath and of God's holy hatred of sin. De Jong clarifies that indeed "God loves the creatures, the persons, and the world that He has created" (122), but a clearer distinction of the various ways the Scripture speaks of the love of God would have been helpful.





# CARING FOR OUR MINISTERS AND THEIR WIDOWS



To learn more, visit [www.OPCcmc.org](http://www.OPCcmc.org)  
or email [david.haney@opc.org](mailto:david.haney@opc.org)

How can we best provide and care for our ministers? Whether active in ministry or already retired, they face unique needs and often with limited resources.

The newly-formed OPC **Committee on Ministerial Care** seeks to partner with presbyteries and local congregations, providing resources to serve the faithful servants God has given us.



**The Committee  
on Ministerial Care**  
SUPPORT • RESOURCES • ENCOURAGEMENT