

NEW HORIZONS

— *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

3 Making Progress
in Uruguay //
by Mark E. Richline

MAY 2014

6 Japan: The Land of
Opportunity // *by Kaz
and Katie Yaegashi*



Moving Forward
on the Mission Field

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New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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Karimojong women are shown here working in the field. For more on the involvement of the OP Uganda Mission with agriculture, see Bob Wright's article on page 8.



MAKING PROGRESS IN URUGUAY



MARK E. RICHLINE // “A small country nestled between Argentina and Brazil, Uruguay has long been one of the region’s most progressive countries.” Such was the statement made by a reporter for *The Economist* on the heels of the nation’s vote to legalize abortion.

Uruguay has long been recognized as the most secular state in South America, having declared itself separate from the authority of the Roman Catholic Church in the early twentieth century. It was among the first countries to remove any biblical influence from the education system and to legalize divorce.

Recent Progressive Developments in Uruguay

More recently, the government has pushed hard to be viewed as a “progressive” nation similar to the United States and European nations. This push to be progressive has led to the legalization of abortion, marijuana, and gay marriage—all within the past two years. Although such moves are viewed as progressive, in the eyes of God they destroy entire societies. Thankfully, the Lord uses his church faithfully to proclaim his gospel, “the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16).

In October 2012, one month after our family arrived on the field, the Uruguayan Senate approved a bill

legalizing abortion during the first twelve weeks of pregnancy. Compared to American and European standards, Uruguay’s legislation is more restrictive, requiring a woman to explain her desire for an abortion to a panel of health professionals who must discuss with her abortion-related risks and alternatives, including adoption. After that, a woman must then reflect for five days before finally deciding to abort her child. Public opposition to this law has been strong, with dozens of doctors refusing for religious or ethical reasons to perform abortions. In June of last year, opponents attempted to call for a referendum to repeal the law, but failed to receive the required number of voters.

In April of last year, Uruguay took its next step toward becoming a more progressive nation when legislators legalized gay marriage, making it the third country in the Americas, after Canada and Argentina, to do so. In marriage contracts, instead of the words “husband and wife”, the married couple is referred to as the “contracting parties.” Sergio Miranda, one of the first

gay men to “marry” his partner under the new legislation, stated, “Uruguay is sending a very strong message to the rest of the world: a message of equality, of inclusion, and of diversity.”

The world certainly took notice of this small South American country last December when, inspired by U.S. initiatives in Colorado and Washington, Uruguay passed a law allowing people to grow, buy, and smoke marijuana. Households will be permitted to grow up to six plants per year. Under this law, residents may also purchase up to forty grams of marijuana per month from licensed pharmacies. Disappointment over the apparent failure of the war on drugs has led many larger nations to applaud the government’s bold move.

Uruguay, with a population of just over three million, is certainly sending a strong message: free exercise of the right to murder unborn children, of the right to abuse one’s body with drugs, and of the right to pervert the natural design of marriage is what makes a nation progressive. The legalization



Mark Richline teaching the memory verse at VBS



Children at the 2014 summer VBS

of such immorality only serves to give license to the outward manifestation of man's inner sinful desires to please himself. Rather than social progression, it is social regression through the rejection of God's will, provoking the judgment of a holy God (see Rom. 1:18–32).

The Truly Progressive Person

In stark contrast to the world's view of progress, the Word of God pictures the truly progressive person as one who desires what God desires and honors others above oneself. These are people who die to their own desires in order to love and serve others. David writes in Psalm 1:1–3,

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Delight in the law of the Lord results in a spiritual progression, which ultimately brings prosperity. People who place themselves under the influence of the Word of God become convicted of inescapable truths. The Holy Spirit uses the Scriptures to convict hearts of the eternal presence of the holy God who rules over his universe and all it contains. As the Scriptures reveal the holiness of God, man's sinful heart is exposed. He sees his desire to do as he pleases no longer as progressive, but as destructive, because he lives in rebellion against the will of his Creator. His pride in himself crumbles. Realizing the weight of God's judgment against him, he is spiritually undone.



Youth group on a day hike east of Montevideo

Enabled by the Spirit of God working through his Word, man renounces of his sinful desires and seeks God's forgiveness. He no longer trusts in himself, but places his faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, who came to save sinners. He renounces his own perceived good works as providing any basis for his acceptance by God and relies entirely on the perfect life and sacrifice of Jesus to forgive his sin, make him God's own child, and give him eternal life. This is God's definition of a progressive person.

Out of love for God, people who are a new creation in Christ deny themselves and strive to please their Lord, conforming themselves to his image. Remaining under the influence of God's Word, people put others' needs before their own, consider others better than themselves, and sacrifice themselves to see others prosper. Such is God's description of a progressive society.

The OPC Uruguay Mission

Here in Uruguay, our Orthodox Presbyterian mission labors to proclaim the Word

of God, bringing society under the influence of his truth. Our mission does not labor alone. Other biblically faithful churches and institutions have been proclaiming God's Word in Uruguay for years. The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Rivera, where OP missionaries Jonathan and Margaret Falk and Stephen and Linda Larson labored, has been preaching the gospel for nine years, reaching across the border into Brazil. Also, the Biblical Seminary of the Americas in Montevideo has as its mission statement, "Called by God to spiritually and intellectually train each student to better serve God through his life in the local church and/or in international missions." Each year between thirty and forty students graduate from that institution, and most of them return to their churches with a greater knowledge of God's Word to make them more capable servants.

Our mission work in Montevideo, La Iglesia Presbiteriana del Uruguay, began four years ago, when the Rev. Mauricio Rolim arrived with his family from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Brazil. My family and I joined them in September 2012, when there was one baptized member in the church and one other who was preparing to be baptized. We have proclaimed God's Word each Lord's Day and sought to impact the community with the gospel of Christ. Each summer and winter, during school vacations, we hold vacation Bible schools, where at least twenty children attend, many of them returning each time. Three times last year, we partnered with a local Baptist congregation to present marriage seminars to the community. One couple who attended the seminar now worships with us each Sunday and desires to join our church. Each Saturday, we host our "Club Feliz" for young children, where they hear the gospel and join in the songs and memory verses.

On Thursday evenings, we meet for weekly prayer and Bible study, where I recently finished teaching on



Mark Richline baptizing Raul

evangelism. We learned to model Christ in our daily living, to share our personal testimonies, and to speak the message of salvation to others. On Friday evenings, our youth group is attended by teens from both within and outside our church family, studying through the book of Proverbs. On Saturday evenings, we invite young men and women to join us to study the Westminster Confession of Faith. All of our efforts would be in vain apart from the power of our Lord, who said, "Apart from me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Yet we rejoice in his work, as last year we heard professions of faith from five people and received another four by transfer from our church in Rivera.

Spreading the Reformed Faith

We delight to see the Lord spreading our Reformed work elsewhere. More than two hundred miles west of Montevideo, on the border with Argentina, lies the city of Mercedes with nearly 42,000 people. Here, in a small house, a group of fifteen believers and their children meet weekly to worship and study God's Word. They contacted us after taking an interest in the Reformed faith and eventually leaving their Baptist church. After studying the

Scriptures with us for several months, they have committed themselves to becoming a Reformed and Presbyterian congregation. We are happy to be directing them and look forward to seeing the Lord impact their community with his Word through their witness.

Our Lord has been pleased to change hearts in Uruguay through the proclamation of his Word. Recently a newly married couple joined our membership. Two weeks before their public reception, they announced that they were expecting. Later the husband shared with me that they had struggled with the news of their pregnancy. They were not planning to have a child so soon and



New members bowing in prayer on the day of their reception

felt unprepared for the coming financial challenges. The wife's friends in nursing school asked if she would keep the child. The following Sunday, the couple heard me preaching from Psalm 139, telling how every child is fearfully and wonderfully made by God. Their hearts were encouraged and their minds were set to submit to the Lord's will and enjoy their new baby. By God's grace, these are truly progressive people.

We petition our Lord to change hearts and transform society, here in Uruguay and throughout the world, through the ministry of his Word. □

The author, an OP minister, is a missionary to Uruguay. He quotes the NIV.

JAPAN: THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY



KAZUHIKO AND KATIE YAEHASHI // **America may be the land of business or educational opportunities, but we think Japan is the land of opportunities to share the gospel. From greeting neighbors with “God made a beautiful day today, didn’t he?” to preaching the full gospel openly and**

regularly, we feel completely free to talk about the love of God.

Recently we read a reminder that the reason we tell the good news to unbelievers is that Jesus told us to do so. Of course, that is a necessary part of our philosophy of evangelism. But we also believe from the bottom of our hearts that sharing what Christ has done and can do for poor sinners is the most interesting and satisfying way to live life.

Another exciting aspect of missionary work in Japan is knowing that we may be the only ones who will ever tell most of our contacts about the love of God in Jesus Christ. They won’t hear it from their parents, their school teachers, or their friends. They won’t hear it on the radio, on TV, or on the Internet. The information is out there somewhere, obviously, but we have never had anyone say he came to Christ because he learned about him on Facebook.

Yamagata, our city, is considered a rural area (even though it has a population of 250,000!) with traditional customs and attitudes. Because of this, people often tell us they cannot be

Christians because they are Buddhists or even because they are Japanese. An interesting example of what it’s like to live in this very conservative part of the Japanese “boon docks” is our neighbor’s decision thirty-five years ago to live in Kagota, our part of the city, because there is no shrine or temple here. Relatives are buried in a family plot at their respective temples. Shrines are for the protection and blessing of the community, and residents “belong” to the shrine.

This is a relatively new part of town, and everyone in Kagota came from somewhere else in Japan! Our neighbor knew she would be considered an outsider and discriminated against in another neighborhood. Katie expressed surprise at that strong word. So another friend explained that, when her mother married and moved to Yamagata after the war, the local shops would not sell to her. There were only enough goods for the people who belonged here! That open discrimination is unusual now, but rejecting anything that is not “Japanese” continues to some extent to this day.

However, people are also interested in what’s new or unusual or beneficial in some way.

When our sister, Gwladys Hare, visited from Texas, she gave two piano concerts in our home, and people came by the dozens! We gave each of them a copy of “My Tribute” to take home and think about. One of the first OP missionary associates, Ruth Ann Graybill (1969–1972), will soon come back and present a seminar on “Women Connecting with Each Other.” We expect about thirty women to attend, most of whom are not believers yet. Children’s programs, which always include Bible stories, hymns, and prayer, are usually attended by parents also.

From Missouri to Yamagata

Even an ordinary activity, such as taking our children out to play, can be an opportunity to share the gospel. Listen to this! A young mother approached our daughters, Megumi and Emi, when they were at the park with Kaila, Megumi’s little girl. The woman and her family had recently returned from two years

in Missouri, where they had gone to church with their English tutor. When our girls told her their name was Yaegashi, she exclaimed that her pastor had told her to look up Mr. Yaegashi when they got to Yamagata! The family had been back here for a couple of months, but hadn't gotten around to it yet. The pastor had e-mailed me that a family that had attended his church would soon be returning to Yamagata. But as he didn't give their name or any other information, Kaz had been waiting to hear back from him.

The young mother said her nine-year-old daughter, who had attended school in Missouri, was looking for a friend who could speak English. There are hardly any foreign children in Yamagata, and those who are here usually have one Japanese parent, go to Japanese school, and don't speak English. As the mothers were talking, their two girls became friends and went off to play. They were able to play together several more times before Megumi and Kaila went back to Brooklyn at the end of the summer.

Since then, the family (living only two blocks from us!) has been coming to Sunday school and church, and all four of them come to English classes at our house. Especially in the Friday-evening conversation class, to which the father comes, the topic is often Christianity.

That providential event happened just recently, but something else that we and you have been praying for and anticipating for thirty years is coming to pass. A childhood friend of ours, Rie Kato Watanabe, who has loved the Lord Jesus almost all of her life, has asked to be baptized. We wrote about her twenty-five years ago, when Emperor Hirohito died. She refused to participate in the memorial to him at school, and stood up and walked out of the auditorium! "I can't do this," she said. "I'm a Christian."

Why she has waited all this time, why she has decided to take this important step now, we don't know. Nor do we need to know. We rejoice in her decision, and pray that she will be an

encouragement to others to go and do likewise.

Dinners and Weddings

Having families over for a meal is another opportunity for evangelism. It's rare that families have dinner at their friends' houses—drinking buddies late at night maybe, or moms and their children for lunch, but hardly ever whole families. So it becomes a special event in their lives—and one more opportunity for us to give thanks to God with and for them and to explain during the evening why there is such joy in our lives. One dad, the owner of our favorite curry place, said that his wife had decided there would be no TV in the dining room of their new house. They would have conversation at mealtime, as the Yaegashis do.

In addition to opportunities such as these, Kaz regularly preaches the sacrificial love of Christ at a wedding chapel operated by a Christian woman. Christian weddings are popular in Japan because ours is the "Love God" and the wedding dress is so beautiful. But at El Sion Chapel, folks learn about the love of God in Christ, and the most beautiful aspect of the wedding is spiritual.

There is a roster of five local pastors, and each one officiates at two to four weddings a month. About a month before the wedding, Kaz meets with the couple and explains that God himself created marriage and brought them together. Often, Kaz says, tears come to their eyes. They had no idea! The wedding is attended by fifty to one hundred guests, most of whom are hearing the gospel for the first time. "A husband must love his wife as Christ loves his

church and gave his life for her. He died on the cross so his beloved could have eternal life." Even if Kaz has preached at only two weddings a month, he has preached to thousands of lost souls over the past fifteen years.

The Japanese have developed a peaceful, profitable society. It seems to work to the advantage of all. But we who know the Lord Jesus know our hearts cannot rest until they rest in him.

The opportunities abound, and the new, unusual, and beneficial are pondered, but the response is slow. We could get discouraged by the small number of

professions of faith, did we not find such sweetness and fulfillment in the message we are allowed to bring. The Spirit of our Creator God has called us to be here to tell as many people as we can that Jesus is mighty to save.

We remember that he who called Peter to preach the gospel saved thousands. Then that same Spirit called Philip to leave his work and preach the gospel to save

one dear soul. And the very same Spirit called Stephen to preach the gospel, and he was stoned to death. We are blessed to be called to preach that same gospel here in the town of Yamagata.

Persecution has been part of Japanese history, but we don't expect that to happen to us. We are warmly welcomed anywhere. One by one, precious souls are coming to love our Lord Jesus, and, by God's grace, when you join us in prayer for Japan, thousands more will follow him! □

Kaz Yaegashi is an associate missionary, laboring with the OPC Japan Mission as pastor-evangelist at RCJ Yamagata Church in Yamagata, Japan.



Kaz Yaegashi addressing the congregation in Yamagata

TILLING THE SOIL AT NAKAALE

// ROBERT J. WRIGHT, JR.



Missionary deacon to Uganda Bob Wright with his wife Martha, son Bobby, and daughters (from the left) Kipsy, Rachel, Anna, and Mary

We have come into the rainy season again in Nakaale. The dry, dusty ground is being nourished by the rains that have been absent for some months. We forget how cool the air becomes after the rains—the heat has been so intense for so long. As the rains begin to soften the soil, we consider what we are going to do this upcoming year. During the past several years, the Karamoja Station of the OP Uganda Mission has planted hibiscus to provide work for those who were running short of their own grain. We could do that again, but we have been approached by a Korean firm to plant sesame for export to Korea and Japan.

One of the downsides of planting a labor-intensive crop is that the workers on the project are typically women. There could be a few men who come to work, but usually more than 90 percent will be women. In a larger project like planting sesame seed, which requires equipment, we would hope to engage more of the men in the work. The government has been removing guns from the Karimojong men, so those who typically would have been out looking after their herds are no longer doing so. Some of this is because the cattle have been removed by neighboring tribes and clans that still have weapons. This means that there are often many young men hanging around under trees, playing cards and drinking. If we

can engage them in a project that keeps them busy and gives them a wage, they can take care of their families.

The Wright family has been traveling a lot. Rachel is now a sophomore at Houghton College in western New York State. I had a chance to visit her for a couple of days while on a trip to the U.S. in March to attend the meeting of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries at Matthews OPC in Charlotte, North Carolina. Martha has been traveling to Kampala quite often, where she is working on a review of the orthography—writing system—of the Karimojong language in a project for the Ministry of Education that is funded by USAID. They have finished the orthographic review and are gearing up to begin developing textbooks in their language for grades 1–3. English is the national language of Uganda, but with a literacy rate of 7 percent in Karamoja, the Ugandan government has decided to try to teach the children to read in their native language first—then in English later.

Martha has worked on literacy materials for a number of years, and they are now being used in the Karamoja Education Outreach (KEO) project. This is a ministry of the Mission in which preschool children come to a building on the clinic property and are taught the Bible, as well as reading, writing, and basic numeracy. They are taught by Karimojong teachers together with two of our missionary associate teachers, Erika Bulthuis and Taryn Dieckmann. They work closely



Taryn Dieckmann teaching school in Karamoja

with the head teacher, Tete George, to teach the children in the morning. In the early morning, they teach the shepherd boys at a nearby village, and in the afternoon there is a class for girls who watch their siblings and cannot go to school. The teachers also split up and go to the local public schools, where they teach Bible, basic literacy, and English. This is a great opportunity to reach the children when they are young.

We have been busy in the workshop on our mission compound in Nakaale, constructing the trusses and other parts we need to renovate the house where the Okken family has been living. This house was the first structure we built after renovating the original ranch house located on the property, and we did the work using the typical Ugandan construction methods. It became obvious after we built the house that we were going to have a long-term battle with termites. We took advantage of the Okkens' time of furlough in the U.S. to take the entire wooden roof system off of the house and remove the wooden cabinets. We are reconstructing everything with steel and cement, as we did on our own family's house and the house built for Jim and Jenny Knox. The guys have been making steady progress. Our son Bobby works with the crew and me, as he has finished his high schooling. We also have missionary associate Jesse Van Gorkom and short-term volunteer Zach English helping out with the shop work and construction. They work with our Karimojong crew, setting the steel and filling the gaps between the steel and the existing masonry with stone.

We also have been able to drill a few wells in recent months. We drilled a well for a hotel in Nakapiripirit, two wells for Living Stones University in Mbale, and one for a school that is being built in Kween District just south of us. These are for friends and Christian agencies with whom we have working relationships. Drilling some of the boreholes takes only a day or two, but others take multiple attempts.

Our younger three girls—Anna, Mary, and Christiana (Kipsy)—are studying at Rift Valley Academy in Kijabe, Kenya. It is a real blessing that they are in a wonderful academic environment. They are being pushed to their limits, and we are thankful for the missionaries there who make the school possible. Anna graduates from high school this spring, so she is busy applying to colleges in the U.S. and filling out scholarship applications. We are thankful for the way the Lord has provided for us.

In all of this, we see how we need to cherish the time the Lord gives us to be together. Rachel will be home this summer, and our other three girls will be back from Kenya for a month—and then off Anna



Bob Wright with his well-drilling rig

and Rachel will go to college in the U.S. Please pray for us as we are getting used to this phase of our life. We are thankful for the opportunities the Lord has provided, but we miss our gang. We would also ask you to continue praying for our health and safety as we work and travel, and that the Lord would be glorified by the work he is doing in Nakaale.

What's New

// Comings/Goings

Missionary associates **Mr. and Mrs. Christopher J. Verdick** (New Life Presbyterian Church, PCA, San Diego, Calif.) returned to Nakaale, Uganda, at the end of April with their first child, Carmel Ariadne, who was born on March 15.



New Prayer Cards Available



MARK AND CHRISTINE WEBER
Silas, Gideon, Levi, Josiah

Missionaries of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in

UGANDA



The Orthodox Presbyterian Church
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS
607 North Easton Road, Building E
Willow Grove, PA 19090-2339
Phone (215) 830-0900 • Fax (215) 830-0350

New and updated prayer cards for all OP foreign missionaries are now available. A map of the mission field, family information, and prayer requests are on the back of each card. Church offices should contact the Foreign Missions office (e-mail cory.1@opc.org; tel. 215/830-0900, ext. 2) and indicate how many sets of these free cards they would like to receive.

OPC SUMMER CAMPS AND CONFERENCES



Some fun at French Creek

ALASKA—Family Camp

(Grace OPC, Wasilla, Alaska)

Place: to be determined (in Wasilla, AK)

Family/all ages, August 15–16

Scott Johnson, johnson.3@opc.org

CALIFORNIA—Blue Ridge Bible Conference

(Presbytery of Southern California)

PineCrest Christian Conference Center, Twin Peaks, CA

Family/all ages, June 16–20

www.blueridgebibleconference.org

CALIFORNIA—Sierra Christian Conference

(OP churches in Northern California)

Sierra Christian Conference Association, Groveland, CA

Memorial Weekend Family Camp, May 23–26

For a brochure, contact Brad and Janet DeBoer

at 209-577-4341 or bradandjanetdeboer@yahoo.com

CALIFORNIA—Summer Bible Camp

(Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada)

Redwood Christian Park, Boulder Creek, CA

Family/all ages, July 14–18

www.pncnopc.org/calendar/2014-presbytery-summer-bible-camp

FLORIDA—Reformed Youth Conference

(Presbytery of the South)

RYC Young Adult Retreat, May 30–June 1

Young adults (single or married), at least one year beyond high school graduation

Blue Springs Baptist Conference Center, Marianna, FL

www.lsopc.org/outreach/RYC_Retreat.htm

RYC High/Middle School Youth Camp, June 16–21

Youth entering 6th grade (or 11 by August 31) through completing 12th grade

Lakewood Retreat Center, Brooksville, FL

www.lsopc.org/ryc

MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE—Deerwander Bible Conference

(Presbytery of New York and New England)

Junior High (entering 6th–8th), August 10–14

Windsor Hills Camp, Windsor Hills, NH

Senior High (entering 9th–12th), August 16–23

Chop Point Camp, Woolwich, ME

www.deerwander.org

MICHIGAN—OPC Family Camp

(Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario)

Camp Concordia, Gowen, MI

Family/all ages, August 4–8

www.harvestopc.org (click on “Connect”)

www.facebook.com/OPCFamilyCamp

OHIO—Summer Camp

(Presbytery of Ohio)

Camp Piedmont, Piedmont, OH

Junior Camp (ages 9–12), July 14–19

Senior Camp (completed grades 7–12), July 14–19

opcOhioyouth.wordpress.com

OREGON—Family Camp

(First OPC, Portland, OR)

Camp Morrow, Wamic, OR

Family/all ages, August 20–23

www.firstopcportland.org/camp.php

PENNSYLVANIA—Conestoga Bible Conference

(OP churches in Pennsylvania and nearby states)

Promised Land Camp, Conestoga, PA
Grades 6–9, July 28–August 2
Grades 10–12, July 28–August 2
www.conestogabibleconference.org

PENNSYLVANIA—French Creek Bible Conference
(OPC affiliated)

French Creek State Park, Elverson, PA
Grades 4–6, August 11–16
Grades 7–8, August 2–9
Grades 9–10, July 21–28
Grades 11–12, July 14–21
Post-High, July 11–14
Labor Day Family, August 29–September 1
www.frenchcreek.org

SOUTH DAKOTA—OPC PCA Bible Camp

(Presbytery of the Dakotas)
Camp Judson, Keystone, SD
Grades 4–12 (completed), June 21–27
www.opc-pca-biblecamp.com

TEXAS—Summer Camp

(Presbytery of the Southwest)
Alto Frio Baptist Encampment, Leakey, TX
Youth entering grades 4–12, June 30–July 5
www.opcsouthwest.org/summer-youth-camp

VIRGINIA—Machen Retreat and Conference Center

(Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic)
Machen Retreat and Conference Center, McDowell, VA
Young Adult Conference, June 12–15
Science Camp, July 14–19
Labor Day Family Conference, August 29–September 1
machen.org

WISCONSIN—Camp Westminster

(Presbytery of the Midwest)
Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI
All members, friends, all ages, August 4–8
www.pmwopc.org/CalCamUpc.html

WOMEN'S RETREATS

For women's retreats and Bible conferences in Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, New England, and Southern California, see www.opc.org/cce/camps.html.

☆ Congratulations

The **Children's Catechism** has been recited by:
• **Jania Cooper**, *Covenant Presbyterian Church, Saint Augustine, Fla.*

ABCs of PRESBYTERIANISM

The True Vicar of Christ (1)

Larry Wilson

The Lord Jesus is our King. But how does he who is in heaven rule and teach his people who are on this earth? Roman Catholicism maintains that he does so through the Pope. They claim that he is “the Vicar of Christ” (i.e., his earthly agent or proxy). We agree that the church does need a vicar. At the same time, we protest that no man could ever come close to being up to the task.

Why does the church need a vicar? Because Jesus said that he would go away (his ascension) and that he will come again (his second coming) (John 13:33, 36; 14:1–3). But what is supposed to happen in the meantime?

When Jesus ascended to heaven, he did not stop working. He carries on his work, but now from heaven (Acts 1:1–2). He uses his church as his body—his voice, his hands, his feet—to continue his work on earth (John 14:12). But how can we possibly do that? We're too weak and foolish and sinful! That is why we need a vicar. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to meet that need.

First, he sent the Holy Spirit as a sort of *replacement* for himself (John 14:15–17). He promised the Holy Spirit as “another Helper” (paraclete). Now we have two paracletes—one in heaven, Jesus (1 John 2:1), and the other on earth, the Holy Spirit (John 14:16).

Second, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as a sort of *return* of himself (John 14:18–24; 16:16). The Holy Spirit mediates the presence and saving rule of the exalted Christ in our lives and in the church.

So when we ask, “Who is the true Vicar of Christ in this world?” our Lord Jesus answers plainly: *the Holy Spirit!* Roman Catholicism officially relies instead on the Pope, and Protestants, in practice, often rely instead on programs, papers (confessions or statements), people (compelling leaders), pyrotechnics (exciting displays), or something else. The underlying dynamic is that our sinful flesh has a deep-seated desire to walk by sight, not by faith (cf. 2 Cor. 5:7). We want to trust what we can see—that which is concrete and immediate. But by faith we look to our exalted Savior, and we rely on the Holy Spirit whom he sent as his vicar to mediate his presence and rule in this world.

● Out of the Mouth . . .

To illustrate what he had learned from Psalm 23 in Sunday school, my grandson, 5, drew a sheep with a green figure on each side of the sheep. When his teacher asked what those figures were, he replied without hesitation, “Those are the two green pastors!”

—Janet Losey
Oxnard, Calif.

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

GOD'S LAW: YOUR FRIEND OR YOUR FOE?



LARRY E. WILSON // Do you see God's law as your friend or as your foe? In an age when so much Christian teaching is saturated with moralism, at first blush it seems refreshing to see a growing trend emphasizing gospel over law. Is it truly refreshing? Or is it possibly overreacting?

Notice, in 1 Timothy 1:8–11, that verse 8 insists “that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully,” while verse 11 stresses that this is “in accordance with the gospel.” In that light, let us consider three principles.

1. God's Law Is Good.

First, God's law is good: “We know that the law is good” (v. 8). When verse 9 follows by saying “that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless,” it does not say “*the* law” in the original; rather, it just says “law.” You see, it's not talking about the whole Mosaic covenant with all its regulations. It's talking about the moral core of all those regulations; it's talking about what we call “the moral law.” Notice how verses 9 and 10 go on to more or less walk us through the Ten Commandments.

How is God's moral law good? It is good in at least two ways. On the one hand, God's law reflects his character. It shows us what the holy God is like. It reveals what is important to him. It defines righteousness. On the other hand, God's law discloses his design for us.

It shows us what we—who are made in his image—are supposed to be like. It shows us how to live most healthily, happily, and harmoniously with our created purpose.

2. God's Law Is to Be Used Rightly.

Second, 1 Timothy 1:8 says, “We know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully.” There's a lawful way to use God's law.

The Reformers agreed that there are three lawful “uses” of God's moral law. First, there is a “civil use” of God's law as a *curb* to restrain evil in society. Second, there is a “pedagogical use” of God's law as a *mirror* to convict sinners of their guilt and drive them to Christ. Third, there is a “normative use” of God's law as a *guide* to show believers how to live lives that express love for God and bring pleasure to him.

Now then, when God says that the lawful use of the law is for the lawless (v. 9), of which of these “uses” is he speaking? Surely he includes the civil use of the moral law. God's law acts as a

curb to restrain the lawless.

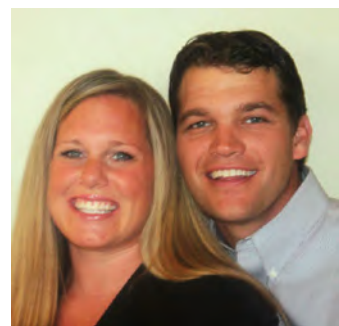
But don't these words also seem to apply to the second use? God's law acts as a mirror to convict sinners of their guilt and drive them to Christ. When the rich young ruler, for example, asked Jesus, “What must I do to have eternal life?” how did Jesus respond? Did he immediately tell him to trust him and be saved? No, he basically pointed him to the Ten Commandments. The rich young ruler needed to hear God's diagnosis before he could see the need for God's cure. He needed to grasp the bad news before he could appreciate the good news.

Moreover, these words also seem to embrace the third use. God's law serves as a guide to show believers how to live lives that are pleasing to God. The law exposes and condemns sin; it causes sinners to flee to Jesus for forgiveness. But then, after they have fled to Jesus and have found forgiveness, it trains them to follow him by putting off sin and putting on righteousness. We believers still

[Continued on page 18]

MAY

1. **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Thank the Lord for providing contacts and opportunities to share the gospel. / **Christopher and Della Chelpka**, Tucson, Ariz. Pray that the Lord would strengthen Covenant OPC and cause it to grow. / **Caleb (and Erika) Smith**, yearlong intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Ill.
2. **Christopher and Ann Malamisuro**, Cincinnati, Ohio. Pray that good contacts will be made at Good Shepherd OPC's community picnic tomorrow. / **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray that seekers will respond in faith to the message of salvation. / Pray for the **Subcommittee on Internet Ministries** as it oversees OPC.org.
3. Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Abigail Cory**. / **Chad and Katie Mullinix**, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Pray that God's Word will be honored at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church. / Pray for **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
4. **Brian and Sara Chang**, Cottonwood, Ariz. Pray that the Lord would strengthen Verde Valley Reformed Chapel and cause it to grow. / **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for Ben's ministry to students at Laval University. / Pray for **George Cottenden** as he prepares to hand over the Stated Clerk's responsibilities to **Ross Graham** in June.
5. Pray that Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** will give a vision for missions to the groups to whom he speaks. / **Jonathan and Kristin Moersch**, Capistrano Beach, Calif. Pray that Trinity Presbyterian Church will witness boldly to the community. / **Doug Watson**, staff accountant.
6. **Kent and Laurie Harding**, Doniphan, Mo. Pray for wisdom for Sovereign Grace OPC as they prepare to reach out to people in Pochontas, Ark. / Pray for the labors of Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson**. / **Shane (and Rachelle) Bennett**, yearlong intern at Knox OPC in Silver Spring, Md.
7. Missionary associates **T. D.** and **Mr. and Mrs. I.**, Asia. Pray that T. D. and Mrs. I. will be an influence for Christ on the children they teach at the international school. / Home Missions staff administrator **Sean Gregg**. / **Louis (and Lizette) Cloete**, yearlong intern at Redeemer OPC Mission in Pittsburgh, Pa.
8. Pray for regional home missionary **David Crum** as he works to support church plants in the Presbytery of Southern California. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia (on furlough). Pray that their family ties and friendships will be strengthened during their furlough. / **Donna Williams**, production manager at Great Commission Publications.
9. **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia. Pray for local pastors as they deal with the needs of their congregations. / **Joseph and Carla Fowler**, Gastonia, N.C. Pray that God would save families and bring them to worship at Reformation OPC. / *New Horizons* staff: **Pat Clawson**, editorial assistant; **Sarah Pederson**, proofreader.
10. **Jim and Tricia Stevenson**, Tulsa, Okla. Pray that the Lord would raise up officers at Providence OPC. / Tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia. Pray that qualified missionary associates will come forward, as they are urgently needed to teach at the university next year. / Army chaplains: **Jonathan (and Marion) Gibbs** and **Graham (and Carla) Harbman**.
11. Missionary associates **J. B.** and **H. L.**, Asia. Pray for spiritual growth and understanding for those attending their ladies' Bible studies that they teach. / **Joshua and Jessica Lyon**, Carson, Ca. Pray for unity and fellowship among the people of Grace OPC. / **Jim Scott**, *New Horizons* managing editor.
12. **Drew and Sonya Adcock**, Williamsport, Pa. Pray for new visitors to come to Omega OPC. / **Woody and Laurie Lauer**, Numazu, Japan. Pray that the Lord would work in the lives of unbelievers who visit Numazu Chapel. / Navy chaplains: **Tim (and Janine) Power** and **John (and Linda) Carter**.
13. **Cal and Edie Cummings**, Sendai, Japan. Pray for those assisting in the teaching ministries at Nozomi (Grace) Center. / **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, Fla. Pray that the Lord would draw new people to Naples Presbyterian Church. / **David (and Kathryn) Landow**, yearlong intern at Emmanuel OPC in Wilmington, Del.
14. Home Missions general secretary **John Shaw**. / **Kaz and Katie Yaegashi**, Yamagata, Japan. Pray for Kaz as he provides pastoral care to members of Yamagata Chapel. / Short-term missions coordinator **David Nakhla**. Pray for the many teams and individuals preparing for short-term missions projects this summer.
15. Pray for affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne** and **Linda Karner**, Japan, as they share the gospel. / **Kim and Barbara Kuhfuss**, Eau Claire, Wis. Pray that those visiting Providence Reformed Church will pursue membership. / **Alan Strange**, chairman of the Psalter-Hymnal Committee.



Joshua and Jessica Lyon

- 16. Todd and Julie Wagenmaker**, St. Louis, Mo. Pray that the Lord would add new families to Gateway OPC. / Missionary associates **Amanda McCrina**, Sendai, Japan, and **Leah Hopp** and **Jesse Van Gorkom**, Nakaale, Uganda. / **Tony (and Mica) Garbarino**, yearlong intern at Covenant Presbyterian Church in San Jose, Calif.
- 17. Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa. Pray for students at Mukhanyo Theological College preparing for exams and graduation. / **Mark and Michele Winder**, Collierville, Tenn. Pray for the developing ministry at Wolf River Presbyterian Church. / **Andrew (and Elizabeth) Barshinger**, yearlong intern at Faith OPC in Elmer, N.J.
- 18. Mika and Christina Edmondson**, Grand Rapids, Mich. Pray that God's elect will be brought to New City Fellowship. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda (on furlough). Pray for balance in scheduling travel and rest times. / **David (and Amanda) Franks**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Orland Park, Ill.
- 19.** Thank the Lord with missionary associates **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda, for the safe arrival of their first child (Carmel Ariadne) in March. / **Ben and Sarah Miller**, Huntington, N.Y. Pray for Trinity Church's outreach to the unchurched and underchurched. / Pray for **the students and instructors of MTIOPC** during this Intensive Training session at Grace OPC in Vienna, Va., this week.
- 20. Everett and Kimberly Henes**, Hillsdale, Mich. Pray that Pastor Henes's weekly newspaper articles will bring visitors to Hillsdale OPC. / **Al and Laurie Tricarico**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for men being trained to teach the Scriptures. / Pray for **Danny Olinger**, Christian Education general secretary, serving as MTIOPC director.
- 21.** Missionary associates **Erika Bulthuis**, **Taryn Dieckman**, and **James Durham**, Nakaale, Uganda. / **Jonathan and Lauryn Shishko**, Queens, N.Y. Pray that the Lord would provide a building for weekly use for Reformation Presbyterian Church. / **Thomas (and Erin) Tkach**, yearlong intern at Calvary OPC in Glenside, Pa.
- 22. Ken and Cressid Golden**, Davenport, Iowa. Pray that God would give the people of Sovereign Grace OPC a passion for the lost. / **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that the work-for-food farm will minister to the diaconal needs of the Karimojong. / **Jeffrey (and Jennifer) Shames**, yearlong intern at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Mich.
- 23. John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. (downtown). Pray that more people will attend Gospel Life Presbyterian



Chris and Chloe Verdick

- Church's outreach Bible studies. / **Mark and Christine Weber**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray that they will have wisdom in using time and resources to advance God's kingdom. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund administrator.
- 24.** Home Missions associate general secretary **Dick Gerber**. / **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray that the Lord would raise up elders and deacons for the church in Mbale. / Committee on Coordination staff: **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the director of finance; **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
- 25. James and Jenny Knox**, M.D. and R.N., Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the work and workers at the clinic. / **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray that San Antonio Reformed Church will make good use of its new worship facility to reach out to college students. / **Kevin (and Marianne) Olivier**, yearlong intern at Pineville OPC in Pineville, La.
- 26. Brandon and Laurie Wilkins**, Crystal Lake, Ill. Pray for Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church's discipleship and ministry. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **M. W.**, Asia, and **Morgan Adams** and **Hailey Adams**, Mbale, Uganda. / **Jeremy Logan**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Mansfield, Ohio.
- 27.** Pray that retired missionaries **Betty Andrews**, **Greet Rietkerk**, **Young and Mary Lou Son**, and **Fumi Uomoto** will be an encouragement to their families and caregivers. / **Daniel and Jill McManigal**, Seattle, Wash. Praise God for the growing number of members and visitors at Hope OPC. / **Micah Shin**, yearlong intern at Cedar Presbyterian Church in Hudsonville, Mich.
- 28. Phil Strong**, Lander, Wyo. Pray that members of Grace Reformed Fellowship will continue to grow in their love for the lost. / Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Czech Republic. Pray that more children will attend Sunday school and hear of Christ. / **Josh (and Kristen) McKamy**, yearlong intern at New Life OPC in Montoursville, Pa.
- 29.** Pray for a bold witness as missionary associate **Mary York**, Czech Republic, interacts with friends and contacts. / **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray that Keys Presbyterian Church's experience of peace as a church will continue to grow. / **Steven (and Sarah) Moulson**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.
- 30. Tim and Joanne Beauchamp**, Bridgton, Maine. Pray for continued growth at Pleasant Mountain Presbyterian Church and for mercy ministry opportunities. / **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for those desiring to join the church through profession of faith and baptism. / **Broc (and Morgan) Seaman**, yearlong intern at Providence OPC in Temecula, Calif.
- 31.** Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray for the work of evangelism in their community. / **Sacha and Martina Walicord**, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Pray that the people of Knox Presbyterian Church will grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. / **Yevgeni Koh**, yearlong intern at Bonita OPC in Bonita, Calif.

ALL OUR HEART, ALL OUR SOUL, ALL OUR MIGHT

// DAVID J. ROBBINS

We serve a great and majestic God, a God worthy of the tribute he commands. But as you know, there's quite a difference between fulfilling a requirement and liking it.

Moses certainly knew this. In his great "farewell sermon" to the people of Israel, wandering on foot and in heart, he pressed them both to keep the law of God and to desire the God of the law: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut. 6:4-5). When our Lord was tested by his adversaries, he summarized the law, and with it the full scope of his personal obedience, by pointing to this text (see Matt. 22:34-40). Our obedience begins in the affections because, as Paul explains, love is the fulfillment of the law (Rom. 13:8-10). Pure love for God is the vital motivation and the only means by which our duty may be done.

So that we might love our God, we must concentrate on his love for us. God is love (1 John 4:16)! Three times Moses exalts God as *the LORD* (YHWH): his glorious name-in-relation, the covenantal name that declares his enduring love and affection for us. He is *God*, the Creator and Ruler of all things, but he is not simply God—he is *our* God. Without this revelation, what fool would have the audacity to claim the Lord of the universe for himself? But God himself has said it, as a joyful groom swearing love to his bride: I am yours. And God is *one*: that is, one in essence (though three in person) and as such unique unto himself—an absolute, independent, triune Being, whose love is not conditioned by our failures or successes of obedience.

Such love is incomparable. We don't

deserve it. And this love is in Jesus, who was given to us out of the infinite, ever-replenishing fullness of divine love. While we were still sinners, enemies of God, Christ died to make us his friends. There could be no greater love.

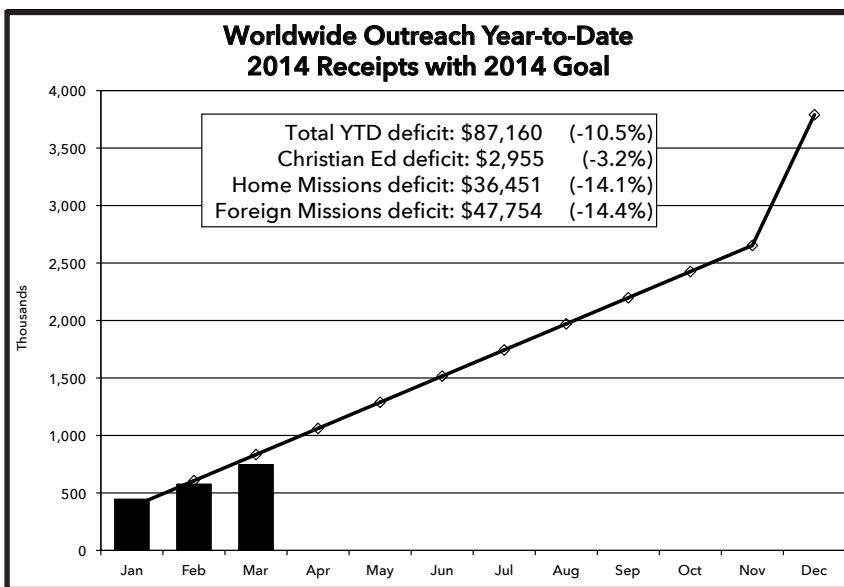
What must we do? Hear, O church! In awe of such grace, would you measure your affection? Such love is yours: can you prefer any other to your God? Love must answer to love: we begin to love him, the source and unceasing fountain of all good, because he first loved us (1 John 4:19).

Our love must be like his. He sweetly calls us to forsake all others, to love him with such intensity of focus and sincerity of interest that all other loves are but silhouettes before the radiant Object of our desire. *All* our heart, *all* our soul, *all* our might: nothing left over, a consuming exclusivity—this is the demand of divine love, with all the inward depths of desire, of life, and of will channeled into the pursuit and wondering discovery of the God who is love.

This is true stewardship. Our whole life, every faculty of soul and body, must be ordered and directed into the love of God. Nothing can remain unaltered: time, relationships, resources, goals—all must conform to the greater aim of love. We present our tithes and offerings to the Lord, yet they are not enough: with them, we must give our very lives.

Your God is worthy to receive such sacrifices: he is love, unending, ever flowing. To obey him with love is no hardship, because we give ourselves to one who is altogether lovely. Hear, O church! Love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your might!

The author is the pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Huntington, W.Va.



A NEW START IN CINCINNATI

// RICHARD R. GERBER

Good Shepherd OPC is a new mission work in Cincinnati, Ohio. But it is not a new congregation. It was started in the late 1970s by a sister denomination. After flourishing for a while, a series of struggles led to hard times.

A remnant of twenty-five people turned to the OPC's Presbytery of Ohio in 2012 for help in reestablishing the congregation. Regional home missionary Larry Oldaker, experienced pastor and church planter Robert Y. Eckardt, and others provided counsel and assistance to the group.

In August 2013, the presbytery received Good Shepherd OPC. Since the congregation owned a wonderful building, it was received as an organized congregation with the understanding that it would receive mission support.

As the church was received, Rev. Chris Malamisuro was installed as pastor. He grew up in a Christian home. Early in his life, he sensed God calling him to be a pastor. The pastor of his church, his uncle, tested that call by giving him opportunities to serve and develop gifts for pastoral ministry.

Chris was in his thirties when he learned of the Reformed faith through the ministry of R.C. Sproul. Then he attended Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh.

The ministry of Good Shepherd OPC is being focused in two directions. Christ's sheep are being cared for through morning and evening worship, a Wednesday-night prayer time, a women's Bible study, and a men's Bible study.

There is also a focus on outreach. Several new men are coming to the men's Bible study. A Christmas Eve service was used for outreach. The congregation participated in the Angel Tree Project, providing gifts for families of incarcerated men.

Four large outreach events are planned for 2014. Vacation Bible school is one. David Haney, director of finance and planned giving for the OPC, will be giving a financial seminar in September. A harvest party and Christmas outreach are also being planned for later this year.



Pastor Chris Malamisuro (facing the camera) of Good Shepherd OPC in Cincinnati, Ohio, talking with a few of the people in the mission work

People at Good Shepherd OPC have interacted a lot with neighbors, friends, and acquaintances, inviting them to church events and worship. So far, the response has been disappointing. Please pray for positive fruit from these invitations.

God has been adding new people to Good Shepherd OPC. A family with longtime OPC ties became part of the church. Another family attended worship for the first time on Chris's first Sunday and has stayed. Morning worship attendance is now in the mid to upper forties.

Please pray that many children will attend VBS and that the contacts made with their families will bear fruit.

Please pray for the Malamisuro family. They have been living in an apartment, and are now house hunting. Pray that the Lord will provide a house well suited to hospitality. Pray that the Lord would guard Chris, Ann, and their three children as they face the turmoil and trials of life.

A RICH HERITAGE

Richard R. Gerber

Every church, like every family, has its own unique origin. In the case of Heritage Presbyterian Church, it began as a combination of a number of families from very different backgrounds. Some were involved in a canola business, some were employed at a local Christian college, and others were affiliated with the University of Georgia. What they all had in common, however, was their love for the Lord Jesus Christ and their desire to see a Reformed witness in Northeast Georgia.

Since there was no Presbyterian and Reformed church in the area, some families were driving in very different

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org.
New editions: May 7, 21.

directions, and often great distances, to participate in worship. A few households were affiliated with Covenant Community OPC in Taylors, South Carolina, where they learned of the OPC's zeal to plant new churches. In God's providence, the idea of starting a work in the Royston, Georgia, area gained traction after some interaction with DeLacy Andrews, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southeast. He soon traveled to Royston and held some informational meetings with the interested families. The first worship service of Heritage was held in April 2011. For the next two and a half years, they were led in worship by a variety of ministers and students, most of whom came from Greenville Seminary. Heritage's organizing pastor, Mike Myers, first became acquainted with the work while he was a student there.

In the spring of 2013, the overseeing session and the pulpit committee of Heritage invited Mike to serve the congregation as an intern, with the possibility of a call in view. He accepted, and the Myers family moved to Royston to begin full-time work. By the end of the year, he was called, examined, ordained, and installed to serve as an evangelist and lead the continued development of the mission work.

Heritage has begun meeting for worship in Hartwell, Georgia. On most Sundays, there are about sixty people in morning and evening worship from twelve households. The Lord has blessed these families with many children—and a number of the families are currently expecting babies!

Northeast Georgia is a rural area filled with a Christianity marked by fundamentalism and mysticism. As the members of Heritage Church reach out, they often encounter people with lots of religious baggage. There are also many poor and elderly people. Nevertheless, Heritage is convinced that the power of the gospel and also the Reformed faith's wholistic approach to life will bear much fruit in due season.

In seeking to be a Christ-exalting and gospel-centered church, Heritage has four goals:

- to maintain purity and zeal in worship,
- to foster personal communion with God,

- to seek the perfection of the saints, and
- to pursue the lost.

Pastor Mike Myers describes the Heritage congregation as a faithful and humble group of people. They have joyfully received his ministry despite the fact that he is the youngest adult male in the church. As a young pastor, Mike is especially thankful for the friendship and mentoring of experienced OP pastors Scott Willet and Peter Van Doodewaard.

Mike arrived at Heritage with varied ministry experience. He served at the Boardwalk Chapel, an OPC evangelistic ministry in Wildwood, New Jersey, in both 2006 and 2009. He also interned with Pastor Dick Ellis at Faith OPC in Elmer, New Jersey. His time at both places impacted him tremendously. He learned how to interact with people, and he grew in his ability to meet individuals and talk with them as the image bearers they are. His compassion for the lost grew, as did his love for the church. Both experiences helped tremendously to clarify his call to ministry.

He is also a chaplain in the South Carolina Army National Guard. He usually sees his soldiers once a month. His work includes leading worship services, evangelism, counseling, and many other things. On the occasions when he needs to be away from Sunday worship at Heritage, Greenville students are often given an opportunity to exercise their gifts.

Mike is a former college athlete who now enjoys ultimate frisbee as his competitive release. Katy, his wife of nearly six years, is a physical therapist assistant, who loves to show hospitality. They have two young boys, Nate and Zach, with a third child due in May.

Please pray for Heritage Presbyterian Church and the Myers family. Mike asks especially that the Lord would continue to teach him to be a faithful minister and keep him laboring in dependence on Christ. Pray that Heritage would be zealous for evangelism and that the Lord would open a door for the gospel to go forth freely in the region. Pray that the Lord would give the church local ruling elders and that finances would be sufficient for the needs of the ministry.



The congregation of Heritage Presbyterian Church in Hartwell, Ga.; Pastor Mike Myers, second from right

GOD'S LAW: FRIEND OR FOE?

[Continued from page 12]

need God's law because our remaining sin makes us prone to lawlessness.

The Heidelberg Catechism (#115) asks:

No one in this life can obey the Ten Commandments perfectly: why then does God want them preached so pointedly?

And then it gives this answer:

First, so that the longer we live the more we may come to know our sinfulness and the more eagerly look to Christ for forgiveness of sins and righteousness.

Second, so that, while praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, we may never stop striving to be renewed more and more after God's image, until after this life we reach our goal: perfection.

3. When Used Rightly, God's Law Accords with His Gospel.

Third, the right use of God's law harmonizes with the gospel: "The law is good, if one uses it lawfully ... in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God" (vv. 9, 11). When we lawfully use God's law, it does not oppose the gospel; it accords with the gospel. God's law and God's gospel are not enemies; they are allies. Jerram Barrs explains why it is a pressing need for us to recover this fact for our day:

We may be sure that where the law is not deeply taught and loved, there will be little appreciation of Christ and for his work; and there will be little transformation of life and genuine discipleship. It is only as we see the righteousness that characterizes God and that he desires in us, only as we understand the full requirements of the law, that we will be deeply convicted of sin and see our need of Christ's love. The truth is that we need to delight in the law in our

inmost being and to teach this delight to others. Only this love for the law will bring utter dependence on Christ and on his grace for both our justification and our sanctification. (*Delighting in the Law of the Lord*, pp. 181–82)

All the while that you seek to obey God's laws and live the Christian life, keep remembering "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God." Keep looking to Jesus. Look back to his finished work, which has secured your free and full salvation. Look forward to his coming work, when he returns to complete and perfect your salvation. And, in the meantime, look up to his present, ongoing work by his Holy Spirit. He is sanctifying you—training you to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live a self-controlled, upright, and godly life in this present age (Titus 2:11–14).

God and His Law as Your Friend

Richard Gaffin offers a helpful explanation of the relation of God's law to the life of a believer:

Apart from the gospel and outside of Christ, the law is my enemy and condemns me. Why? Because *God* is my enemy and condemns me. But with the gospel and in Christ, united to him by faith, the law is no longer my enemy but my friend. Why? Because now *God* is no longer my enemy but my friend, and the law, *his* will—the law in its moral core, as reflective of his character and of concerns eternally inherent in his own person and so of what pleases him—is now my friendly guide for life in fellowship with God. (*By Faith, Not by Sight*, second edition, pp. 117–18)

Did you catch that? If God is your enemy, then his law is your enemy and it condemns you. But if God is your friend, then his law is your friend and it guides you.

You can't call God's law your friend unless you can call God your friend. So how do you become God's friend? Because of God's grace alone, by Jesus

Christ alone, received through faith alone. If you follow Jesus in faith, then God is reconciled to you and you to him. God becomes your friend.

From then on, God's law is your friend. Why? Only because of Jesus Christ's merits and mediation. Jesus has fulfilled all the law's demands for you. Jesus has satisfied all the law's curses for you. He reconciles you to God. And he energizes and transforms you by his Holy Spirit. He makes you to become more and more like God. And the law is one of the tools he uses. That's why the law is a friendly guide to you as a believer.

Example: A Habitual Thief

A habitual thief was converted. But the sixth commandment—"You shall not steal"—kept haunting him. Stealing had become such a deeply ingrained habit for him that he constantly had to struggle not to fall back into his old way of life. And the commandment kept condemning his impulses to return to that life: "You shall *not* steal." It drove him to despair.

But one day, the sixth commandment struck him in a fresh way. He realized that—since he was now a redeemed child of God, with the Holy Spirit indwelling him—the commandment was no longer just a prohibition to him. It was at the same time a description of what the Lord was graciously causing him to become. It began to strike him as a promise: thanks to the grace of God in Christ, "you *shall* not steal."

Is that how you see God's law? God is so determined to restore you to his image that he causes all things to work together to that good end (Rom. 8:28–29). He has given you his law to guide you toward that good end. When you are sure that *God* is your friend by his grace in Jesus Christ, then you can also be sure that *God's law* is your friend by his grace in Jesus Christ. "The law is good, if one uses it lawfully." □

The author is the pastor of Redeemer OPC in Airdrie, Alberta, Canada.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

UPDATE

CHURCHES

• The Presbytery of New Jersey has dissolved the congregation of **Cherry Hill OPC** in Cherry Hill, N.J., effective March 23.

MINISTERS

• The Presbytery of New Jersey has dissolved the pastoral relationship between **Neil J. Lodge** and Cherry Hill OPC in Cherry Hill, N.J., effective March 23, 2014.

• **Samuel Rodriguez**, formerly pastor of Mt. Carmel Church (OPC) in Somerset, N.J., was received by North Texas Presbytery of the PCA on February 8; he is now serving as pastor of First Reformed Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Minco, Okla.

MILESTONES

• Former OP pastor **Richard M. Craven**, 59, died of cancer on March 6.

• **Nancy Brienza McClymonds**, 50, the wife of OP minister Timothy L. McClymonds, died of cancer on March 6.

LETTERS

WHICH PSALMS SHALL WE SING?

Editor:

I greatly appreciate the perspective Rev. Poundstone provides on the history of psalmody in the OPC (March, p. 7). He clearly states the core issue, declaring that it “has not been proved” that God commands the church to sing all 150 psalms.

However, Christ commands his church through the apostle Paul to sing “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Of the Greek term rendered “psalms,” Thayer (1889) says that the “plural [refers to] the (book of) Psalms,” i.e., “the book of the O. T. which

is entitled *psalmoi*.” There is no compelling reason to see “psalms” in Ephesians or Colossians as anything but the Old Testament Psalter. In context, these commands reference the entire Psalter. They do not restrict our singing only to “Christian” psalms. Having first understood the biblical imperative to use all of the psalms, we can then begin to discuss the hermeneutic that we should apply as we sing them (as Rev. Wallace most helpfully does in his article, p. 5).

Stephen Lauer
Lynnwood, WA

Editor:

I write in response to the article by Donald M. Poundstone in the March issue of *New Horizons*. He makes statements that reflect upon the book of Psalms. He writes, for example, on page 8, “The so-called imprecatory psalms, however—like a broken website for a government spending program—are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to problems for Christians in the Psalter.” I shudder at the simile that compares a portion of God’s Word with anything that is “broken,” especially when our Lord says, “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). Equally problematic is the suggestion that Christians “have problems” with the Psalter. There may be problems with interpretation, but not with the Psalter. “Let God be true, though every man were a liar” (Rom. 3:4).

Mr. Poundstone appears to be saying that certain portions of the Psalter, though inspired, are not profitable for believers today. But Paul affirms, “*All Scripture* is inspired by God and *is profitable* for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruc-

tion in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, *thoroughly* equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16–17). If we are not to sing certain portions of the Psalter, are we also discouraged from reading them, and are they to be omitted from a minister’s obligation to declare the whole counsel of God?

Finally, where is the divine guidance to show us which psalms are inappropriate for the Christian? There is no word from God that erases the divine sanction from any portion of the Psalter. Instead we are told that we are to live “by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4).

Brian Wingard
Pretoria, South Africa

Editor:

In response to Mr. Poundstone calling the proposed Psalter-Hymnal “radical” and “revolutionary,” didn’t our General Assembly back in 1985 request that all 150 psalms be included in the revised *Trinity Hymnal*? After twenty-nine years and numerous votes sustaining that opinion, how radical can it be?

Jason Wallace
Salt Lake City, UT

Editorial comment: GA Minutes, 1985, p. 12 (Journal, §58): “On motion the Assembly requested the Committee on Christian Education to inform the Hymnal Revision Planning Committee that the General Assembly desires that the 150 inspired Psalms in some form for singing be included in the revision of *Trinity Hymnal*.”

Editor:

Your treatment of the Psalms in worship and the Psalter-Hymnal Project (in the March issue) both refreshed my soul and better acquainted me with the surprisingly wide range of opinion within the Orthodox Presbyterian Church on the value of psalmody. Thank you!

Whatever becomes of the Psalter-Hymnal Project, may we commit

Correction

The caption for the photo at the top of page 11 of the April issue should have identified the man at the left as Dr. Hughes Oliphant Old.

ourselves to becoming better acquainted with all 150 psalms as “the word of Christ” (Col. 3:16). The Psalter is a complete quiver of select arrows. Through the ages, it has furnished the church with the means to meet the avowed enemies of the gospel. How would the church know how to lament and combat the present rebellion, if the Lord did not teach us in his Psalms? When our Lord warned the Pharisees, when Peter warned Simon of Samaria, and when Paul warned the fail-

ing Galatians, each used hard words, as we find in the Psalms, to promote, if they might, the gracious work of repentance and restoration!

Twenty-first century Amalekites shape our culture today, and they know how to employ music. The church needs to sing from the heart all of the psalms for a robust, full-orbed Christianity, perhaps now more than ever.

Jonathan B. Leach
San Antonio, TX

PSALTER-HYMNAL UPDATE

Acting upon the feedback of individuals and churches in both the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the United Reformed Churches in North America to the “First Reading” psalms list, the OPC and URCNA Psalter-Hymnal committees met at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Illinois, on March 5–6, 2014. The committees agreed to a “Second Reading” psalms list to be presented to the Eighty-first (2014) General Assembly of the OPC and Synod 2014 of the URCNA for approval. Changes were often based upon improving English poetry and correcting inflection issues.

The committees also agreed to arrange the Psalter according to psalm number, beginning with the complete text(s) of a psalm, followed by any partial text(s), followed by paraphrased versions. A hymn that is clearly based on a psalm will be identified as such in the hymn section. Pronouns referring to the Deity will be capitalized for the sake of clarity. The beginning of new lines will not be capitalized unless a new sentence begins there. Regarding the usage of gender-specific language in the psalms, the text of the English Standard Version will be followed. The name “Jehovah” and archaic language in psalms and hymns that are considered classics will be unchanged.



Orthodox Presbyterian (OP) and United Reformed (UR) committee members: seated: presidents Alan Strange (OP) and Derrick Vander Meulen (UR); standing in front: Danny Olinger (OP), Brian Cochran (UR), Darryl Hart (OP), Randal Lankheet (UR), Lou Ann Shafer (OP), Denise Marcusse (UR); standing in back: Harry Zekveld (UR), Joel Pearce (UR), Christopher Folkerts (UR), David Buursma (UR), Timothy Shafer (OP), Stephen Pribble (OP) with his wife Norma, Angeline Vanderboom (UR)

EXTRAVAGANT GRACE

Editor:

Barbara Duguid’s widely praised book, *Extravagant Grace: God’s Glory Displayed in Your Weakness* (reviewed February, p. 23), deserves further comment.

Duguid addresses what she calls “the myth of the victorious Christian life” (p. 18). Duguid wisely turns to John Newton and Reformed confessions as her guides; however, her own writing does not reflect the deliberate balance of these authors when they discuss God’s sovereignty and human responsibility.

In contrast, Duguid’s book contains comments such as “If God wanted me to change, I would” (p. 30), and, as the reviewer notes, the idea that a believer is free “not to grow at all.” Duguid consistently sets up a false dichotomy between human effort and full dependence upon God for sanctification. In all these ways, she departs from clear biblical teaching.

God’s grace goes beyond working all things—including our sin—for good. His grace is so amazing that by Christ’s resurrection power he actually changes us. It sells the Holy Spirit short to expect anything less. My concern is not that Duguid’s description of God’s grace is too extravagant, but that it is not extravagant enough.

Emily Van Dixhoorn
Vienna, VA

REVIEWS

Christian Guides to the Classics, a series written by Leland Ryken. Crossway, 2013–. Each book: paperback, 96–128 pages, list price \$5.99. Reviewed by OP member Anne Shaw.

Christian Guides to the Classics: the title of this series says it all. Each book in the series is written by Leland Ryken, a much-respected name in Christian scholarship. In these guides, Ryken provides a rigorous academic understanding of classic works of literature and situates them clearly and compellingly in a vibrant Christian worldview.

Each guide begins with three one-page essays: “The Nature and Function

of Literature,” “Why Classics Matter,” and “How to Read a Story.” A two-page summary follows these and offers pertinent details of “The Book at a Glance.” A fourth essay, entitled “The Author and His Faith,” deals with each author’s Christian faith (or lack thereof) and worldview.

The bulk of each guide consists of plot summaries for each scene or chapter, commentaries, and questions for reflection and discussion. Notes in the sidebar offer explanations or translations of obscure passages into modern language, as well as further insight from history and culture, and ties to other works of literature and the Bible. Each guide concludes with a list of further resources, a glossary of literary terms used in the guide itself, and, in some cases, commentary from other literary critics about the work under scrutiny.

The commentary sections and notes in the sidebar give these guides the flavor of sitting in a college classroom listening to a knowledgeable, passionate, clear-thinking professor who knows how to communicate that knowledge, passion, and thinking to those of us with less experience in the literary realm. They allow us to comprehend more deeply what these works are about, not simply on the level of “who, what, where, and when,” but deeper: into the “why.” Why did the characters do and say what they did and said? Why did the author write it that way? Why should we care?

As an English teacher, literature buff, and Christian parent, I would highly recommend these guides for high school students, homeschoolers, and anyone who wants to delve more deeply into the complexities of great works of literature and explore how a Christian worldview—held by the author, the reader, or both—profoundly affects our understanding of those works. Unless you have taught university-level literature classes for over forty years (as Ryken has), you will undoubtedly learn something from these guides.

The way Ryken weaves the ideas and thought processes of a Christian worldview throughout the guides sets this series apart from other guides to the classics. If one simply wants to pass the test, SparkNotes or CliffsNotes might do just as well. If one wishes to truly know and

appreciate a piece of literature, Christian Guides to the Classics is the series in which to invest.

The titles in the series so far are: *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, *The Odyssey*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Great Expectations*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Paradise Lost*, and *The Devotional Poetry of Donne, Herbert, and Milton*.

***Gospel Treason: Betraying the Gospel with Hidden Idols*, by Brad Bigney. P&R, 2012. Paperback, 248 pages, list price \$14.99. Reviewed by OP minister Cornelius Tolsma.**

Brad Bigney wants this book to “help you identify and destroy the idols that keep you enslaved to certain sins in your life, sins that keep you from experiencing gospel joy and freedom.” He defines idolatry as “anything or anyone that begins to capture our hearts, minds, and affections more than God.”

Analyzing the problem, he writes that idolatry removes the gospel from the center of life and dramatically affects how Christians live and glorify God. He emphasizes that relationships are disrupted, and that personal satisfaction is lost. He illustrates his points by sharing accounts of idolatry’s destructive power in his own marriage and the lives of others.

For a solution, he details the character of the sinful heart and the godly measures needed to guide and guard the heart. He offers ways of identifying one’s idols and encourages repentance that recognizes that sin’s power and penalty have been broken while “the presence of sin still remains.”

Finally, he writes of “getting excited about what will happen as a result of identifying and repenting of the idols of your heart, and what changes you can expect in your life.” These changes are a new sense of freedom and gratitude, while recognizing the sin in your life and your ability to forsake it. He insists that “you’ll have a lifestyle of love” with a soaring “passion and love for God.”

I wish Bigney had spent more time

outlining this lifestyle of love. It is the biblical alternative to self-serving idolatry, especially when finding one’s joy and freedom in a life of humble obedience to the will of God.

Is Bigney justified in identifying “idols of the heart” as those things that capture hearts more than God? He refers to Ezekiel 14:3, where the prophet speaks of men setting up idols in their hearts. But Ezekiel is condemning the unregenerate heart’s compulsion to make carved images and give them the worship belonging to God (cf. 16:17). Contra Bigney, Calvin

too has carved images in mind when describing “man’s nature” as a “perpetual factory of idols” (Institutes, I.11.8).

However, Bigney’s definition rings true. Biblical descriptions of idolatry include making personal might a god (Hab. 1:11), Paul calling covetousness “idolatry” (Eph. 5:5), and Jesus’ warning: “You cannot serve God and money” (Matt. 6:24). Indeed, setting something in God’s place characterizes all sin.

Christians struggling with sin, especially those in troubled relationships, should find this user-friendly book helpful. Here see your sin as idolatry before God, and find encouragement to be humbled before him with true repentance, turning from idolatry to live a God-glorifying life true to the gospel of Christ’s self-sacrificing love.

***The Message of the Person of Christ*, by Robert Letham. IVP Academic, 2013. Paperback, 264 pages, list price \$20.00. Reviewed by OP pastor David Graves.**

Robert Letham’s *The Message of the Person of Christ* is part of the Bible Speaks Today series from InterVarsity Press. Letham’s subject matter is the Christ, not the second person of the Trinity as such. While some may see this as a distinction without a difference, the point is that Letham traces the Bible’s teachings on the mediator of redemption, not on the ontology of the second person of the Trinity. He assumes the divinity of Christ and



wholeheartedly confesses it, but that is not his focus in this book.

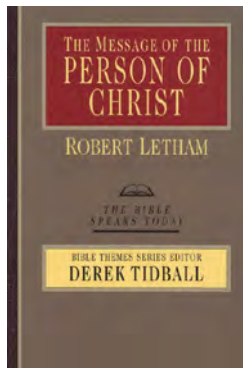
Letham's three-page introduction needs to be slowly read and savored as he sets forth an

interpretive method in which belief is the starting point for reading the Bible. Such an approach is refreshing amidst the morass of critical works that seek to undermine the trustworthiness of Scripture and then try to resurrect a kernel of truth from "the abundance of chaff" in Scripture. As Letham persuasively argues:

Sadly, this obtuse refusal to see how the Bible speaks of Christ includes some who are known as evangelical. I have come to sympathize with David Steinmetz's suggestion that, in general and apart from technical matters, medieval and early modern exegesis is superior to that of the post-Enlightenment period. (p. 23)

To employ this methodology, Letham divides the book into five sections: "Christ promised," "Christ incarnate," "Christ crucified," "Christ risen," and "Christ ascended." Letham has several chapters in each section that interpret representative Scripture passages related to the theme of the section. For example, the six chapters of "Christ promised" examine Genesis 3:15; Genesis 12:1-3; 2 Samuel 7 and Psalm 110; Isaiah 7:14-17, 9:6-7, 11:1-5, and Micah 5:2-5; Isaiah 41-50; and Isaiah 52:13-53:12. Each chapter contains a theologically informed exegesis relating the passage to the progress of redemption. He also deals with the critics of each passage's messianic import. An added bonus is that each chapter is short enough to be read in one sitting in a devotional manner.

There is also an appendix in which Letham examines the ecumenical councils from Nicaea (A.D. 325) to Constantinople (553). This brief retelling of the events that surrounded the early councils provides insight into the various misunderstandings



that necessitated further refinement and discussion, so that the church would have a better understanding of what the Bible teaches about the Trinity in general and the nature of the Incarnation in particular.

Letham has served the church well by assembling the various texts of Scripture, and by approaching them in faith he has gone a long way toward showing forth the inestimable greatness of our Savior. This book would serve those who are new to the faith as well as the mature in furthering their knowledge of the Redeemer.

Justification by Grace through Faith: Finding Freedom from Legalism, Lawlessness, Pride, and Despair, by Brian Vickers. P&R Publishing, 2013. Paperback, 240 pages, list price \$17.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Jonathan Hutchison.

Since this book is in a series named Explorations in Biblical Theology, I was anticipating a treatment of justification related to its unfolding revelation in Scripture. Equally promising was the statement that each book in the series seeks to be solidly Reformed (p. ix). Happily, the book is Reformed; disappointingly, it does not advance very far with biblical theology. Instead, the book is more a summary of the

Reformed doctrine of justification based on the exposition of several biblical passages and themes—an exploration of theology that is biblical. To be fair, the author reads those passages and themes in the context of Scripture as a whole, but this does not take him much further than the Old Testament as leading to Christ and Christ as the second and last Adam.

This is especially frustrating since the book's stated goal is "to trace the basic contours of justification in the Bible from Adam to Abraham, through Israel, and into the New Testament" (p. 4). Although the author acknowledges "pre-redemptive Eschatology" (p. 13), he does not attempt to define justification in its light. Accordingly, the author does not take full advantage of his own intention—never consid-

ering, for example, that Adam before the fall lived not only in the hope of eternal life, but also in the hope of the judgment through which one enters into that life, namely justification.

Similarly disappointing is chapter 5 on the giving of the law to Israel. Here the author considers only the relationship of the law to Israel as fallen in Adam, but never to Israel as a type of the one to come. Perhaps this is why the author has almost nothing to say about the exile. Chapter 6 defines the righteousness of God and the relationship of justification to union with Christ. The author's limiting of that union to its forensic aspect (p. 134) is not the understanding of our standards (see LC 69), and it results in a torturous explanation of 1 Corinthians 1:30 (pp. 137-39). However, his argument against Romans 2:13 being hypothetical is persuasive (pp. 154-58), and his conclusion that our justification in the present is the same justification that will be declared publicly in the future at the resurrection and judgment (p. 158) had me cheering.

Strangely, the author cautions against the use of certain words and phrases, specifically "probation" (p. 15), "the active and passive obedience of Christ" (p. 39), and "mere" (pp. 81-82), on account of popular misunderstanding. Why that does not lead him to object to the use of other popularly misunderstood words, such as "imputation," remains a mystery.

As a summary of certain biblical passages and themes central to the Reformed doctrine of justification, this book is commendable. As a biblical-theological perspective on justification, a better book waits to be written.

Journeys of Faith: Evangelicalism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Anglicanism, edited by Robert L. Plummer. Zondervan, 2012. Paperback, 256 pages, list price \$18.99. Reviewed by OP elder D. G. Hart.

For much of recent church history, evan-





Short-Term Missions Opportunities

Have you visited the OPC's Short-Term Missions (STM) website lately? We hope that recent enhancements to www.opcstm.org will help you better navigate the site, discover opportunities for short-term service at home and abroad, learn more about STMs in general, and explore fields that are of particular interest to you!

gelical Protestantism was the religious home for people who desired a more biblical and committed expression of Christianity. In recent years, however, especially during the papacy of John Paul II and the debates over sexuality, the traffic between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism has been two-way. In fact, owing partly to the way that evangelicalism became a wing of the Republican Party, some evangelicals searched for ecclesiastical homes where worship and tradition pointed to a faith that transcended election cycles. This book takes the pulse of recent converts who have left evangelicalism for Anglicanism, Roman Catholicism, and Eastern Orthodoxy; it also includes a former Roman Catholic who became evangelical, along with responses from critics. For anyone wanting to understand the appeal of churches outside the evangelical world, this book will be useful. It will also, however, be frustrating to Presbyterians who understand that evangelicalism is not the best representation of Protestantism.

Two matters of major significance emerge from the accounts of those who left evangelicalism for other traditions: worship and history. At least two of the departed found evangelical worship to be particularly weak and the sacraments neglected. For another convert, Roman Catholicism represented a history of Christian reflection that evangelicalism could not match—a history, by the way, according to Francis Beckwith, that even the Reformation could not displace. Without minimizing these concerns, they do not address a more profound question, namely, what does God require?—a query that involves where God has revealed himself

and whether human beings are capable of doing what God requires. Of course, God's special revelation (*sola Scriptura*) and how to be right with God (justification by faith alone) were at the heart of the Reformation.

As it turns out, these are the truths that were crucial to the convert (Chris Castaldo) who became evangelical. He became convinced that Rome's understanding of the church could not be sustained by biblical teaching. "It's not an Infallible Church that God gives us; it's the infallible Word of God" (p. 151). Castaldo also discovered "a nagging fear" that he could not find true forgiveness (p. 160). The Roman Catholic experience is "salvation on probation"—a "feeling that a person is secure in his or her relationship with God so long as one is good in the eyes of the Church" (p. 162).

This book's disappointing aspect is that many professed Christians do not find the questions of revelation and salvation as important as Castaldo does. To be sure, conservative Protestants (whether confessional or evangelical) will not be able to match the beauty or history of other Christian communions. But in the larger scheme of God's dealings with sinners, the glories of liturgy or tradition are trivial compared to the gospel and the book that reveals it.

***Crazy Busy*, by Kevin DeYoung. Crossway, 2013. Paperback, 124 pages, list price \$11.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Paul Browne.**

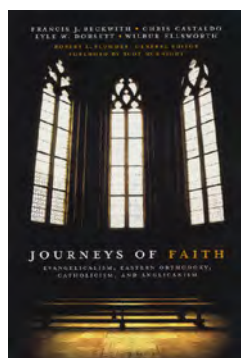
Kevin DeYoung tells us in the first chapter of *Crazy Busy* that he wrote this book for himself, to figure out what in himself

leads him to be overcommitted, hectic, and regularly stretched too thin. But he is right in assuming that most of us are not very different than he is. Accordingly, his many frank admissions and personal revelations in *Crazy Busy* make the book a warmly engaging vehicle to consider what might also be our besetting sins.

The strength of the book is that DeYoung recognizes the tendency to be too busy as sin—a problem of the heart, not of the calendar. Therefore he offers, not gimmicks for time management, but targeted faith and repentance. "The antidote to busyness of soul is not sloth and indifference. The antidote is rest, rhythm, death to pride, acceptance of our own finitude, and trust in the providence of God" (p. 102).

The bulk of the book is taken up with seven diagnoses as to why we make ourselves "crazy busy." Before that, he offers thoughts as to how, culturally in the West, "complexity" and "opportunity" aggravate the issue as never before. Significantly, he provides one whole section to brace us with the truth that genuinely loving and serving others will sometimes rightly exhaust us.

In the final chapter, DeYoung leads us to, and leaves us at, the feet of Jesus, with a stirring exhortation to devote ourselves daily to him as the one thing that is necessary. There DeYoung considers what he calls the nearest thing that Jesus gave to a sermon on busyness, the story of Martha and Mary in Luke 10. He concludes, "It's not wrong to be tired. It's not wrong to feel overwhelmed.... What is wrong—and heartbreakingly foolish and wonderfully avoidable—is to live a life with more craziness than we want because we have less Jesus than we need" (p. 118). If you read this slim volume, which I recommend, do not expect to do it easily in the narrow space of minutes you allotted to it ahead of time; the issues it raises and the helps it offers are just too timely.



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