

# NEW HORIZONS

— *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

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by Thomas J. Sorkness

OCTOBER 2015

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## New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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Participants in the intensive training session of the Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC held at the OPC Administrative Office building in Willow Grove, Pa., August 17-19 (from the left): Matthew Prather, Ken Montgomery, Glenn Ferrell, Michael Borg, Bradney Lopez, Bill Watson, Kevin Van Der Linden, Lowell Ivey, Ryan Woods, Todd Smith, Luke Lorence, Robert Smith, Jonathan Hutchison, David Noe (instructor, Greek Refresher), Everett Henes, John Muether (instructor, OPC History), David Koenig, and Jon Stevenson (not pictured: Roberto Quiñones)



# JAN HUS AND THE CHURCH



**JERRY AND MARILYN FARNIK // In a day and age when people easily dismiss the church as unnecessary, Jan Hus stands in stark contrast. Hus was a staunch defender of Christ's church, both in proclaiming her importance and in protecting her from enemies within and without.**

On July 6, 1415, Hus was burned at the stake for his convictions. This year we celebrate the 600th anniversary of his death.

Jan Hus was born in Husinec, Bohemia, between 1364 and 1376, to a poor farming family. After gaining the titles of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Theology, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1401. The following year, he became the dean of the philosophical faculty of the University of Prague and was appointed preacher at Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, where sermons were delivered in the Czech language.

Early in the fifteenth century, the teachings of John Wycliffe were brought to Bohemia from England by university students. Hus publicly praised Wycliffe's work and translated his *Trialogus* into Czech. As interest grew throughout Bohemia, a dispute arose at the university over Wycliffe's teachings, and in 1408 a papal mandate enabled the archbishop of Prague to disallow them. All of Wycliffe's manuscripts were publicly burned in 1410, and Hus was put under the ban.

With the support of King Wen-

ceslaus of Bohemia, however, Hus continued to preach boldly in Bethlehem Chapel, even though the churches of Prague were under interdict. The sale of indulgences, authorized by Pope John XXIII (later declared an antipope) in 1412 to finance his opposition to King Ladislaus of Naples, especially concerned Hus. He opposed the use of the sword in the name of Christ, as well as any ordinance that implied that people could gain forgiveness and eternal life apart from faith in Christ.

In his most well-known treatise, *The Church*, Hus focused primarily on the medieval institution's faulty understanding of the nature of the church. At the time, the driving force of the Roman church was its hierarchy, which weighed in heavily on both secular and ecclesiastical matters. Thomas Fudge points out that the Roman prelates and cardinals had authorization to judge, but they could not be judged by any lower court or authority.<sup>1</sup> Leading theologians in the church regarded the pope as the head of the holy Roman Church and the College of Cardinals as its body. Hus challenged this by defining the one

holy, universal church as all those predestined by God to eternal life, whose head is Christ alone.<sup>2</sup>

Hus was also insistent that no one should be considered head of the church except Christ alone, and that anyone who would call himself the vicar of Christ should follow in his footsteps.<sup>3</sup> He was vehement in his criticism of prelates and clergy who did not live in conformity with God's Word, calling them enemies of Christ. He writes:

If, therefore, a prelate is proud, lives in luxury, follows after greed, is impatient, does not feed the sheep, but oppresses and scatters them, is he not antichrist?

To truly be Christ's vicar, one must be humble, seeking not honor or worldly gain, able to shepherd the church by God's Word and godly example, meek, patient, chaste, hard-working, and devoted to eternal rather than temporal things. This description did not fit many of those highest in the church hierarchy of Hus's day.

In criticizing the leadership of the church, Hus looked primarily to the



Scriptures for support, but also frequently cited church fathers, such as John Chrysostom, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory the Great, and Bernard. With them, he urged a return to the law of Christ, where alone the righteousness of God could be found. All human rules and institutions, he said, should be evaluated in light of the Scriptures. Hus did not propose anarchy, but strongly emphasized freedom from the burden of human rules and institutions that were not in accord with the Scriptures. Following this reasoning, Hus continued in the ministry of the Word, despite having been excommunicated from the church.<sup>4</sup>

In all matters, Hus recognized the superiority of God's Word and did not acknowledge any other authority as being equal to or higher than the Scriptures. In particular, Hus called into question the authority of prelates who themselves disobeyed God and required believers to do the same.<sup>5</sup> He insisted that only those in ecclesiastical authority who gave commands in accordance with Christ's law should be obeyed.

In 1415, Hus was summoned to appear before the church council in Constance, Germany. He was promised safe passage to this council by the Holy Roman emperor Sigismund, and he expected an audience before the council to defend his views. One of Hus's accusers, a former friend and fellow countryman named Stepan Palecz, convinced the church court that Hus's doctrine of the church threatened the medieval institution as most Christians knew it and the church's unity. Hus's faith was tested severely in Constance, when prior assurances from authorities were ignored and he was put on trial. Facing condemnation, Hus clung to the imperishable Word of God in standing for the truth. Hus declared at the stake, "God is my witness that I have never taught that of which I have been accused by false witnesses. In the truth of the gospel which I have written, taught, and preached I



*Jan Hus dying for the truth as found in Scripture*

will die today with gladness."

One hundred years before Martin Luther began his efforts toward reform, Hus addressed many foundational issues regarding the authority and jurisdiction of the church and the sufficiency of God's Word. As a divinity student in Erfurt, Luther came across Hus's sermons and later wrote: "I was struck with amazement as I read on, and was filled with astonishment difficult to describe, as I sought out for what reason so great a man—a doctor, so worthy of veneration, and so powerful in expounding the Scriptures—had been burned to death."<sup>6</sup> Luther was the first to publish the letters of Hus in 1536.

Hus's death caused an uproar in Bohemia. Many protested, and several of his closest followers also paid the ultimate price for holding firmly to the truth of God's Word. Jerome of Prague was burned at the stake a year after Hus's execution.

By the end of the sixteenth century, 85 percent of the Bohemian population had become Protestant.<sup>7</sup> But after their defeat at White Mountain in 1620, all Calvinists and other non-Lutherans were ordered by the Holy Roman

emperor to convert to Roman Catholicism or leave his realm within three days. During the following year, all Lutherans had to do the same. Forty-seven Bohemian leaders of the insurrection were put on trial, and twenty-seven of them were beheaded in the heart of Prague on the Old Town Square. Protestantism was suppressed during the following three hundred years, but religious refugees from Bohemia eventually started a remarkable movement in neighboring Saxony. Hundreds were sent out as tentmaking missionaries to all parts of the world from the estate of Count Zinzendorf in Herrnhut.

Today many Czechs, both believers and unbelievers, still hold Jan Hus in high regard and consider him a national hero. Although few have actually read his works, he is respected for defending his beliefs

at great personal cost and fighting corruption without compromise. During the Communist era, some historians referred to Hus as the first Socialist revolutionary, praising him as progressive in his stance against the church. Hus was, however, wholly devoted to the church, willing to die if necessary in his attempt to bring attention to her need for reform. His severe criticism, especially of those most responsible to God for the direction of the church, was in no way mean-spirited, but rather an expression of concern for their souls and all those under their influence. □

*The authors are OP affiliated missionaries working in the Czech Republic.*

1 Thomas A. Fudge, *The Trial of Jan Hus: Medieval Heresy and Criminal Procedure* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 323.

2 John Huss, *The Church* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), 67.

3 *Ibid.*, 96.

4 *Ibid.*, 149.

5 *Ibid.*, 131.

6 John Huss, *The Letters of Jan Huss* (William Whyte, 1847), 9.

7 "Protestantism in Bohemia and Moravia," at [www.museeprotestant.org](http://www.museeprotestant.org).

# JOHN SKILTON: THE MISSING PORTRAIT



THOMAS J. SORKNESS // Periodically, I have occasion to run over to Westminster Seminary. Entering Machen Hall, I am always impressed by the large portraits of the early professors of the institution—an august assembly, to be sure—Machen, Murray, Van Til, and others. These men are important to our denomination and to

the broader church as well. They defended the faith during a time when it was under attack both from without and from within. It is important that their images hang on those walls. They give us pause to thank God for their providential work at such a crucial time in the history of the church.

There is a portrait missing, however, in my estimation: the portrait of Dr. John Skilton. I'm sure that name is familiar to many readers—but to the younger set, maybe not. I have found that few of the younger generation know who he was.

I have a confession to make at this point. Once in a while, when over at the seminary, I'll wander into one of the offices in Machen Hall, and taking note of the portrait hanging in that department, I'll ask one of the young, unsuspecting workers where Dr. Skilton is. Silence. Blank stares. Somebody may pipe up, "Oh yes, he's the guy that ..." "Well, no, that was somebody else." More silence. Blank stares. Yes, when I engage them that way, I am baiting them—baiting them for the opportunity

to tell them a little bit about this wonderful man of God. I always end the conversation by saying that there ought to be a portrait of Dr. Skilton hanging in those hallowed halls as well. So who was Dr. Skilton?

## Diaconal Visionary

Dr. Skilton was one of the early professors of the seminary, but he is probably best known for his visionary and ecumenical diaconal work among the poor in Philadelphia. It was through his efforts that Skilton House Ministries was established. Skilton House, in the Olney section of Philadelphia, was a beacon of light to the lost for many years. It was there that Dr. Skilton lived, taking care of his infirm mother.

I first set foot in the Skilton house when I was taking an evangelism class with Dr. Jack Miller. We would do street preaching (exhorting) at Broad and Olney. Just before heading up the street to our usual spot, we would meet for prayer at the Skilton house. The first time there, I recall Dr. Skilton telling us that on every Thursday night, the entire

city of Philadelphia was invited to come for dinner. This was always an open invitation, and I believe that he trusted that if everyone did show up, the Lord would provide. (And since he was not a respecter of persons, if someone from the suburbs had shown up at the door, he would not have turned him away!) Although some may chuckle at the thought, I believe this invitation characterized the tremendous gift of hospitality he possessed.

But it went well beyond that. Dr. Skilton had a love for the lost. This was deep-seated in him. Over the years, he was actively involved in evangelism, nursing home ministries, and aid to Vietnamese refugees in the Logan section—all this through Skilton House Ministries. The most recognizable of his achievements in diaconal efforts was Operation Brotherhood, an ecumenical work among gospel-believing churches in the city. The capstone each year was, and still is, the Thanksgiving Food Basket Drive. Each year thousands of households around the city receive a Thanksgiving food basket as well

as a printed gospel message from their neighborhood churches, all through the coordination of Operation Brotherhood.

Dr. Skilton was the visionary behind all this. He had a tremendous capacity to love the dispossessed of the world and evidenced this in very practical ways. This legacy continues through the ongoing work of Skilton House Ministries. He was tireless in his efforts, pouring himself out like a drink offering.

### Eminent Bible Scholar

There was another side to Dr. Skilton, however—a side that those who were the recipients of his diaconal and evangelistic efforts knew little if anything about. Dr. Skilton was an eminent scholar, a scholar of the New Testament. He started teaching at Westminster in 1939 and taught for many years. As a matter of fact, as indicated on the seminary's website, he served in that capacity longer than any other professor—until 1997, the year before his death. Having been born in 1906, he was still teaching at age 91! He taught for fifty-eight years!

Dr. Skilton's knowledge of the New Testament was almost unbelievable. I say unbelievable, unless one sat under his teaching. It was rumored that he had the entire Greek New Testament memorized, and it may have been so. Sitting in advanced Greek class, I can recall him reciting major portions of the text, then asking us to translate. Always gracious, he was ever patient to help the novice along in the text. But he also had the great and scholarly mind to deal with the textual criticism of the day. He was gracious, but certainly held his own against the most virulent attacks on the Bible, following Paul's lead in demolishing arguments set up against the knowledge of God.

Dr. Skilton's ability to memorize is legendary. The best story surrounds his doctoral dissertation. One day the draft of his dissertation was either lost or stolen on the Route 23 trolley. Discouraged to be sure, but not undone, he was

able to reconstruct the entire document from memory and received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1961. His dissertation was entitled "The Translation of the New Testament into English, 1881–1950." For a time, Dr. Skilton was the chairman of the New



John Skilton in 1961

Testament Department and was also the editor for the *Westminster Theological Journal*. He contributed scholarly works and even toward the end of his life was still traveling and delivering addresses around the country. For Dr. Skilton, there was nothing of greater importance than the preservation and transmission of the Word of God.

### Churchman

Dr. Skilton was also a man of the church. An ordained pastor in the OPC, he preached whenever he had the opportunity. And he was a great preacher: always earnest and adamant, and clearly presenting the Word of God, long passages of which were always included in his sermons. He took great delight in hearing young children recite Bible verses and catechism answers. He always showed deference to young people and children. (I can remember him playing with our kids when he would come over for haircuts from my wife.) Always a gentleman, one of his colleagues related to me a standing joke

about Dr. Skilton. It was said that if you ever met John at a doorway and waited for him to pass through first, you would be waiting until the Lord returned. He was pleasant, always had a smile, and remembered your name.

All of these stories paint a picture of Dr. John Skilton. There is so much more that could be said about him, but space does not permit. Dr. Skilton made a tremendous impression on me. I wish I had known him better, but the few encounters I had with him have left indelible images on my mind. There is no portrait of Dr. Skilton at Westminster Seminary, so far as I know—and perhaps he would prefer it that way—but there is a portrait of him nonetheless. It is a portrait that hangs in my mind, if not my heart. It is a portrait presenting a very interesting juxtaposition: picture a man laboring over a scholarly paper designed to defend the Word of God and then getting up to deliver a bag of clothes to a household of Vietnamese boat people. That was Dr. John Skilton. It is his portrait: love for the Word of God and love for the lost. It is the portrait of Christ, evidenced through his life.

As I reflect on this a bit, I think that maybe one of these days, I'm going to take a little jaunt over to Westminster again, stroll into Machen Hall, find some young, unsuspecting office worker, and ask where Dr. Skilton is. You know, they ought to hang a portrait of him around there somewhere! □



John Skilton, 1991

*The author is a ruling elder at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Ambler, Pa.*



# TRINITY PSALTER-HYMNAL UPDATE



**DANNY E. OLINGER // On August 1, Orthodox Presbyterian minister and chairman of the Special Committee on the Psalter-Hymnal, the Rev. Dr. Alan D. Strange, and United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) minister and chairman of the URCNA Psalter Hymnal Committee, the Rev. Derrick Vander**

Meulen, officially began their labor as coeditors of the proposed *Trinity Psalter-Hymnal*. Earlier in April, an agreement between a commission of the Committee on Christian Education (CCE) and representatives of both the URCNA trustees and the URCNA Psalter Hymnal Committee, had been reached that Dr. Strange and Mr. Vander Meulen would serve in this role.

Mr. Vander Meulen stated, “Our committee enjoyed working with the OPC committee as we labored through the process of song selection these past few years. Now that we have progressed to the production stage of the project, I am greatly honored to serve as coeditor with Dr. Strange. Dr. Strange is a man of integrity, a churchman who understands church music.” Mr. Vander Meulen added that Dr. Strange’s “wit and humor bring enjoyment to the work of this important and weighty project.”

Dr. Strange said, “It has been a joy to work with the brothers and sisters from the URC on this project under the able leadership of Derrick Vander Meulen. This is a most important ecumeni-

cal and liturgical undertaking. Pastor Vander Meulen has become a friend, whose musical sensibilities and churchmanship are vital in this project. He is a delight to work with, and I much prefer winter where he is [Hawaii] than where I am [Chicago area].”

It was also agreed that the work would proceed with the goal of producing a single volume that would contain both the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordt) and the Westminster Confession of Faith and Shorter Catechism. If space allows, the Larger Catechism might be added.

The two sides further agreed that the content of the Psalter-Hymnal would be controlled on an equal basis by the CCE and the URCNA throughout the lifetime of the project, including future printings. Copyright permissions will be sought in the name of the Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Corporation of the United Reformed Churches—United States.

The summer began with the pre-

sentation of a “First Reading” of 428 hymns to the Eighty-second General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, meeting in Sioux Center, Iowa, on June 5. Nearly 80 percent of the hymns presented (339 of the 428



Derrick Vander Meulen

hymns) appear in the revised edition of *Trinity Hymnal*.

Fourteen of the hymns presented appear in the original *Trinity Hymnal*, but were not included in the revised *Trinity Hymnal*. These fourteen hymns are “Before Thee, God, Who Knowest All” (#409), “Behold the Amazing Gift of Love” (#442), “Far and Near the Fields Are Teeming” (#668), “Glory Be to Jesus” (#190), “Great God, We Sing That Mighty Hand” (#612), “Hast Thou Not Known, Hast Thou Not Heard” (#28), “Lo! What a Glorious Sight Appears” (#601), “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word” (#91), “O Thou the Eternal Son of God” (#191), “Savior of the Nations, Come” (#165), “’Tis Midnight; and on Olive’s Brow” (#182), “To Your Temple I Repair” (#313), “Weary of Earth, and Laden with My Sin” (#467), and “Zion, to Thy Savior Singing” (#361).

Of the new hymns presented, twenty-six are compositions from the last twenty years. They include “A Shoot Will Spring from Jesse’s Stump” (2014), “All Glory Be to God” (2012), “All Praise to Christ” (1999), “Before the Throne of God Above” (1997), “Behold My Servant” (2015), “Blest Be the God of Israel” (2015), “Cast Down, O God, the Idols” (1997), “Christ Is Our Cornerstone” (2011), “Come to the Waters” (2000), “Consider Well” (2006), “Give Praise to God” (1999), “Hallelujah!” (1999), “Holy Spirit of Messiah” (2015), “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” (1995), “How Great the Bright Angelic Host” (2004), “How Marvelous, How Wise, How Great” (1999), “In Christ Alone” (2001), “My Child, Do Not Forget God’s Word” (2006), “My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord” (2014), “Now I Make My Good Confession” (2004), “O Praise the Father” (2011), “O Spirit, Fill Our Hearts” (2010), “Praise God for Joy of Sabbath Blest” (2008), “Speak, O Lord” (2005), “Union with Thee” (2014) and “Up to the Mountain Went the Lord” (2005).

The complete list of the hymns presented, with full text and music, is available at [psalterhymnal.org](http://psalterhymnal.org) for re-



Alan Strange leading the CCE in reviewing and singing through the Psalms

view. In order to gain access, a username (“psalter”) and a password (“hymnal”) is needed. Congregations are invited to sing the proposed hymns, but permanent copies may not be stored. Comments and feedback from both individuals and congregations concerning the textual and musical composition of the hymns can be sent to [psalterhymnal@opc.org](mailto:psalterhymnal@opc.org) before December 31, 2015.

Any amendments to the proposed hymns list that are agreed upon by the OPC’s Special Committee on the Psalter-Hymnal and the URNCA’s Psalter Hymnal Committee will be sent to the

CCE for its approval. If the CCE approves the final list, it will be put before the Eighty-third (2016) General Assembly for approval. The URNCA Psalter Hymnal Committee will put forward the same list of hymns to Synod 2016 for approval. Both the OPC General Assembly and the URCNA Synod will then vote on the Psalter-Hymnal as a whole. If both vote “yes,” it will enter into production for use by congregations sometime in 2017. □

*The author is the general secretary of the Committee on Christian Education.*

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

The Committee on Christian Education has established a Special Committee on Marriage and Sexuality. It was formed to help the members and congregations of the OPC to uphold the biblical view of marriage and sexuality in light of the increasing antagonism from the surrounding society.

On the one hand, many in the church today find themselves ill-equipped not only to answer the hostile voices, but also to protect themselves from litigation in light of the Supreme Court’s recent ruling on same-sex marriage. On the other hand, many do not know how to help church members who are struggling with their sexuality. The special committee is working to identify resources that will help both members and churches in these areas.

Being planned are a new page on [OPC.org](http://OPC.org) where books and articles, websites and links, and even suggested by-laws changes for churches can be found. The special committee is working on issues of *New Horizons* and *Ordained Servant* featuring these topics.

A pre-Assembly conference on June 8, 2016, expected to be held at a church near the General Assembly, will address the ministerial, legal, and cultural aspects involved. PCA minister Timothy Geiger of Harvest Ministries, Georgia law professor Randy Beck, and Westminster Seminary professor Carl Trueman have accepted invitations to speak. Jennifer Marshall, from the Heritage Foundation, will participate with the speakers in a panel discussion. Details will follow.



# A SUMMER OF SERVICE



**PATRICIA E. CLAWSON // Orthodox Presbyterians from at least sixty-five congregations showed that summertime is for more than just riding the waves. More than five hundred members of the OPC gave heartfelt service on different short-term mission trips, including sharing their faith through vacation Bible schools,**

English classes, evangelism on boardwalks, and repairing church buildings and members' homes.

"I praise the Lord for the continued and growing interest in short-term missions in the OPC," said short-term missions coordinator David Nakhla, who found the testimonies of participants a blessing to read on OPCSTM.org. "I was reminded that the Lord can and does use these special settings to draw us closer to himself, even as we go, seeking to be a blessing."

Kelly Rose, a costume seamstress and a member of Covenant OPC in Orland Park, Illinois, helped lead two mission trips for their youth group and other OP teens in July. They first helped to reconstruct a manse apartment for Todd Smith, the pastor-elect at Faith Bible

Church (OPC) in Brick, New Jersey. They also rebuilt the deck of a nearby member's home damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The team also witnessed how the Boardwalk Chapel evangelizes. Church members showed their appreciation by preparing a meal for the group on Sunday and dropping by for fellowship during the week.

Their second mission in July presented vacation Bible school programs to OP churches on the reservations of the Stockbridge and Menominee tribes

in Wisconsin. On-site training sessions helped the volunteers to learn about cross-cultural ministry, ministering to poor children, and door-to-door canvassing. They then showed the gospel through VBS lessons, skits, and music, and by developing relationships with the children. The team members "reflected on the gravity of the gospel and our role as bearers of that gospel," said Kelly. "Watching the students on this trip has challenged me to be bolder in my verbal witness of Christianity." One convenience store clerk told Kelly, "Our kids look forward to that every year. No one comes up here and does anything like that for us."

Newlyweds Isaiah and Calli-Jade English were among seventeen full-time staff and more than three hundred volunteers this summer at the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, New Jersey. Every evening they presented an informal evangelistic service with skits and music and then tried to share the gospel with individuals afterward. "This is an incredible opportunity to gain



*Boardwalk Chapel singers Terri Smith and Calli-Jade English*

*[Continued on page 20]*

# THE MIGHTY GOD OF CHANGE

// MARK SUMPTER



Mark Sumpter (left) participating in evangelism training in Corvallis, Oregon

*Editor's note: Mark Sumpter has been called by the Presbytery of the Southwest to serve as its regional home missionary.*

In church planting, as in every application of the gospel, our God never fails in his work of spiritual transformation. He is up to something—working his mighty work of power in and through Jesus, whom he raised from the dead and seated in the place of rule, putting all things under his feet. To have the Spirit of God, who has been poured out on the church, means seeing our mighty God work through the Word, worship, and ministry of drawing in his elect and building them up. He gives newness of faith and repentance, and enables us to show forth increasing likeness to Christ. Our mighty God abounds—superabounds!—to bring change.

Church planting itself portrays newness for growth and maturity. New location. New people. New opportunities. Church planting, as a new venture, captures the trajectory of God's purpose of renewal and growth for individuals, families, and communities.

In this light, there is a focus on the special place of his gracious work. What special place? It has different names: the people of God, the Christ-centered community, the Spirit's dwelling—or, more traditionally, the local church. With the empty tomb, the Spirit's direction, and an open Bible, we grow in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, aiming at maturity. Therefore, evangelists, organizing pastors, and elders invest in our lives with pastoral care and teaching for faithfulness in family life, vocational interests, civics, entertainment, finances, education, art, science, and care of our bodies. With church planting, change is up ahead, just around the corner!

My wife (Peggy) and I are *privileged* to take part in the work of planting new churches in the Presbytery of the Southwest. What a blessing it is for me to serve Christ and his

church in this way.

The call from the Presbytery of the Southwest to serve as her regional home missionary allows me to head back to the South, the place of my birth and my young childhood days. If you know Tabasco sauce, you know South Louisiana! I was born in New Iberia, Louisiana, during the days of my father's off-shore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. My siblings came along in Texas, and a love for the Southwest remains in me. My folks presently live in the San Antonio area, and my wife and I both have family scattered around Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. Helping to plant churches in the Southwest will mean working in familiar territory.

The Lord allowed Peggy to be brought up by loving Christian parents. She and her sisters were taken to worship and Sunday school every Sunday. Worshipping with God's people was instilled in her from an early age. She remembers that on one Friday night her youth group went to an evangelistic movie. The main actor talked to Jesus like he was real, and that caught her attention. At the end of the movie, there was an invitation to go down to the front to pray. Even though she didn't understand everything, she felt compelled to go; so she went and joined with those praying. A Bible and some study materials were given to her, and that was the beginning of her professing walk with her Savior. Today she looks back and says:

Praise God that he sent his one and only Son, Jesus Christ, who died for my sins. One of my favorite verses is Galatians 2:20; it says, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me" (NASB). My old self has been put to death, but now I have a new life in Christ. Serving others, by the help of the Holy Spirit, is my calling, and it is all done to the glory of my heavenly Father.

With Peggy at my side, I've crisscrossed the USA to serve





Mark and Peggy Sumpter

as a ruling elder or minister in four OP congregations. The highlights include the training I received under Pastor Richard P. Kaufmann of New Life Presbyterian Church in Escondido, California—an OP church at the time. Dick exuded gratefulness to God for his gracious working through the Word to bring fruit-bearing change in a person's life. Also, back then in the mid-1980s, I served alongside elder David Winslow and evangelist Dave Crum to carry out TEAM BAJA evangelistic ministry.

In the early 1990s, the Presbytery of the Northwest called me to be the organizing pastor of a small flock of twenty-eight adults and children in Wasilla, Alaska. For five years, I served this mission with preaching, evangelism, and officer training. God gave the increase—the chapel grew to number around sixty-five as she took steps to organize as a particular church.

Later in the 1990s, I served as associate pastor for Covenant OPC in Burtonsville, Maryland, giving primary focus to the educational ministry and training of the church. It was here that I helped to coordinate multiple short-term teams for missions and evangelism, which served evangelistically at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, at the Boardwalk Chapel, and alongside home missions chapels for the OPC.

In more recent years, I have served as chairman of the Regional Church Missions Committee of the Presbytery of the Northwest and as pastor of Faith OPC in Grants Pass, Oregon. Here at Faith OPC there has been a concentration on helping a daughter church get established sixty-five miles to the north in Roseburg. Today, Pastor Jeff Scott serves that church as her minister.

By God's gracious leading, in what ways do we anticipate

### **Home Missions Today**

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail [HomeMissionsToday@opc.org](mailto:HomeMissionsToday@opc.org).  
New editions: October 7, 21.

seeing his mighty hand at work in the Southwest?

- Pray for Houston, Texas. Huge numbers of people are flocking to Houston. Reportedly, ten thousand people arrive each month! Pray for our pastors, Robert Arendale (Cornerstone/Houston) and Adam York (Providence/Houston). These brothers and their sessions continue to work for the spiritual fruit of transformed lives. Their vision for Houston, as organized churches, leads the way for church planting. We are giving attention to Houston, so that there might be several OP congregations to dot this vast metropolitan landscape. Right now, there are three targeted areas, with two of them holding promise to launch this fall. Pray for the suburbs of Richmond, Memorial, and Clear Lake.
- Pray for Waco, Texas, home to Baylor University. We are gathering the names of families, and things look bright. It has been exciting to see how the Lord makes connections between folks who presently live in Waco and OP folks who are moving there. Activity is brewing!
- Andrew Moody, our organizing pastor at San Antonio Reformed, a newer mission work, anticipates greater fruitfulness in outreach via the use of a new location. A new face and a location closer to the heart of the city of San Antonio will provide exceptional opportunities.
- Regarding Austin, Texas, the brothers and sisters of South Austin OPC refuse to dally! Already a brand-new organized congregation, South Austin OPC is drawing up plans to reach out with a Bible study in the nearby town of Dripping Springs.
- Gathering information in cities like Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Corpus Christi, Texas, are on the horizon.

For us, the changes will be many. They started with a move from Oregon to Texas. We anticipate meeting dozens of new people each week in Richmond, a southwestern suburb of Houston, where we are based. I am exploring hospitality outreach, door-to-door evangelistic calling, hymn sings in city parks, and open-air preaching. Pray for the follow-up on these ministries. I have found that when I go back to reconnect with folks four or five times—sometimes six or seven—there's an opening for conversation, prayer, and ministry. Other short-term items on my to-do list include launching a website, meeting our OP church officers and the congregations of the presbytery, and assembling leadership-training materials.

We give thanks for this coming season of change in ministry. Many are praying for this important transition for us. We rejoice in the faithful counsel of pastors, ruling elders, deacons, and the people of the Presbytery of the Southwest. We feel the Southern welcome and hospitality! Pray for our safety in travel across the Southwest. Pray for wisdom, courage, and faithfulness in ministry. Our God remains good and kind. We know that his grace, truth, and love will bring lasting fruit, Spirit-led change, for his glory in and through the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.



# COVENANT PREACHING (PART ONE)

// ROBERT RUSSELL DRAKE



Robert R. Drake

Many years ago, PCA ruling elder Joel Belz, the founder of *World Magazine*, introduced me to a distinction between what he called “truth preaching” and “gospel preaching.” Truth preaching is a sermon that presents the truth from Scripture, but never takes us to the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Such a sermon may correctly teach a certain doctrine or may carefully exegete a particular text. The sermon may even abound in what the speakers and hearers consider to be relevant application, answering questions about how we are to live in this present evil age, but we never get to Christ.

I once heard a sermon on the office of the ruling elder, his qualifications and his duties, but there was no mention of Christ. On another occasion, I heard a sermon on overcoming depression, in which Elijah was used as the model to be imitated. Again, there was no Christ. I’ve heard sermons on the pursuit of holiness and evangelizing our neighbors that never brought us to the cross and the empty tomb. Everything these men said was true. But they didn’t give the whole truth. In a courtroom, people who take the witness stand are told to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The idea is that a true statement combined with a false statement distorts the truth. Likewise, a true statement that leaves out important information distorts the truth. The takeaway from truth preaching may end up being the opposite of the New Testament message and even the opposite of what the preacher intended. If people conclude “I should try harder to be a better ruling elder” or “I should try harder to imitate Elijah,” they miss the point of the new covenant.

Gospel preaching makes sure that people hear the good news in Jesus Christ. The sermon gets to Christ, not as an afterthought, but as an integral part of the message. It gets to what Christ has done for us and what he is continuing to do in us. In other words, to preach the good news of Christ is to preach a union with him that fulfills both dimensions of the

new covenant: God will forgive sins, but he will also write his laws upon our hearts (Jer. 31:33–34).

I would say that truth preaching, as honorable and well-intended as it may be, is a problem in the contemporary church. I can think of at least three reasons why.

## Reason One

First, what I’ve called “truth preaching” gives the impression (unintentionally) that all we need for what ails us is more teaching. The whole issue of what Jesus Christ came to do becomes confused. Did he come to teach us or to save us? Now in saying this, I am not denying the prophetic office of Christ. I know Jesus came to teach, but he did more than teach. Teachers can’t save you, but the Savior can teach you.

At this point, the words of OPC minister Richard Gaffin from my student days at Westminster Seminary still ring in my ears: “Either Jesus Christ came to tell us to what we are capable of doing for ourselves, or Jesus Christ came to do for us what we are incapable of doing for ourselves.” Sermons that do not take us to the saving work of the cross and resurrection of Christ leave us with only a teacher.

I once heard PCA minister and Covenant Seminary president Bryan Chapell say that a sermon without the saving work of Christ is not just “a neutral, non-Christian sermon.” Chapell went so far as to say, “It is an anti-Christian sermon.” To elaborate, I would say that all the religions and life-philosophies of the world only present various versions of works righteousness. If people only come away from our messages thinking about their work, rather than Christ’s work, we have confused the whole issue of why he came into the world.

Maybe you will think I’m going too far, but I would say that even believing a doctrine to be true is not the same as hearing that doctrine proclaimed as part of the description of what Christ has done for us. For example, we could expound on the omniscience of God, but we’re not done until we see how this makes him the perfect Judge and the perfect Savior.

No secrets are hidden from him, and his promise of forgiveness will never be withdrawn because he didn't anticipate our latest transgression.

I hope you don't think I'm setting up an antithesis between truth and good news. The good news is the truth, but it's like the truth put to music. It stirs. It makes us want to worship. In fact, that's why preaching is part of worship. When I'm preaching, I want it to be an act of worship for me as well as for the people listening to me. I want it to feel like it's just a step away from singing.

Does that make sense? Think about it for a moment. What stirs our hearts to song? Isn't it the truth heard as good news? I don't know of any hymn that says, "I'll do better next time, O Lord. I'll do better." No, we sing, "Jesus paid it all!" "Amazing grace!" "And can it be?" I'm saying gospel preaching should make people want to sing, because they've heard good news.

### Reason Two

Second, what I've called "truth preaching" will not help people who are stuck in an Old Testament understanding of themselves. By an "Old Testament understanding," I mean that while the Old Testament commanded the people to love God from the heart, it did not make provision for responding to that greatest commandment. The provision for obedience came in the new covenant, with both the forgiveness of sins and the laws of God written upon the heart. Many today joyfully hear about the forgiveness of sin, but they seem unable to hear about a law upon their hearts. Remember, God told Ezekiel that the point about receiving the new heart and

[Continued on page 19]

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## ☆ Congratulations

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

- **Katharine Olinger**, *Calvary OPC, Glenside, PA*

The **First Catechism** has been recited by these young people at *Living Hope OPC, Allentown, PA*:

- **Emily Batten**
- **Jonathan Batten**
- **Luke Batten**
- **Nathan Batten**
- **John Buonanno**
- **Luke Buonanno**
- **Evan Diem**
- **Ethan Gonnewardene**
- **Laura Gonnewardene**
- **Zack Ziegenfus**

## ABCs of PRESBYTERIANISM

### All the King's Men (3)

Larry Wilson

It is important to remember that our Lord Jesus himself gathers and perfects his church by his Holy Spirit working through and with his Word, and in his sovereign grace he uses men as his media to administer that Word. As the Chief Shepherd, who always cares for his flock, he appoints undershepherds to take heed to the flock in his name (1 Pet. 5:4). They are to care for the sheep of Christ by publicly reading and proclaiming God's Word, administering his sacraments, praying with and for his people, and exercising pastoral leadership and oversight.

In the Old Testament church, the priests and Levites—sometimes termed *elders* (Lam. 4:16; Acts 5:21)—were especially responsible to fulfill these ministries (Deut. 10:8; 33:10; Lev. 10:11; Neh. 8:7–9; Mal. 2:7). They were joined in the government of the church by the elders of the people—sometimes termed *judges*—(Deut. 17:9; 19:17; 21:1–9; 2 Chron. 19:8–10).

In Old Testament polity, then, the term *elder* could refer specifically to the lay rulers of the people. Or it could refer generally to all church governors, which included not only lay rulers but also priests and Levites (the ministers of the Word and sacraments of the Old Testament). This is why Acts 5:21 calls the Sanhedrin "the elders of the people," even though it included both lay rulers and priests. The High Priest was the president (or moderator) of the Sanhedrin. Other priests also sat in this "council of the elders" or "presbytery" (Luke 22:66). So, every priest was an elder, but that did not make every elder a priest.

When we consider this God-inspired Old Testament backdrop, then we can see the same usage in the New Testament. For example, every apostle was an elder (1 Pet. 5:1), but that did not make every elder an apostle. This sheds light on 1 Timothy 5:17.

According to 1 Timothy 5:17, there are elders who rule the congregation, but some of them are also called to labor in preaching and teaching. Similarly, every New Testament minister of the Word is an elder, but that does not make every elder a minister of the Word.

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## ● Out of the Mouth . . .

I was teaching my son Levi, 3, to answer a new catechism question about the persons of the Trinity. When asked who they were, he replied, "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Secret."

—Nic Gordon  
Doniphan, Mo.

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

POINTING  
TO CHRIST IN  
OUR LABORS

// T. L. L.

*Western language options at the university*

The campus is bustling this cloudy, humid morning; the first-year students have just arrived for orientation and military training. The English Communication Office (also known as the English Conversation Office) is quiet and empty two weeks before classes begin. I have just returned from various parts of the country, visiting students and a former colleague. The knowledge gained through these travels has made me consider our work here again. My friends are struggling with “Post-University Syndrome.” They find it difficult to transition to life outside of the university. They miss the love and care of the community here. They are struggling with matters of faith, unable to find the same draw to church or even to find a good church. I’ve listened and observed, sometimes feeling hopeful that they’ve gotten jobs, sometimes feeling sad that our regular pattern of Sunday church attendance seems to have fallen off. Yet I know that all of this is in the Lord’s hands.

As a teacher and now also director of the English Communication Office (ECO) at a university of science and technology in Asia, I think a great deal about how the work in this office engages with the mission here. Being a teacher takes time and has its various pressures, in some ways rightly so; this is where our work visas come from. On the other hand, when we spend much of our working day teaching twelve class hours of spoken English to our eighty to one hundred students, as well as preparing lessons and hanging out with like-minded Christian colleagues, it’s easy to think that the office is the primary mission. After all, when there are fifteen to twenty foreign

*The author*

native or near-native speakers who must teach one thousand students, it’s natural to flock together to share our common joys and sufferings. As a leader in this office, my foremost goal in serving my colleagues is that our work would somehow lead to what we do outside this office.

The ECO was founded by S. F. in response to the university founder’s vision to promote an international focus among students. One goal is to add spoken language ability to our students’ English skill set. The typical student here learns English for the college entrance exam, but rarely uses it practically. Here all students take English Communication classes for two and a half years, and the ECO facilitates this by recruiting native or near-native English-speaking, like-minded volunteers to teach these courses. We can accept teachers with just a B.A. or B.S. degree, so that we can also attract recent graduates. The more teachers we have, the better our student-teacher ratio, so recruitment is a priority every semester.

As an introduction to teaching in Asia, the ECO at our university provides a good learning experience. The faculty is predominantly Christian, which brings both support and scrutiny. For those who don’t have classroom teaching experience, the curriculum, course schedule, and grading are set, and teachers work together in teams. It provides better management for each new teacher and also allows the ECO to have some objective standards for all our teachers and students. After one semester, teachers find more freedom for one-on-one studies or for fulfilling other organizational activities. There’s a sense of community when teachers are teachable and willing to serve each other for our greater good.

As we look for opportunities to do



more outside the office, we encourage interaction with students. The classroom is not only a realm of work for us. It's not just about teaching grammar, colloquial expressions, or Western culture. As Christians, we want to make the most of every opportunity, to take every thought captive, and to learn something from our teaching experience. One student confided that the one thing she learned most in class was morals. Because of a disciplinary action in that class, we had spoken about breaking of trust, resolution, forgiveness, and grace. She wanted to know the basis of such thinking. This led to a relationship and personal study. So teachers talk to students outside of class through interviews, meals, and other relationship-building activities. Teachers frequently eat with students in the cafeteria. One teacher is famous for his spaghetti dinners. Some teach students to bake. Others ask students to tutor them in the language.

Every semester there are cultural lessons revolving around holidays. These are tough to teach because we have to maintain our integrity—we are not allowed to “preach” in the classroom, but we also want to tell the significant facts about holidays. A former missionary associate brought his family to sing a carol to his class at Christmastime. The very sight of this family, which included three adopted Chinese daughters, was so moving to one student that he told me his teacher was a “good man.” One year, a student of an OP missionary associate came into the office and declared that she had never heard the full story of Easter until that day and asked how someone might become a Christian. One Thanksgiving, I spoke about the power of a book that would be incorporated so deeply into the lives of people that they would undertake a dangerous journey in order to live by it. For one student, this led to a deep study of the very book itself.

Teachers are encouraged to get students talking about topics important to them in class. Not only does this provide English practice, but it helps us to learn more about the culture of our students and their attitudes toward life. Nowadays the norms seem more dominated by media and consumerism—much from mainstream American and Korean TV shows. Individualism is stronger regarding success, environmentalism, food safety, appearances, love, marriage, and family. How do we generate deeper thought and critical thinking? Our textbook may ask students about what a dream wedding would be like, but we can ask them whether they have thought about a second wedding. Usually there is no memorized reply for this, so we have a real discussion about marriage, conflict, divorce, and children. We then deal with real-life problems and the intrusion of sin.

Normal acts of kindness impact our students: providing a meal, being concerned when someone is sick, playing games, listening and giving counsel, praying, and studying the Bible. Often we learn much of this from our parents and church families. This past summer of travel and reunions took me to all the key students with whom I had attended the local



*Students at the university deep in thought*

church since my first semester here in 2010. One said, “You are like my family to me.” Another Bible study student shared that, though her life now seems like a very different reality, her college experience gives her hope for what life could be. I encouraged them all to keep reading the Word and going to church, even though it's hard for them to find one close by. Establishing these patterns is hard, but important.

So the teaching continues: it's crucial to teach students that true life is not the university experience, just as our mission isn't just being ECO teachers. The greatest lesson for these young believers who have entered into a personal relationship with Christ is that God's Word is the authority for our lives and that the church is the place where the family of God gathers to live as life could be.

As I gaze out the window of my office at the new students below, I find myself praying that what we do here will promote the primary goal of the mission: encouraging and supporting the local church in the faithful work of God's Word, so that our students can go where life can be different than it is in this world, which is passing away. Please continue to pray for the growth of faithful churches on this field and that we may serve well in continuing to point to Christ in all our labors.

*The author is a tentmaker missionary in Asia.*

## What's New

### // Appointments

**Miss Rebecca J. Call** (New Life Presbyterian Church, PCA, La Mesa, Calif.) has been appointed to serve as a missionary associate to Uruguay for five months beginning in August.

**Miss Sarah F. Jantzen** (Peace Church, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Middleville, Mich.) has been appointed to serve as a missionary associate to assist the Tuiningas at the Mbale station in Uganda for one year, beginning in September 2015.

# LOVING THE CHURCH

// PHILLIP D. HODSON

In an age of independency, sectarianism, and heresies, it is crucial that the church maintain her focus. Numerous voices constantly compete to draw our attention to causes, programs, and pious emphases, each winsomely arguing its case as a most worthy and effective means to surely righteous ends. The people of God are constantly presented opportunities to miss the assigned forest for a myriad of proposed trees.

There is a subtle assumption in our day, a foundational presupposition of the baptistic, evangelical culture all around us. To adopt it not only shapes priorities and the focus of the energies of believers, but also directly shapes giving. Here's what I mean. We as Reformed Christians swim in waters where the church is assumed to be simply a voluntary society. This changes everything. Rather than seeing the church as a visible institution sovereignly established and administered on earth by God, people see the church as an expression, a reflection, of the real church, which is invisible and spiritual. This view rejects identifying the church with the openly organized, connected, and sacramental body instituted by Jesus. Instead, most professing Christians in America today assume that any cooperative effort among believers is essentially the same thing.

## Liberty and a Calling

Every family (of course!) has complete liberty of conscience to give to any cause, whether it impacts people, animals, the environment, or whatever seems good—including parachurch works done in Jesus' name. Nonetheless, there is one universal obligation, an inescapable calling, which is to be central for Christians, namely to recognize, love, and support the church.

This calling does not turn on whether or not we have decided to join, participate in, or support her, since the earthly institution of the church is herself the means of salvation.

Indeed, she is the apple of our God's eye, the target of his love, the recipient of his inexpressible gift! The earthly church is the body for which Jesus died, and to which he has given himself, wherein he communicates his life and salvation, outside of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. This church is the kingdom and tangible covenant-manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. And make no mistake, the earthly, historical, institutional church is that same church, baptized already at Pentecost, and now fed constantly from heaven, which will enter the promised land of the world to come, then fully sanctified, properly peopled, and carefully weeded, to populate the new heavens and earth.

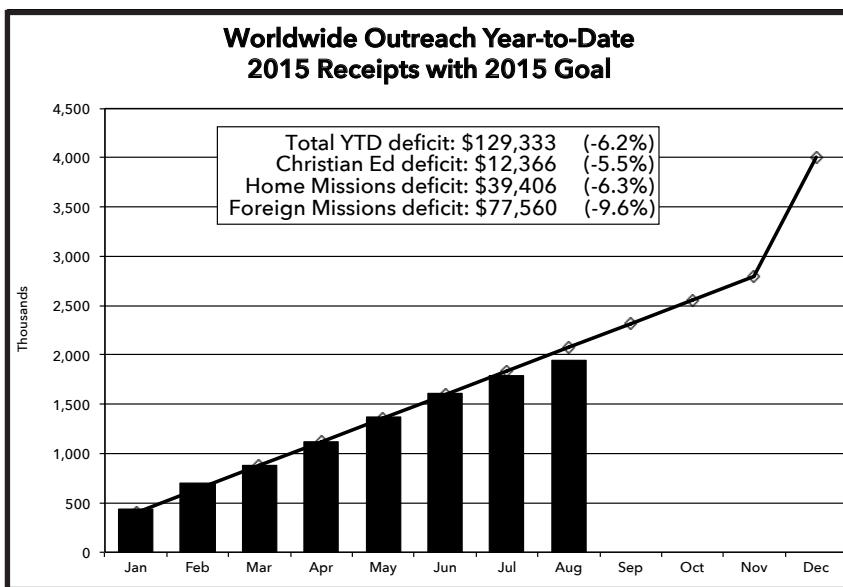
And she's here now! The earthly church is his body and she's real. If we would say, "Thy will be done," or "Lord, Lord," then we are bound to truly care, from the heart, for this body, this house, this temple for which our Lord cares, and to which he has given his life. We are obligated to pray, speak, act, and give just as sacrificially, as a manifestation of the same love.

Yet with all this talk of our duty to love and give to the church, we need to come full circle to the why. Why must we acknowledge, participate in, serve, and give to the church? Is this merely a duty? Not at all!

We love our Lord and seek to do his will, and we love what he loves and cherish his people, because of the love that we have come to know and believe he has for his church as a whole and for each believer in her, for you and for me.

So let us do good to everyone, including the world in this way, but especially loving the household of faith, the church.

*The author is the pastor of Christ the King Presbyterian Church in Longview, Tex.*



## OCTOBER

1. **Jim and Jenny Knox, M.D.**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Jim and the Clinic staff as they deliver medical care to local villages. / **Paul and Sarah Mourreale**, St. Louis, Mo. Pray that visitors to Gateway OPC will desire to join in communicant fellowship. / *Ordained Servant* editor **Greg Reynolds** and proofreader **Diane Olinger**.
2. **Brad and Cinnamon Peppo**, Springfield, Ohio. Pray that God's elect will be brought into Living Water OPC. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for David as he presents the gospel to those who come to the Clinic for treatment. / Pray for the **Subcommittee on Internet Ministries** as it oversees the OPC website.
3. Missionary associates **Leah Hopp** and **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the outreach programs with which they work. / **Everett and Kimberly Henes**, Hillsdale, Mich. Pray for Hillsdale OPC's new women's Bible study. / **Benjamin (and Emily) Gordon**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.
4. **Tony and Mica Garbarino**, Morgan Hill, Calif. Pray that the congregation of Providence Presbyterian Church will grow in spiritual maturity. / **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for the new church plant, holding its first official worship service today. / Pray for **Danny Olinger**, Christian Education general secretary, who reports to the CCE during its meeting on October 5-7.
5. **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray that new contacts in the community will begin attending worship services. / **Mika and Christina Edmondson**, Grand Rapids, Mich. Pray that God will continue to bless New City Fellowship's outreach efforts. / **Tim (and Jeni) Son**, yearlong intern at First Presbyterian Church, North Shore, in Ipswich, Mass.
6. **Jonathan and Lauryn Shishko**, Queens, N.Y. Pray that God would bless Reformation Presbyterian Church with additional families. / Pray for Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma**, and for secretary **Katrina Zartman** as she settles into her new job. / **Pat Clawson**, *New Horizons* editorial assistant.
7. Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he reports to the Committee on Foreign Missions this week. / **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Andover, Minn. Pray for unity and growth within the congregation of Immanuel OPC. / **Alan Strange and Derrick Vander Meulen**, coeditors of the proposed Psalter-Hymnal.
8. **Kim and Barbara Kuhfuss**, Eau Claire, Wis. Praise God for new members and more people interested in membership at Providence Reformed Church. / Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson** as the Committee begins meeting today. / **Matthew (and Elin) Prather**, yearlong intern at Harvest OPC in San Marcos, Calif.
9. **Al and Laurie Tricarico**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Al as he preaches and teaches the Word in Karamoja. / **Chris and Megan Hartshorn**, Anaheim Hills, Calif. Pray that both the unchurched and mature Christians will visit and join Anaheim Hills Presbyterian Church. / Pray for the **2015 yearlong interns** seeking ministerial calls.
10. Home Missions staff administrator **Sean Gregg**. / Pray for new missionary associates **Sarah Jantzen** and **Fiona Smith**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they adjust to life in Karamoja. / Pray for stated clerk **Ross Graham** as he assists presbyteries and General Assembly committees with work assignments.
11. **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the preschool for Karimojong children, which has begun its third year. / **Phil Strong**, Lander, Wyo. Pray that the people of Grace Reformed Fellowship will rely fully on Christ. **Darryl and Anita Kretschmer**, yearlong intern at Lakeview OPC in Rockport, Maine.
12. **Joseph and Carla Fowler**, Gastonia, N.C. Pray for the discipleship and ministry of Reformation OPC. / **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray that God would raise up godly men to lead the OPCU congregations and to plant new ones. / **Brian Guinto**, yearlong intern at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.
13. **Charles and Connie Jackson**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Charles as he prepares for and teaches classes at Knox Theological College. / **Jim and Tricia Stevenson**, Tulsa, Okla. Pray for growth in numbers and in love for our Savior and the saints at Providence OPC. / **Charles Williams**, yearlong intern at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, Mich.
14. **Ron and Carol Beabout**, Gaithersburg, Md. Pray that the people of Trinity Reformed Church will have peace, joy, and renewed hope through the gospel. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Taryn Dieckmann** and **Jesse and Hannah Van Gorkom**, Nakaale, Uganda. / *New Horizons* managing editor **Jim Scott**.
15. Pray for retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Greet Rietkerk**, and **Young and Mary Lou Son**. / **Andrew and**



Ray and Michele Call



**Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray for effectiveness in outreach and discipleship of new members at San Antonio Reformed Church. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.

- 16. John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. (downtown). Pray that more people will attend Gospel Life Presbyterian Church's outreach Bible studies. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray that the distribution of Reformed literature will be an effective tool to reach unbelievers. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund administrator.
- 17.** Pray for missionary associates **M. D., D. V.**, and **S. Z.**, Asia, as they reach out to their students. / **Jeremy Logan**, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Pray that the Lord will raise up new deacons at Knox Presbyterian Church. / **Daniel Adams**, yearlong intern at Calvary OPC in Glenside, Pa.
- 18.** Pray for **Mark and Peggy Sumpter**, as Mark begins his labors as regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southwest. / **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia. Pray that Mr. M. will find time in his busy schedule for both ministry and teaching responsibilities. / Navy chaplain **Bryan (and Shelly) Weaver**.
- 19.** Pray for tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia, as she works with the university's English conversation teachers. / **Robert and Christy Arendale**, Houston, Tex. Pray for the Word and the Spirit to build up and sustain Cornerstone OPC. / **Lowell (and Mae) Ivey**, yearlong intern at Covenant Community Church in Taylors, S.C.
- 20.** Home Missions general secretary **John Shaw**. / Missionary associates **Mr. and Mrs. C.**, Asia. Pray that God would equip them to disciple the students they teach. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
- 21.** Pray for affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic, as they present the gospel to a number of groups each week. / **Mike and Katy Myers**, Hartwell, Ga. Thank the Lord for adding new families to Heritage Presbyterian Church. / Army chaplain **Stephen (and Lindsey) Roberts**.
- 22.** **Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, Ky. Pray for new visitors to come to Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church and for opportunities to reach the lost. / **Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa. Pray for Brian's teaching and preaching ministry in the local church. / **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
- 23.** **Benjamin and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for the churches in Haiti as they seek to meet the diaconal needs of their members. / **Jim and Eve Cassidy**, Austin, Tex. Pray for South Austin Presbyterian Church's new outreach Bible study in Dripping Springs, Tex. / **Caleb (and Alexa) Nelson**, yearlong intern at First Church of Merrimack in Merrimack, NH.
- 24.** **Greg and Stella Hoadley**, Fargo, N.Dak. Pray that God would save local families and bring them to worship at Grace OPC. / Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti, are thankful for ministry opportunities that the Lord has provided. / **Doug Watson**, part-

time staff accountant.

- 25. Cal and Edie Cummings**, Sendai, Japan. Pray for those assisting in the teaching ministries at the Nozomi Center. / **Christopher and Ann Malamisuro**, Cincinnati, Ohio. Pray that Good Shepherd OPC will find effective ways to reach unbelievers. / Pray for tomorrow's meeting of the **Board of Trustees** of Great Commission Publications.
- 26. Brian and Sara Chang**, Cottonwood, Ariz. Pray for new growth at Verde Valley Reformed Chapel. / **Woody and Laurie Lauer**, Numazu, Japan. Pray for Woody as he assists in training young men for Christian service. / **Roberto (and Irma) Quiñones**, yearlong intern at Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana in San Juan, P.R.
- 27. Kaz and Katie Yae-gashi**, Yamagata, Japan. Pray that more children will attend Sunday school and hear about Christ. / **Jonathan and Kristin Moersch**, Capistrano Beach, Calif. Pray for continued growth and harmony and for a bold and gracious witness at Trinity Presbyterian Church. / Army chaplain **Earl (and Susan) Vanderhoff**.



*Jonathan and Kristin Moersch*

- 28. Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray that the Lord would add new people to Keys Presbyterian Church. / Affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne** and **Linda Karner**, Japan, ask prayer for the interns who will be assisting the mission teams this year. / Committee on Diaconal Ministries administrator **David Nakhla**. Pray for the Committee's deliberations at their biannual meeting tomorrow and Friday.
- 29. Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray that seekers will respond in faith to the message of salvation. / **Tom and Martha Albaugh**, Pittsburgh, Pa. Pray that new people will be brought under the ministry of the Word of God at Redeemer OPC Mission. / **Sarah Pederson**, *New Horizons* proofreader.
- 30.** Pray for regional home missionary **Jim Bosgraf** as he travels, visiting mission works and churches in the Presbytery of the Midwest. / **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray that God would expand the outreach of St-Marc Church. / **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the finance director.
- 31.** Missionary associate **Jennifer Nelson**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for her witness to non-Christian friends and contacts. / **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, Fla. Pray that the Lord would draw families with children to Christ the King Presbyterian Church. / **Chris Tobias**, *New Horizons* cover designer.

## PREACHING

[Continued from page 13]

having the Spirit was to “cause you to walk in my statutes” (Ezek. 36:27). Dare I say that despite their professions of faith, some have not yet grasped the new covenant?

And the reason the new covenant has not been grasped in its fullness is because people have not grasped that their union with Christ is a union with the whole Christ, not merely with one or two of his benefits. We receive the One who is the high priest after the order of Melchizedek, which means he is inseparably priest and king. To be in union with Christ is to be bound to his priestly work *and* his kingly rule. We receive his forgiveness *and* his rule, justification *and* sanctification.

Here I like what Calvin said when using the illustration of the sun’s rays. He said the rays come to us as both light and heat. We may distinguish them, but they are inseparable! If I were to elaborate on Calvin’s illustration, I would say the light of Christ comes instantly (justification), but his heat warms us gradually—even gradually changing our appearance (sanctification).

Think of it like this: The exhortations given in Romans 12 were never meant to be abstracted from the larger context, which includes Romans 6. In Romans 12, Paul is exhorting those who have died with Christ and been raised up with him. Romans 12 without Romans 6 is not good news. A sermon should proclaim what Christ has done for us and what Christ is doing in us.

Let me put it this way: The message we preach ought to be the message that is symbolized and sealed in the Lord’s Supper. We remember Christ and what he has done for us on the cross, but we are also fed by him. He is even now at work in us—until he returns on the clouds of heaven. Given the way some people preach the gospel (and the way some people hear it), we could just as easily skip the eating and drinking and just sit there looking at the bread



## Original Trinity Hymnals Available

About 70 copies of the original *Trinity Hymnal* (1987 reprinting, blue covers) are available from New Covenant PCA in Abingdon, Md. About 50 are in good condition; 18 are well worn. The financial considerations and the terms of delivery are negotiable. Contact David G. Barker, pastor, at david.barker@ncpres.org.

and cup.

Gospel preaching takes us to a genuinely New Testament understanding of ourselves. We have a twofold problem: the guilt of our sin and the continuing power of sin over us. Any diet of preaching that does not address both is not proclaiming the new covenant and is not really good news. We don’t say, “Hey, you are forgiven, but you’ll never change. Deal with it!” We proclaim the forgiveness and power of Christ, which doesn’t have to degenerate into perfectionism (which really only dumbs down sin). We can confidentially proclaim, “You are not as successful today at being a sinner as you used to be!” To me, it’s like traveling from where I live in Asheville, North Carolina, to Newport, Tennessee. The trip is up the mountain, but the road doesn’t go just straight up. Sometimes it goes up, sometimes the road is just level, and sometimes it even goes downhill. You can’t measure your trip by where you are at the moment, but at the end of the day, if you stay on the road, you will get to Newport.

### Reason Three

Third, the contemporary church is so conformed to the world that it wants preaching to consist only of worldly advice. As soon as I wrote that last sentence, I winced and wanted to back off. I thought for a while and decided that I can’t. Conformity to the world is not just about socialism and sexuality. It’s about self-centeredness, powerlessness, and blame-shifting. The motto of the world is: “I will serve only if I am being served—only if my needs are being met.” The world says, “You can’t expect me to think about others when I myself am hurting so badly.” Haven’t you heard that in the church? “They are not

meeting my needs, so I won’t stick around to meet theirs.”

Don’t get me wrong. It is very sad if genuine needs are not being met. However, contrast that concern to that of Christ, who said, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve” (Matt. 20:28). Surely, the motto of his kingdom in imitation of him is “I will serve, even if I am not being served.” Isn’t that the most radical thing you ever heard? Isn’t that something that requires the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit within a person? Gospel preaching, good news preaching, reminds us that we have the supernatural resource we need for doing what seems impossible.

Surely, the service mind-set of Christ is reproduced in the fruit of the Spirit when Paul places “patience” and “kindness” next to each other in Galatians 5:22. He does the same thing in 1 Corinthians 13:4—“Love is patient and kind.” Patience is *makrothumia*, hard breathing. Someone is in pain. He is a sufferer. Anyone who suffers for whatever reason is, or will be, turning inward. It’s only natural. But then notice how Paul immediately adds “kindness,” which is directed outward to others. Is Paul not saying that in the power of the Spirit, our individual discomfort is no excuse for self-preoccupation? The pain you inflict on me is no excuse for me not to love you. Imagine not only being forgiven, but also being able to combine patience and kindness because we are in union with Christ. How could we not call that “good news”?

*The author is a recently retired minister in the Presbyterian Church in America (and former minister in the OPC). This is the first installment of a three-part series.*

## SUMMER OF SERVICE

[Continued from page 9]

experience and skill in sharing the gospel,” said Isaiah, who came from Matthews OPC in Matthews, North Carolina, to help train the staff in outreach. Calli-Jade wrote and directed the skits. “In the heart of what I’d call the ‘Pleasure Island’ Wildwood, the Boardwalk Chapel screams the love and truth of Christ in a variety of awesome and intentional ways to people who are longing for true joy, but can’t find it in a funnel cake or roller coaster,” said Calli-Jade. “The only skills really needed to be here were a willing heart with knowledge of Christ and the working of the Holy Spirit inside of me.”

### Volunteer Work in Haiti

After volunteering for four summers in the Czech Republic, Joseph Pollard, a member of Calvin OPC in Phoenix, Arizona, joined a trip in June to help the OPC Haiti Mission. His congregation gave him \$1,500 in support for the team fees, and he raised the remaining \$500 for supplies and immunizations. Before going, Joseph expected to receive bruises from riding over rocky roads and to get seasick from sailing to the island of Lagonav to help with three VBS programs. Instead, “I learned how to shut my mouth when complaints about the humidity flared up, how to sing through pain, and how to be increasingly flexible to win souls and train hearts to follow hard after Jesus,” he said. “Jesus is sufficient when we are faint and anemic in spirit.” Joseph also used his handyman skills to improve Benjamin and Heather Hopp’s missionary compound by completing countertops, painting, planting trees, and helping Heather to cook.

### Volunteer Work in Ukraine

Faith Nakhla joined her husband David in reaching university students through an English Camp in Lviv, Ukraine, in July. She hoped to advance the work of missionaries, including

OP minister Heero Hacquebord. She helped to prepare lessons and lead the camp’s English conversation, which slowly unfolded the gospel message over a week. “Our excitement was definitely fed by seeing the students growing in their understanding of the gospel,” said Faith. One camper “panicked” after realizing she could no longer rely on her own good works. Another self-described atheist left camp calling himself a “former atheist.” Although she is uncomfortable witnessing to neighbors at home, she hopes to find more opportunities to share the good news in her neighborhood after having so many open discussions at the camp.

### Volunteer Work in Quebec

Jordan Francoeur, from the First Church of Merrimack, in Merrimack, New Hampshire, took a week off driver’s education in late June to help for a second summer with an English-for-Kids Bible camp, one of five English camps held in Quebec City and St. Georges de Beauce, Quebec. The different camps ministered to elementary-age children by sharing the gospel while teaching English. Also an English-for-Teens Bible Camping Trip was held in July to help OP missionary Ben Westerveld teach biblical truths through English conversation. At the Kids Camp, Jordan and another teen put together game shows based on their Bible lessons and performed skits. “I prayed our entire team would be able to clearly, boldly, and faithfully show them all (the gospel) through the songs we sung, the messages we taught, and the love we showed them,” said Jordan. “I learned to *want*, truly *want*, their salvation and to show that through my actions of faith.”

### Volunteer Work in Key West

On her first mission trip, Michele Sinacori helped to chaperone members of Grace Presbyterian Church’s youth group as they learned how to evangelize in Key West, Florida. Pastor Bill Welzien in June trained the Columbus, Ohio, group to talk clearly with others about Christ from a Reformed

perspective. Michele found it wasn’t easy to put into practice what Bill taught, but was thankful to be reminded that their efforts weren’t in vain, as God uses the seeds that are planted for his purposes. Some of the group also dug a trench to help water run off from the Keys Presbyterian Church property. The team stayed in the church’s dorm-style accommodations and cooked their own meals. While the students paid their own airfare, the Columbus congregation picked up the remaining cost. During evening witnessing in Mallory Square, the group prayed with the family of a seriously injured man and spoke with a charismatic family of five and a Hindu family.

Many volunteers also ministered this summer in Uganda, Japan, and other parts of Asia; helped with VBS in San Antonio, Texas; assisted in outreach at a Peach Festival in Middletown, Delaware; and helped with English-conversation outreach and ministry to the homeless and those recovering from addictions in Naples, Florida. Large doses of elbow grease also aided churches in St. Augustine, Florida, in Neon, Kentucky, and in Magna, Utah.

Over the years, volunteer Kelly Rose has witnessed the benefits of participating in STM trips: “Energy and resources we would normally use to serve only ourselves, instead are called to be used in service of others, both those we came to minister to and our fellow team members.”

David Nakhla appreciates how participating in STMs positively impacts those who are served and positively transforms those who go. The volunteers “can bring back into the church a renewed zeal for the Lord and how he does actively work in and through our feeble efforts,” said David Nakhla. “This is all for the good of his kingdom around the world. I look forward to the Lord expanding our fleet of short-term workers in the years to come!” □

*The author is the editorial assistant of New Horizons magazine. For more information on STM trips: [www.OPCSTM.org](http://www.OPCSTM.org).*



# NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

## REDDING CHURCH ORGANIZED

Gene Crow

On May 15, 2015, a special service was held in the northern California city of Redding to celebrate the successful conclusion of a longer-than-usual journey to particularization for Redding Reformed Fellowship (RRF).

Church planter Gene Crow, originally ordained in the URCNA, was installed as pastor of the newly organized congregation, and Jim Westberg was installed as ruling elder. Mike Ziegler, who had served on the overseeing session, was retained to augment the session. The Rev. Mike Dengerink conducted the service. RRF is now the northernmost church in the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada.

Redding Reformed Fellowship is the result of God's work in a small Baptist church in the nearby town of Shasta Lake City, which, by God's providence, came to understand and embrace the doctrines of grace through the work of one of their pastors. In November 2007, through a series of personal connections, the group was received as a mission work of the OPC.

In 2008, Gene Crow and his wife Cynthia returned to their home state of California when Gene accepted the call to serve as evangelist for the new work. Despite initial excitement, the group struggled to grow during its early years, losing several families due to the economy.

That, along with the mounting need to make substantial repairs on the aging building, led to the decision to try to sell the building and move nine miles south into Redding. The Lord blessed the group with a quick sale of the building, despite a depressed real estate market.

After an intense search, they were able to secure a new meeting location at a local union office's event center. This has worked out very well. Despite the end of denominational support, the work was able to continue for several more years, as growth, which had been slow, began to

pick up.

There have been many ups and downs in the seven-year history of RRF, but the Lord has provided a solid core of families dedicated to the ministry of the word and the Reformed faith.

## UPDATE

### MINISTERS

- The pastoral relationship between Gabriel N. E. Fluhrer and Shiloh OPC in Raleigh, N.C., was dissolved as of August 7, and he was transferred to the PCA; he will serve as an assistant minister at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, Miss., and teach at Reformed Theological Seminary.

- **Jude J. Reardon**, once an OP minister and recently a CRC minister, was received by the Presbytery of the Northwest as a retired minister at its April 24–25 meeting.

### MILESTONES

- **Mildred Plack Benson**, 97, the widow of OP minister W. Lee Benson, died on July 30, 2015.

- Retired OP minister **Roger L. Gibbons**,

77, died on August 20.

- Retired OP deacon and elder **William S. Ramsey**, 100, died on August 20.

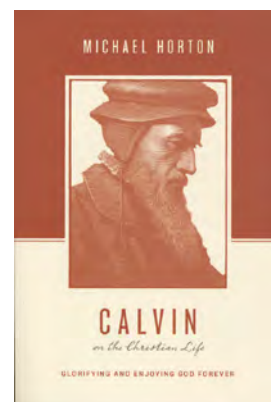
- Retired OP minister **Andrew E. Wikholm**, 85, died on July 19.

## REVIEWS

*Calvin on the Christian Life*, by Michael Horton. Crossway, 2014. Paperback, 272 pages, \$19.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Christopher Chelpka.

On August 23, 1535, John Calvin wrote to King Francis I of France, explaining his purpose for writing the *Institutes*. He wanted to help

people live the Christian life by teaching them the Christian faith. "My only purpose," he wrote, "was to teach some rudiments by which those who are touched with some good affection for God might



The Redding, Calif., congregation; right of sign: Rev. Gene and Cynthia Crow

be instructed in true piety.”

This objective was grounded on the belief that doctrine and life go together. As Calvin explained in the *Institutes*, salvation starts with the gospel, but it can't end there. Doctrine “must enter into our heart and pass into our daily conduct.” The gospel “is not a doctrine of the tongue, but of life.” Using the *Institutes* as a guide, Michael Horton helps us to see this vision of piety in *Calvin on the Christian Life: Glorifying and Enjoying God Forever*.

Horton begins with some introductions and a brief biography of Calvin. Then, in chapter 3, he develops Calvin's theological foundation for Christian living: knowledge of God and of ourselves in relation to him. “Nearly all the wisdom we possess,” wrote Calvin, “consists of [these] two parts.” Chapter 4 explains the way we receive this wisdom: as a story of redemption, not as a set of proof texts.

In chapters 5 and 6, Horton explores Calvin's doctrine of Christ as our mediator and the gifts that we receive in our union with him. Chapters 7–11 describe the ways we receive these gifts and how sanctification occurs in the family of God. These chapters are filled with insight and practical applications for piety. The same is true for the final chapters.

In the final chapters, 12–14, Horton considers the Christian's life in the public square. He puts Calvin's ideas in their historical context and shows how Calvin's view of Christ and culture “is more complex and even paradoxical” than some assume. Those who think they already know Horton's opinions on these matters may be surprised by what they read.

This book succeeds in showing the organic connection between Christian doctrine and Christian living, as seen in Calvin's thought and life. Occasionally the book seems to lose this focus when the implications for piety are more assumed than stated, but Horton never strays from his main objective.

I particularly enjoyed three things about this book. First, Horton summarizes Calvin's ideas in an accurate and memorable way. This is impressive, especially considering how good Calvin was at communicating his own ideas! Second, Horton highlights some overarching

motifs in Calvin's theology, such as “distinction without separation” and compassion for the weak. Third, the book is inspiring. Horton shows us that Calvin is a worthy example to follow, not because he was perfect, but because he knew what it meant to believe and live in light of the cross. By that same light, we are encouraged to do the same, for the benefit of others and to the glory of God.

***Luther on the Christian Life: Cross and Freedom*, by Carl Trueman. Crossway, 2015. Paperback, 224 pages, list price \$17.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Nathan Holloway.**

Martin Luther is a character from church history who is bound to come up in conversations about the Reformation or justification. He is one of those historical figures of whom one needs to have a basic grasp. Yet Luther is very complex. This is why Carl Trueman's *Luther on the Christian Life* is such a great book.

Trueman provides a lens for the modern interpreter to understand Luther's life and thought. His book begins in the first chapter by walking the reader through the life of Luther to provide the context for his thought. The subsequent chapters move into the thought and theology of Luther, showing how his views progressed over time. Trueman relates each topic to the Christian life.

One might assume that a book on Martin Luther would deal primarily with justification by faith. However, this work focuses on Luther's views on the Word and the sacraments. In fact, three of the eight chapters are devoted to his views on the Word of God. One chapter discusses Luther's view of the Mass, but his view of the sacraments trickles throughout the book. Also important in the portrayal of Luther's thought is the distinction between theologians of glory and

theologians of the cross. These concepts are set in the proper context of what Luther meant by them.

This book is commended for three reasons. First, it introduces many of the key writings of Luther. On multiple occasions, the reader is told that Luther valued *On the Bondage of the Will* and his catechism above all his other works. This tells the selective reader where to go first. In addition, this book helps the reader to understand Luther's earlier works in light of later developments in his thought. This is helpful to those who will not be able to read all of his works.

This book is valuable, secondly, because of the pastoral advice it offers. It is part of a series that focuses on the contributions of historical figures to the Christian life. While modern Christians in general are challenged, Trueman has much to say specifically to ministers. This advice ranges from how to preach to how to relate to one's family.

The third value of this book is the example its author provides of how to relate to those with whom one is not in full agreement. The author is a Presbyterian writing on a Lutheran. There are some strong and important disagreements between their perspectives. But even in the disagreements, there is the possibility of being sharpened and challenged within one's viewpoint, as Martin Luther has sharpened and challenged the author.

***The Theology of the French Reformed Churches: From Henri IV to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes*, edited by Martin I. Klauber. Reformation Heritage Books, 2014. Paperback, 414 pages, list price \$25.00. Reviewed by pastor and missionary Ben Westerveld.**

Even Francophiles like me often suppose that French Reformed pastors, past and present, have little if anything to offer to Reformed theological reflection. How refreshing it is to read a collection of essays that place French-speaking theologians in the historical spotlight.

In this eleventh volume of the series Reformed Historical-Theological Studies, Martin I. Klauber has gathered together a variety of stimulating articles in an



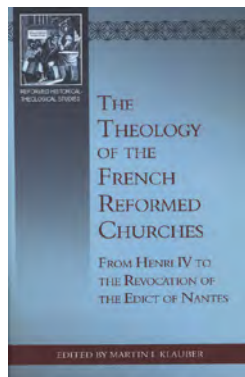
attempt to resurrect some of the vitality and richness of seventeenth-century French Reformed theology. “The period was an unusual one,” notes Klauber, “in which France boasted two state religions, Roman Catholic and Protestant, due to the protections afforded the latter by the Edict of Nantes” (p. 1).

The historical background of this nearly century-long period is explored in the first part of the book, while the second part develops various, and even opposing, streams of Reformed theology and their theologians. The reader will find helpful appendixes providing excerpts of the Edict of Nantes (1598) and Edict of Fontainebleau (1685), revoking the freedom of Protestants in France, as well as a list of contributors, many of whom will be unknown to readers unfamiliar with French Reformed historical research. The selected biography of primary and secondary sources will permit the English reader to further his research. While the primary sources include many French titles that have not been translated into English, it would have been helpful to include the French bibliographical information of works already translated into English.

Anyone at all familiar with the seventeenth-century French Reformed Church will likely recall the theological controversies surrounding Amyraldianism and the persecution of the Huguenots. This collection of articles gives a fuller picture of the historical, theological, ecclesiastical, and even personal issues involved.

For instance, while the hypothetical universalism espoused by Moïse Amyraut is often condemned as heretical, Richard Muller demonstrates that his views were controversial, and even vigorously opposed by his Reformed colleagues, but never condemned by the Reformed Church synod (pp. 197–216). Amyraut also made significant contributions to the apologetics of faith and science, as well as Christian morality.

With respect to the Huguenot persecution, several articles add personal touches to the often dry perception of the



men of God who pastored churches during these years. On the one hand, many pastors like Andreas Rivetus had vivid memories of the bloody persecution and other dramatic events affecting the Huguenots, which “profoundly colored his identity and personality” (p. 254) as he sought the unity and peace of the church. Other pastors, such as Pierre Jurieu, who fled the increasing persecution just before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, wrote a much-read treatise on Christian devotion “in the heart and closet—in places where the gaze of the king could not find it” (p. 346).

Pastors and teachers would benefit richly from reading even a selection of these articles. The discovery of Reformed theology put into practice in an unfamiliar historical context may open up new perspectives on how to teach and live the Reformed faith today.

***Not Just a Soup Kitchen: How Mercy Ministry in the Local Church Transforms Us All*, by David S. Apple. CLC Publications, 2014. Paperback, 243 pages, list price \$13.99. Reviewed by the Deacon Board of Grace Reformed Church in Reedsburg, Wis.**

Put aside all other books you have read about becoming a deacon or doing the work of a deacon. This is a book by a man who has walked the talk. It has the information of a good manual and the readability of a good memoir (which the early pages explicitly are).

Combining his spiritual calling as a deacon with more down-to-earth “street

smarts,” David Apple serves as a fine guide for deacons in the Reformed tradition, and, more broadly, for anyone actively involved in mercy ministry.

Apple has almost thirty years of experience directing ACTS (Active Compassion Through Service) at Tenth Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Philadelphia. Smack in the middle of that city, he, they, have seen it all. As a result, this book is chock-full of good advice.

Much of the advice comes in the form of general guidelines, and some in very practical (even pointed) terms, such as: “Do not work harder than the person coming to you for help,” and “It is not the deacons’ task to be ‘Lone Rangers’ in their ministry.”

Some of the most memorable words of advice are found in this set of rules: rule #1: “Do not give money”; rule #2: “Do not give money”; rule #3: “When in doubt, see rule #1.”

Lest anyone get the impression that such quips predominate, we would quickly add that the book also includes several substantive appendices, including a list of resources, guidelines for deacons, a sample talent survey, and a bibliography.

Since not every deacon will have the time and the inclination to take up this book and read, we would offer here a few more gleanings from Apple’s book. In our opinion, these points should make it onto the agenda for discussion at your next deacons’ meeting:

- Present the gospel.
- Ask for references.
- Set limits on what one recipient can



## Zoar Celebration Time!

Menominee OPC, on the Menominee Indian Reservation in Zoar, Wis., held its first worship service in August 1955, and its building was dedicated in October. We are planning a 60th anniversary celebration of God’s goodness on Saturday, October 10, 1–4 p.m. Come and join us for a Fellowship Feast, music, and memories of the past. For details, contact Trudy Bosman at bosmanst@hotmail.com.





NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS *Continued*

- receive without others' approval.
- Do not give cash.
- Do not visit an applicant alone.
- Let the recipient earn a contribution, if possible (e.g., help around the church).
- Require some responsibility from the recipient (a budget, perhaps).
- Keep records.
- Do not give assistance without the agreement of at least one other official.
- Encourage church attendance.
- Pray with the applicant.

Becoming a deacon is like going to a foreign country. We think it unwise to do that without a guidebook. We encourage you to make this book your guidebook.

**MICHIGAN AND ONTARIO FAMILY CAMP**

*Corrie Post*

This year the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario celebrated its twentieth year of Family Camp in Gowen, Michigan. The camp was held at Lincoln Lake Youth Bible Camp, from August 10 to August 14. The speaker was Dr. Iain Duguid, from Westminster Seminary, who gave a lecture on the Song of Solomon. Dr. Duguid discussed how to understand “what the Song of Songs is, what it teaches us about living wisely in this world, and how it points us to Christ and the gospel.”

Over 180 registered campers spent the week growing in faith and unity. The

laughter of children echoing over the pristine lake water and shrieks of excitement from the zip line and archery field competed with the quiet whispers of joy from delighted fisherman and the gentle murmurs of contentment over a crackling campfire. Other highlights from camp included nights of swing dancing, glow-in-the-dark dodgeball, and “Mocha and Music”—a favorite tradition. Best of all, the harmonious stanzas of praise lifted up in worship to our great God gave a faithful testimony to the wonderful week of fellowship enjoyed by all.

For more information, visit our Facebook page at “OPC Family Camp” or <http://www.harvestopc.org/index.php/connect/2013-02-23-16-41-46/family-camp.html>.



*Campers at the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario's Family Camp (photo by Vera Picknally)*