

NEW HORIZONS

in the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3 Then and Now at Palos Heights
// by Danny E. Olinger

AUG-SEPT 2017

7 A Servant's Summit
// by Jamie Dean



THE OPC IN

Chicagoland



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New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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The OPC's Diaconal Summit III was held at Wheaton College for three days in June. Shown here is keynote speaker David Apple during a discussion time. Sitting comfortably on the stage floor is Pastor Nathan Trice, a member of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries (also a speaker at the summit). For a full report on this gathering, see Jamie Dean's feature article on page 7.



THEN AND NOW AT PALOS HEIGHTS: 84TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY



DANNY E. OLINGER // When the Forty-first (1974) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church met on the campus of Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois, it was a big change. For the first time, the assembly met on a college campus, not at a local OP church or at Westminster Theological

Seminary in Philadelphia. The commissioners stayed in dormitories, not in homes of members, and ate in the dining hall, not in a church's fellowship hall with meals supplied by the local congregation.

Forty-three years later, the Eighty-fourth General Assembly returned to Trinity Christian College on May 31–June 6, 2017, with the innovations introduced by the Forty-first (1974) Assembly still in place. Six ministers—George Cottenden, Donald Duff, Richard Gaffin, Jr., Glenn Jerrell, John Mahaffy, and Stephen Phillips—were commissioners at both assemblies. These fathers in the faith, with a combined 293 years of ministerial service in the OPC, were not mere figureheads at the recent assembly. Mr. Duff nominated Larry Westerveld, pastor of Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pennsylvania, as moderator. Mr. Mahaffy served as the assistant stated clerk of the Assembly. Mr. Phillips, president of the OPC Trustees, presented the Trustees' report. Mr. Cottenden served as chairman of an advisory committee. Mr. Gaffin,

president of the Committee on Foreign Missions, helped present that committee's report and was elected to serve a three-year term for a record seventeenth time.

Statistician's Report

Luke Brown also participated in both assemblies. In 1974, Mr. Brown was a twenty-eight-year-old ruling elder and first-time commissioner from Church of the City in Philadelphia. At the Eighty-fourth Assembly, Mr. Brown, the OPC's statistician, gave a summary of statistics for 2016. A comparison of his report and Edward Haug's statistician's report to the Forty-first (1974) Assembly indicates that much has changed in the OPC in the forty-three years between the two assemblies. Mr. Haug reported that the total membership at the end of 1973 was 15,043, consisting of 210 ministers, 9,940 communicant members, and 4,893 baptized children. Mr. Brown reported that total membership at the end of 2016 was 30,918, consisting of 540 ministers, 22,745 communicant

members, and 7,633 baptized children or noncommunicants. Mr. Haug also reported that 126 churches and 22 chapels (mission works) were a part of the OPC. Mr. Brown reported 278 churches and 44 mission works in the OPC.

In his comments to the Assembly, Mr. Brown stated that a review of the noncommunicant history suggests that with over 540 children being added to the noncommunicant membership roll each year by baptism, some 80 percent of that roll consists of children below twelve years of age. Of the remaining 1,700 young people on the roll, 300 profess their faith and are enrolled as communicant members each year. Since most of our young people profess faith sometime during their teen years, there is no statistical indication that we are losing large numbers of covenant children, as is happening in some denominations.

Mr. Brown's pastor at Trinity OPC, Mr. Westerveld, was elected as the moderator of the Eighty-fourth (2017) Assembly. Upon accepting the honor, Mr. Westerveld lamented that



Incoming moderator Larry J. Westerveld (left) welcomed to the podium by outgoing moderator Paul Tavares

he had only one suit jacket for the week. Thankfully, not only his wardrobe, but also his moderating, fared well during the week, as he provided a consistent and firm hand in guiding the Assembly through its business.

Confessional Revision

The connections between the past and the present continued with the reports of the committees. In 1974, a potential merger of the OPC with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES) led the Forty-first Assembly to debate possible changes to Larger Catechism questions 86–89. In union talks, the RPCES had proposed amending those questions to ensure “eschatological liberty” in the confessional standards. Specifically, the suggested changes were to allow a place for ministers in the RPCES who held to premillennial eschatology and believed that WLC 86–89 excluded that

understanding of the second coming of Jesus Christ. The OPC’s Assembly did not agree. It stated that it was neither necessary nor wise to amend the questions.

This year’s assembly also considered matters related to the Westminster Standards. In response to the action of the Eighty-third (2016) Assembly, asking that it consider creating a “Modern English Study Version of the Shorter Catechism,” the Committee on Christian Education recommended to this Assembly “that it, in accordance with FG 32.3, elect a special committee or authorize a standing committee to make specific proposals for changes to the doctrinal standards of the OPC (The Con-

fession of Faith and Catechisms) that are morphological in nature (e.g., ‘thee’ to ‘you’ and ‘hath’ to ‘has’) and update clearly obsolete and archaic words (e.g., ‘stews’ in Larger Catechism 139).” The Assembly did not approve the recommendation, but referred it back to the CCE for perfecting. It also directed the CCE to confer with the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations

(CEIR) regarding whether the suggested recommendation should be communicated to other churches that adhere to the Westminster Standards.

The Bible Presbyterian Church

The Eighty-fourth Assembly’s invitation to the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC) to enter into an ecclesiastical relationship also has a historical connection with the Forty-first Assembly and its talks with the RPCES. In 1938, some members of the OPC (which was called the Presbyterian Church of America until 1939) departed to form the Bible Presbyterian Synod. They left over issues of eschatology (whether officers could adhere to dispensational theology), temperance (whether members could partake of alcoholic beverages), and the exact nature of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms adopted. In the mid-1950s, the Bible Presbyterian Synod split into two groups. One of them, the Bible Presbyterian Church, Columbus Synod, became the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in 1961. Four years later, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church merged with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod, to create the RPCES.

Now, years after the splits and mergers, CEIR administrator Jack



With the first-time commissioners standing behind them, the six commissioners who were also commissioners in 1974 sit with others: Don Duff, Dick Gaffin, Ross Graham (stated clerk), Larry Westerveld (moderator), John Mahaffy, Glenn Jerrell, Steve Phillips, George Cottenden, plus Roger Huibregtse



Fraternal delegates Reinier Noppers (left, from Australia) and Kevin Backus

Sawyer stated that there was a growing realization within the OPC and the BPC that there exists a common commitment to the Reformed faith as confessed in the Westminster Standards, and expressed in Presbyterian worship and government. He thanked BPC representative Kevin Backus, pastor of Bible Presbyterian Church in Grand Island, New York, for his role in bringing about the growing level of cordiality and trust between the two churches. This assembly marked the twenty-third consecutive year that Mr. Backus has represented the BPC. After voting to approve the CEIR recommendation to invite the BPC into ecclesiastical fellowship, the commissioners responded with a standing ovation.

New Committee Established

At the Forty-first (1974) Assembly,

the Committee on Foreign Missions announced that Lendall and Sherrill Smith were preparing to go to Taiwan as OPC missionaries. At the Eighty-fourth (2017) Assembly, Mr. Smith played a different role. As president of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries (CDM), he presented the committee's report, along with CDM administrator David Nakhla. Mr. Smith and Mr. Nakhla reported that the CDM's work today focuses on ministry to those in need in the OPC, ministry to those in need internationally, ministry to those affected by disasters, and ministry to pastors and their widows.

In 1974, the report of the CDM voiced the rising concern to provide for OPC ministers who were reaching retirement age without sufficient income. The issue of ministerial care has

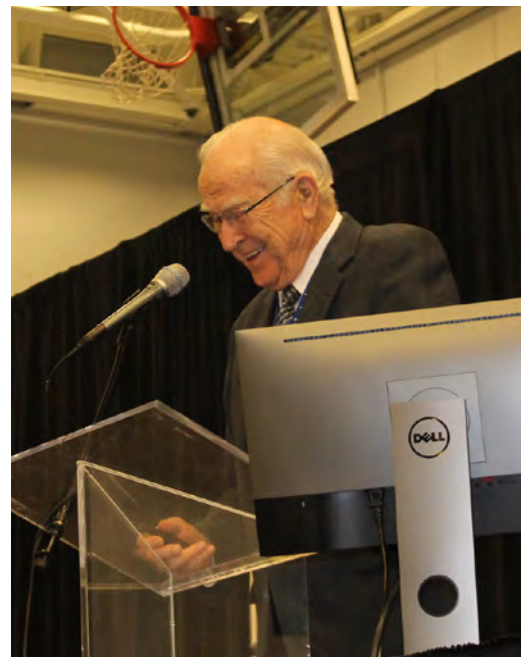
continued to be a major one in the OPC, and the Eighty-fourth (2017) Assembly took the rare step of closing one standing committee, the Committee on Pensions, and erecting in its place a new committee, the Committee on Ministerial Care. The Assembly amended its standing rules and accepted the recommendation that the initial membership include the following OPC officers: ruling elders Bruce Stahl, David Vander Ploeg, David Haney, Greg De Jong, and David Nakhla, and pastors Darren Thole, Clark Brooking, Douglas L. Watson, and Lendall Smith.

In closing the Committee on Pensions, the Assembly recognized Garret Hoogerhyde and Roger Huibregtse for their service. Mr. Hoogerhyde served on the Committee from its beginning in 1958 and Mr. Huibregtse from 1976. The Assembly adopted a resolution of praise and thanksgiving to God for the many decades of faithful service by Mr. Hoogerhyde and Mr. Huibregtse, attending to the needs of ministers and elders and the work of the Committee on Pensions. The Assembly also prayed for Mr. Hoogerhyde, who was hospitalized and unable to attend the Assembly.

Even during the devotions, the Assembly was reminded of 1974. Preaching from Philippians 1:21, Bill Welzien



Chad Van Dixhoorn and Al Tricarico



Roger Huibregtse

talked about his conversion, when, as a wandering hippie in Palestine, he was pursued by the Lord, who drew him to himself forty-three years ago.

Looking to the Future

Throughout the Assembly, it was evident that the Lord has blessed the OPC with experienced men who have given, and continue to give, their lives in service to the Lord. But it was equally evident that the Lord is raising up a new generation of ministers and elders in the church. Thirty-three ministers and elders from the seventeen presbyteries of the OPC were first-time commissioners. One of them, J. M., 36, preached at the opening worship service of the Assembly. Later he addressed the Assembly as the OPC's newest foreign missionary, as he will serve in East Asia with his wife, Elizabeth, and their five children. Young ministers Steve McDaniel and Chris Hartshorn were elected to the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension.

In addition to the new day of ecumenical relations with the Bible Presbyterian Church, the assembly made plans in 2018 to hold a joint assembly/synod in Wheaton, Illinois, with the United Reformed Churches in North America. The anticipated centerpiece of the meeting is the release of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, a project that the two churches have worked on together since



Brian and Dorothy Wingard being honored for their years of missionary service

2012. The two bodies also plan to share with each other their work in home and foreign missions, with the hope of finding areas of potential cooperation.

Douglas Bylsma reported for the Special Committee on Canadian Matters. Due to the Canadian Revenue Agency's restrictions on funds being transferred out of the country, OPC congregations in Beamsville, London, Meaford, and Sheffield, Ontario, and Airdrie, Alberta, have been unable to contribute to Worldwide Outreach. To remedy this situation, the Assembly established a Joint Ministry Agreement of eight members to be appointed by the Ontario Committee of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario.

Undoubtedly, the hardest work of the Assembly was sitting in a judicial capacity and hearing an appeal of a minister against the Presbytery of the Dakotas. After more than ten hours of deliberation over two working days, the Assembly sustained four specifications of error in favor of the appellant minister. The Assembly then determined that the sustained specifications of error were of such importance as to require the reversing of the judgment of the Presbytery.

The highlight of the last day of the General Assembly was the Committee on Foreign Mission's recognition of retired missionaries Brian and Dorothy Wingard. General secretary Mark Bube read a resolution of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord Jesus Christ for the Wingards' twenty-three years of missionary service in Kenya, Eritrea, Uganda, and South Africa. The Assembly responded with an extended ovation for the Wingards.

At the end of the meeting, many commissioners were mentally and physically exhausted from the work. And yet there was the shared belief that the Spirit of the Lord had been present and that the body had reached decisions with one accord. □

The author is the editor of New Horizons. Photos by Sara Grace Baugh, Kathryn Yen, and the author.



John Ferguson and Ken Smith from the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario

A SERVANT'S SUMMIT: DEACONS AS VISITORS



JAMIE DEAN // On a hot afternoon in the suburbs of Chicago, more than two hundred deacons, elders, and pastors from OPC congregations across the country hunched over plates of barbecue and settled into visiting with each other on a lawn in front of a residence hall at Wheaton College.

It was a fitting way to begin Diaconal Summit III, which would narrow in on a key concept: the powerful potential of a simple visit.

While deacons in the OPC serve their congregations in a crucial number of nitty-gritty, practical ways (from unlocking doors to managing funds), the summit in Wheaton emphasized a core pillar of life and ministry for all Christians: to *visit* widows and orphans, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

The Twin Passions

Pastor Nathan Trice, vice president of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries (CDM), called those two marks of pure and undefiled religion the “twin passions of vibrant Christianity” in his opening sermon from the book of James.

The diaconal summit at Wheaton College on June 15–17 was the third national gathering of OPC deacons organized by the CDM since 2010. The committee hopes the gatherings will encourage deacons in their service, offer practical training and guidance, and allow the men to fellowship with other

deacons in a common calling.

Before the first evening’s sermon, the men sang about the mandate God sets by his own example: “Well Jehovah loves the righteous, and the stranger he befriends, helps the fatherless and widow, judgment on the wicked sends.”

That beautiful line from a beloved hymn offered a template for the weekend’s emphasis on loving and helping both saints and strangers in our churches and communities across the country.

In his sermon from James 1:27, Pastor Trice noted the tension between serving in a broken world and keeping oneself unstained by the world.

He pointed to Jesus as the ultimate example of both mercy and holiness during his earthly life and ministry: he went to the broken, sinful, and needy, but he also maintained perfect purity.

Jesus also spoke about the kind of life he would commend on the Last Day: “I was sick and you *visited* me, I was in prison and *you came* to me.”

The sermon underscored the biblical calling to visit the vulnerable, shown in Jesus’ teaching and in James. Writing

a check may often be easier than spending time with someone, but visiting people is the form of ministry that is “the most costly and the most effective.”

While all Christians are called to such service—spending time with those in need and offering gospel hope—the sermon emphasized that deacons are called to lead their congregations in this ministry: “The church needs you as deacons to lead them in what is indispensable to authentic Christianity.”

With such a high calling, the summit moved to a time of prayer, with the deacons asking the Lord to help them in their ministries and churches. The prayers of the men offered a glimpse of their zeal and humility:

“We pray that you would so inflame our hearts that we might return to our homes and see it take root and catch fire in our churches.”

“Be with our congregations that don’t have diaconates, and raise up men to serve you.”

“Let every day be a day when we look for people in need of a cup of

cold water.”

“Give us humility and compassion.”

“Preserve our churches for the glory of your name and the spread of the gospel.”

The next day began with a hearty breakfast, as the deacons sat at tables by presbytery. These meals encouraged fellowship and networking among deacons serving in the same regional bodies. Some deacons used the opportunities to make plans or discuss how their local churches could work together.

The morning session began with singing, and the deacons proclaimed their hope to work hard back home: “No strength of our own and no goodness we claim; yet, since we have known of the Savior’s great name, in this our strong tower for safety we hide: the Lord is our power, ‘The Lord will provide.’”

Unwrapping the Grave Clothes of the Dead

The Lord’s provision was a central theme of the morning, as the summit’s keynote speaker, Dr. David Apple, addressed the gathering. He has directed the ministry of mercy at Tenth Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Philadelphia since 1988, and he oversees some two hundred volunteers reaching out to the

neediest in the congregation and surrounding community.

He’s also the author of *Not Just a Soup Kitchen*, a book about the theology and practical outworking of mercy ministry in local churches. (Each deacon received a copy of the book during the summit.)

Dr. Apple didn’t emphasize his credentials as he addressed the men. Instead, he began with the remarkable story of his own brokenness and need, and the work of Christ’s redemption and restoration in his own life.

As a young boy, Dr. Apple was struck by a car and suffered severe injuries that doctors thought would leave him unable to walk. The Lord did restore his ability to walk, but his recovery was grueling and slow, with painful rehabilitation and surgeries for years to come.

He also suffered sexual abuse in childhood, and later became a single dad to three small children when his first wife left their home. He endured years of heavy trials and depression that at times left him desperate.

Dr. Apple said the Lord intervened through Christians who visited, listened, and offered the comfort of the gospel. It was a powerful affirmation of how the Lord can use visitation in the lives of the most needy.

That experience informs his work at Tenth Presbyterian, where members of the congregation reach out to the many homeless people, drug addicts, prostitutes, and others living near their downtown location.

Though many churches aren’t located in the heart of downtown areas, Dr. Apple says the ministry of deacons is the same: “bringing light to hard places” and “approaching people’s misery” in whatever form it takes.

He said remembering that every person is made in God’s image is crucial when ministering to those in the depths of sin and those deeply sinned against.

He compared such ministry to “unwrapping the grave clothes of the walking dead,” as Jesus commanded the crowd outside Lazarus’s tomb to do for him. He offered several examples of ministry to people in extreme need that showed how his church has reached out to people who seem unreachable.

Does it work? Not every person comes to know Christ or repents from sinful patterns. But as the church offers practical help and gospel teaching, Dr. Apple said, they have seen the Lord accomplish great things in people’s lives. It was a helpful reminder that deacons are called to visit and serve the needy, not to fix them: the Holy Spirit alone can bring new life and lasting change.

The Holy Spirit must also empower the work of visiting and serving. “We can minister in walking gravesites, if we know the power of the resurrection in our own lives,” Dr. Apple said.

In afternoon sessions, the men broke into groups by presbytery to discuss some of the realities of being in the diaconal ring.

David Nakhla, the CDM administrator, talked about the nuts and bolts of how local churches can work with their presbyteries and the CDM to meet needs beyond their local churches.

Chris Sudlow, a CDM member and a deacon at Bethel OPC in Wheaton, Illinois, walked through a handful of case studies that show



Participants at the Diaconal Summit

the kinds of situations deacons may face, and how they can navigate difficult decisions and relationships.

The session sparked questions and discussions of practical matters for deacons in their home churches, and Sunday ended by encouraging the men to be gentle and consider what it's like to be a church member asking for help.

Lendall Smith, a retired minister and president of the CDM, brought pastoral wisdom on avoiding pitfalls of diaconal ministry. He encouraged the men to "cultivate a culture of mercy" in their churches that encourages the members to join them in the work of showing the love of Christ to others.

Not Growing Weary in Doing Good

Matt Avery, a deacon at Provi-

dence OPC in Bradenton, Florida, has been working to cultivate that culture in his church for nearly a decade. He's one of two deacons in his congregation of about one hundred members, and he serves on his presbytery's diaconal committee.

Diaconal ministry in Florida can present its own unique challenges. Some areas are prone to hurricanes, making disaster response important. And many retirees move to Florida, making churches more likely to have widows and others who may need special care.

When it comes to disasters, Avery said his presbytery is in an ongoing process of being prepared to respond. When it comes to widows and other needs in the local congregation, he and

his fellow deacon have a simple plan: visitation. The deacons set a schedule for meeting with church members in their homes, and have discovered needs they didn't know existed.

Avery said he loves his calling, and he appreciates the summit's emphasis on the ministry of visitation: "I've been encouraged to not grow weary in doing good." He also appreciates the fellowship with many other deacons: "There are only two of us at the church, but here you're around so many others who know how it feels and know what you're going through."

Visiting Families

Richard Cocanour said that was helpful for him as well. The deacon from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Marina, California, has served in the office for over two decades, and he said it's helpful to compare notes with other deacons from around the country and hear what works for them: "There's a thousand years of experience in there—it's crazy not to take advantage of it."

Cocanour and his fellow deacon also visit members of their church. They pay close attention to those whom they know have particular needs, but they visit the other members of the congregation as well: "We want them to know that we are their deacons."

He said that visiting all the families gives them a chance to be visible to church members who might not interact with their ministry on a regular basis, and helps them to know how to pray for their congregation. Visiting in homes has deepened their bonds in the church and has "profoundly changed our ministry."

That crucial diaconal ministry goes forward in OP churches across the country. Before leaving, the deacons sang together about their work for Christ and his church: "My secret heart is taught the truth that makes thy children free: a life of self-renouncing love is one of liberty." □

The author, a journalist, is a member of Matthews OPC in Matthews, N.C.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

When the body of Alan Kurdi, a three-year-old Syrian refugee, washed up on the shores of Turkey after drowning during his family's escape in September 2015, the world mourned. So did members of the OPC.

CDM administrator David Nakhla says the OPC's administrative office has received an unprecedented number of inquiries from local congregations asking how they can help refugees caught up in the current crisis. The inquiries peaked when a news photo captured young Alan's tragic death.

Nakhla gave an overview of the refugee crisis at the diaconal summit, noting that currently 65 million people across the world have fled their countries or their homes. In seeking to help, he said, the OPC's goal is to look for local churches directly involved in ministry of word and deed to refugees, or to look for churches with OPC connections.

The OPC has distributed funds in the last year for refugee ministry in Greece and Uganda. In Greece, the Greek Evangelical Church is assisting Middle Eastern refugees fleeing violence. In Uganda, PCA missionaries and others are assisting the massive flow of refugees fleeing war in South Sudan.

With such overwhelming needs, how can local churches help the refugees in their own communities? Nakhla offered lessons from churches already engaged in refugee ministry overseas. For example, start small, take the opportunities the Lord sends, be a learner, and be a good neighbor.

There are also opportunities in our own denomination. A congregation in Atlanta has called an evangelist to work in Clarkston, Georgia—a city with one of the highest refugee concentrations in the country. At the OPC's Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, New Jersey, summer staffers have said they are seeing more openness for friendship and discussion among Muslims working on the boardwalk during the summer.

Nakhla noted that the command to love sojourners comes from Scripture, and he offered the examples of many displaced people in the Bible: from Abraham to Elijah, and from the exiles to our own Lord Jesus. Ultimately, we too are sojourners, he said: "We are all strangers. We are not at home."

THE REFORMATION ON SUFFERING: AFFLICTION FOR CHRIST'S SAKE



BRIAN DE JONG // Vicious violence marked the brief reign of King Frances II of France. His ascension to the throne in July 1559 inaugurated eighteen months of excruciating pain for French Protestants. One historian of that era described the atrocities as follows: “There was nothing but arrestations and imprisonments,

pillage of houses, outlawries, and massacres of the servants of God.”

The intense suffering of the Huguenots for the gospel moved John Calvin to send a letter of comfort and encouragement to his French brethren. In that communiqué, Calvin reflected on the place of suffering in the life of the believer. He wrote, “Persecutions are the true combats of Christians to try the constancy and firmness of their faith.”

This was not the only instance of the persecution of Protestants during the Reformation. Suffering became commonplace for those who left the relative safety of Roman Catholicism. From that experience of affliction arose a ripening understanding of this difficult reality. Simply put, suffering forces reflection, and reflection in turn equips the believer to endure future persecution.

Over time, the Reformers developed a mature perspective on suffering.

Four related components of the Reformation contributed to this deepening understanding:

- their own personal experiences,
- their focus on the Scriptures,
- their attention to the person and work of Christ, and
- their doctrine of the Christian life.

There are many varieties of suffering that are experienced by the human race generally. Injury, sickness, and death show the physical effects of the fall. Relational misery is another result of sin, as men are alienated and estranged from one another. And there has never yet been a shortage of suffering brought about by wars and rumors of wars, as governments vex the citizenry. Often economic hardship follows in the wake of such warfare. This is not to mention the innumerable cases of affliction brought on by sinful choices, which then lead to necessary conse-

quences and, sometimes, divine chastisements. But the Reformers focused on spiritual suffering, even more than on the generic difficulties of life: pain and distress experienced for the sake of the gospel.

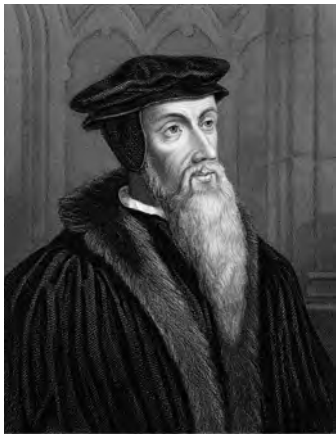
The Reformers themselves were no strangers to affliction; they encountered all of the varieties of suffering to one degree or another. Luther, Calvin, Knox, and their followers continually lived in the crucible of suffering. From their acute personal trials arose sanctified meditation on the nature, purposes, and ends of suffering. God used their pain to help them think through a topic that we instinctively avoid.

In the midst of their many trials, the Reformers maintained the practice of carefully expounding the Scriptures. Their dedication to the Word of God led them to ponder such books as Job, Jeremiah, and James. Commenting on James 1:3, Calvin says,

We certainly dread diseases, and want, and exile, and prison, and reproach, and death, because we regard them as evils; but when we understand that they are turned through God's kindness unto helps and aids to our salvation, it is ingratitude to murmur, and not willingly to submit to be thus paternally dealt with.

Because the Reformers were diligent students of the Scriptures, they regularly encountered the recurring theme of suffering in the Bible.

The study of Scripture produced a Christ-centered theology in the Reformers. In their devotion to the person and work of our Savior, they rightly emphasized his cross. He was the Suffering Servant prophesied by Isaiah—the man of sorrows. Reflecting on the words of Isaiah 53:5, “by his wounds we are healed,” Calvin writes:



John Calvin

Here the Prophet draws a contrast between us and Christ; for in us nothing can be found but destruction and death; in Christ alone is life and salvation, he alone brought medicine to us, and even procures health by his weakness, and life by his death; for he alone hath pacified the Father, he alone hath reconciled us to him.... Let everyone, therefore, draw consolation from this passage, and let him apply the blessed result of this doctrine to his own use; for these words are spoken to all in general, and to individuals in particular.

It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that the Reformers viewed the Christian life as one of bearing one's cross. In his *Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life* (excerpted from his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*), Calvin argues:

It is fitting for the faithful Christian to rise to a still higher level where Christ calls every disciple to ‘take up

his cross.’ For all whom the Lord has chosen and received into the society of his saints ought to prepare themselves for a life that is hard, difficult, laborious and full of countless griefs.

Luther shared this perspective, as Carl Trueman has demonstrated (see *New Horizons*, October 2005). After showing how Luther used his “theology of the cross” to reformulate various theological points, as well as Christian ethics and living, Trueman summarizes

Luther's outlook in this way: “The cross is paradigmatic for how God will deal with believers who are united to Christ by faith. In short, great blessing will come through great suffering.”

Thus these four factors worked together to produce a full-orbed view of persecution and suffering. But what exactly was this perspective? In his letter to the Huguenots in

1559, Calvin recounted God's various purposes in assigning affliction to his people. Through suffering, God refines us like gold in the furnace, he said. Trials curb our love for this world, correct evil tendencies in us, restrain our native pride, and cultivate Christlike humility. Then Calvin pointed his readers to what he considered God's greatest purpose in these dark providences: “Above all by suffering he wishes us to be conformed to the image of his Son, as it is fitting that there should be conformity between the head and the members.” Being united to Christ by faith, we share in his sufferings as well as in his glory. We are conformed to him in his death and in his resurrection. We are inducted into the fellowship of his sufferings, and like our Savior, we attain glory only through the cross.

In comments on Philippians 3:10, Calvin can say,

Christ crucified is set before us, that we may follow him through tribula-

tions and distresses; and hence the resurrection of the dead is expressly made mention of, that we may know that we must die before we live. This is a continued subject of meditation to believers so long as they sojourn in this world. This, however, is a choice consolation, that in all our miseries we are partakers of Christ's Cross, if we are his members; so that through afflictions the way is opened up for us to everlasting blessedness.

Persecution in America?

Orthodox Presbyterian history has included its own episodes of suffering for Christ's sake. In the early days, buildings were confiscated, courageous leaders were unjustly disciplined by the old denomination, our missionaries were frequently harassed, and even prominent newspapers heaped scorn upon the us. No, we are not strangers to suffering!

The horizon ahead of us may seem dark and ominous. As Western culture is increasingly secularized, tolerance of a vocal Christian minority may quickly evaporate. Some cultural elites menace Christians who have the audacity to object to the moral revolution happening all around.

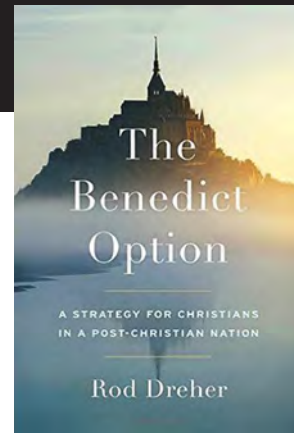
Only God knows whether the future holds persecution for the American church. If this is what he has ordained, then let us remember the heritage of the Reformation. In the writings of the Reformers—and especially in John Calvin—we have a treasury of wisdom for coping with suffering.

As we stand for the gospel in our day—and stand, we must—we should not be surprised to find that the saying is true: “All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim. 3:12). But even as we share in his sufferings, we also anticipate sharing in his glory. And for that reason we can say with Paul, “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom. 8:18). □

The author is the pastor of Grace OPC in Sheboygan, Wis.

REVIEW: *THE BENEDICT OPTION*

// D. G. HART



On the centennial of J. Gresham Machen's birth (July 28, 1881), Charles Dennison observed in *New Horizons* that the man in many ways responsible for the OPC died a long way from where he started. Dennison, then the historian for the OPC, was not just commenting on the distance between Baltimore and Bismarck, North Dakota, where Machen succumbed to pneumonia. The historian was also drawing attention to the cultural isolation that Machen experienced over the course of his life. The son of a well-to-do Baltimore attorney, he studied at elite universities and rubbed shoulders with the nation's wealthiest and most influential persons. Yet Machen went to his grave as the leader of a small, obscure, and largely discredited cause—ministering the Word of God according to Presbyterian orthodoxy. Machen's life as a pilgrim in exile, Dennison believed, was also true for the OPC. This was not a communion characterized by prestige or cultural influence. Dennison repeatedly called upon Orthodox Presbyterians to remember and embrace their heritage. The OPC, he wrote, “begins where Machen ended and that is her secret, her genius, and her calling.” The OPC's founding was a recognition that Christians are called to be strangers and aliens, a peculiar people, not transformers of culture.

Not everyone in the OPC shared Dennison's call for cultural exile or his interpretation of the church's founding, but Rod Dreher's new book, *The Benedict Option*, is a confirmation that Machen and Dennison had a point in eschewing the American mainstream for ecclesiastical authenticity. A writer at *The American Conservative* with a remarkable knack for hitting the sweet spot of discontent among Americans who prefer tradition to progress, Dreher with this book adds to his reputation for thinking beyond small government, a strong national defense, balanced budgets, and family values. He argues that American Christians (and he tries to write with Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox in

mind—he has been all three) are in the midst of a deluge that threatens the family, morality, communities, and churches. He quotes an Anglican theologian approvingly: “There is no safe place in the world or in our churches within which to be a Christian. It is a new epoch.”

The current revolution in sexuality and marriage is the culmination of a long process, Dreher argues, begun even in the late Middle Ages, which saw the secular triumph over the sacred. Christians now confront a situation similar to what Benedict of Nursia experienced at the time of the Roman Empire's collapse in the fifth century. Just as Benedict formed a monastic community to preserve a Christian witness and culture, Dreher argues, so also contemporary believers need a “Benedict Option” to preserve the faith and pass it on to future generations. (The anomaly of monastic ideals and having children is a conundrum that runs through this book.)

The qualities that informed monasticism—order, work, prayer, asceticism, stability, community, and hospitality—are features that Dreher recommends to Christians in their everyday lives. This Benedictine outlook means above all being intentional about distinguishing Christianity from the surrounding culture. Parents should consider living in neighborhoods with like-minded Christians. They should also pay attention to the education children receive by looking at classical Christian academies or homeschooling. Christians should also, Dreher says, recognize the value of hard work and the virtues it instills, one of which includes rejecting the casual attitude to sex that prevails in the modern West. It also means that Christians should be self-conscious about their use of social media and other technologies that distract from either reflection or quiet.

The greatest weakness of Dreher's prescription is his understanding of Christianity. On the one hand, he idealizes a medieval social order, the kind that sustained Benedictine monasticism. That older European society assumed God haunted everything, all parts of creation and society were also signs of God's presence, and the whole world was sacramental. This means, of course, that Protestantism rained on Christendom's party by destroying the sacred canopy that bequeathed

religious significance to all parts of human existence. Luther and his fellow travelers were not entirely to blame for upending Christendom. Renaissance humanists and modern scientists and philosophers also added to the decline of Christian Europe. But Dreher's narrative of the West reinforces the idea, made popular recently by Brad Gregory in *The Unintended Reformation* (2012), that Protestants "segregated the sacred from the secular" in ways that led to the current climate of cultural relativism. Whatever the merits of that historical claim, and there are a few, it conflicts with Dreher's larger aim of writing for all of "us" Christians. He hopes that all Christians can embrace the Benedict Option, and yet the book implicitly favors older over modern forms of Christianity. Dreher should have been more forthright about his own religious beliefs.

On the other hand, Dreher adopts a utilitarian approach to Christianity. It is most evident in his chapter on church life, which begins with a quotation by historian Robert Louis Wilkin, that "nothing is more needful today than the survival of Christian culture." Dreher does use the word "gospel" a number of times, but whoever indexed the book did not think the subject merited an entry in the index. It was omitted for good reason, since Dreher's book shows more concern for culture than for the gospel, that is, salvation. Indeed, the sacraments and liturgical worship become vehicles to raise an awareness of God's presence in the universe, while iPads and

[Continued on page 22]

☆ Congratulations

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

- **Renata Boulay**, *Westminster OPC, Hamden, CT*
- **Daniel Holst**, *Hamden, CT*
- **Ruth Holst**, *Hamden, CT*
- **Ellis Joseph Marcel**, *Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod, West Barnstable, MA*
- **Isaac Morrison**, *Grace and Peace Presbyterian Church, California, MD*

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

- **Margaret Bandstra**, *Westminster OPC, Hollidaysburg, PA*
- **Chaya Detrich**, *Hollidaysburg, PA*
- **Bethany Orr**, *Hollidaysburg, PA*

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

- **Johnny McCabe**, *Grace OPC, Vienna, VA*
- **Grace Houghton**, *Grace and Peace Presbyterian Church, California, MD*
- **Patience Yeh**, *California, MD*

OUR MEMBERSHIP VOWS

The Importance of the Trinity

Glen J. Clary

The second membership vow of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is about the Trinity.

Do you believe in one living and true God, in whom eternally there are three distinct persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—who are the same in being and equal in power and glory, and that Jesus Christ is God the Son, come in the flesh?

The word *Trinity* is made up of two parts: *tri* (meaning "three") and *unity* (meaning "one"). The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there is only one God in three distinct Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We often hear references to the Trinity in our worship services. For example, pastors baptize, as Jesus instructed, "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

Many hymns in *Trinity Hymnal* refer to the Trinity. The doxology, for example, ends with the words "Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Likewise, the first stanza of the popular hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy!" praises the triune God:

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee. Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Many churches recite the Apostles' Creed as a confession of faith. You may have noticed that it has three parts, which correspond to the three persons of the Trinity: "I believe in God the Father Almighty.... I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son.... I believe in the Holy Spirit...."

Pastors regularly close the worship service with Paul's Trinitarian benediction, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God [the Father] and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14).

As we can see, the doctrine of the Trinity plays a central role in Christian theology and worship.

● Out of the Mouth . . .

As our daughter Esther, age 3, was reviewing the Catechism for Young Children, we came to question 17: "How did God create man?" She responded: "God created man, email and female, after his own image."

—Josiah Walters
Sterling, Va.

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

MONEY AND STEWARDSHIP

// STEPHEN L. PHILLIPS

Money. Interesting. It certainly is mentioned on many Christian programs on TV and radio, and some think that money is the most talked about topic from the pulpit. In a way, that's understandable. After all, Christian programs do need money to stay on the air, and churches need to pay the mortgage, the cost of upkeep and repairs, the salary of its pastoral staff and any others on the payroll, the askings of presbytery and general assembly for home and foreign missions, for local and denominational diaconal needs, etc.

One suspects that a good portion of those who would criticize the church for asking for money may be guilty of overlooking the same emphasis by many secular entities, if not the whole of our cultural. My wife and I make weekly trips to visit her 97-year-old father, who is in a personal care facility. As we enter that facility, the TV is on in the lobby, being watched by a handful of residents. What are they usually watching? Game shows, where people in the studio audience cheer the contestants on to the big cash prize.

One also suspects that a good portion of those who would criticize the church for asking for money may be guilty of being blind to their own personal emphasis on money. How many career choices are actually made based on something other than money? At least money is an important consideration.

Back to the church. The session once asked me to preach on stewardship—because giving was down. I indicated that I would, and starting working on the assignment. There followed three messages on stewardship. I think the session members were surprised that in none of those sermons was money at the fore. That's because money is not at the fore when the word “stewardship” is used in Scripture. Does that surprise you, as it did me—and them? We'll look at some texts, but first the basics: the New Testament word “stewardship” (*oikonomia*) comes from the word for “steward” (*oikonomos*), meaning “one

who has responsibility over a house (*oikos*) or an estate.” There are examples of a steward in the Old Testament (e.g., Gen. 43 and 44; Isa. 22:15; Dan. 1:11) and in the New Testament, especially in Jesus' parables (e.g., Luke 12:35–48; 16:1–13; see also Titus 1:7, concerning the qualifications of elders).

We'll take a look at four verses in the ESV, but please note that not all translations will use the word “stewardship” when *oikonomia* appears:

1 Corinthians 9:17—“For if I do this [preach the gospel, v. 16] of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship.”

Ephesians 3:2—“... assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you.”

Colossians 1:25—“... [the church] of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known.”

1 Timothy 1:3–4—“... not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.”

Clearly, stewardship for Paul centers on the good news of God's grace in Christ and how he fulfills his calling as a preacher of the gospel. This should be the primary focus of every preacher and of every church. For the church, money should simply be a tool to help accomplish that purpose.

The author is a retired OP minister.

WHERE'S THE CHART?

Charts and graphs can be helpful by putting data into a visual format. But when the graphs always seem to look the same, our eyes just glance past them. This month we are changing things up to try to communicate the message more effectively.

The Worldwide Outreach ministries of the OPC (Home Missions, Foreign Missions, and Christian Education) depend upon the regular giving of your local church and you. **To date, that giving has been approximately 20% below the approved budget.** As we approach the fall months, ministry decisions will begin to be impacted by these significant shortfalls.

Let us all consider how we can help to close this gap and enable our missionaries and others to carry out the important ministries that we have entrusted to them.

Note: If you would like to consider making a gift of stock or donating your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your retirement account, please contact David Haney for tax-saving information at david.haney@opc.org or call him direct at 215-935-1018.

Items pertaining specifically to September are in italics.

1. **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Eric as he prepares for and teaches classes at Knox Theological College. / **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Immanuel OPC in Andover, Minn. Pray that God would powerfully use Jim's sermons on the covenants of the Bible. / Navy chaplain **John (and Linda) Carter**.
2. **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray for San Antonio Reformed Church's growth groups in homes around the city. / **Charles and Connie Jackson**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of young people. / Navy chaplain **Tim (and Janine) Power**.
3. **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the diaconal and construction work in Karamoja. / **Brett and Maryann Mahlen**, Orland Park, Ill. Pray that many will come to the Lord through Brett's preaching and evangelism in the prison. / **Daniel Bobick**, summer intern at Calvary Community Church in Harmony Township, N.J.
4. **Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, Ky. Pray that Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church will be organized by 2020. / Missionary associates **Leah Hopp** and **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that the Lord would equip them for their labors. / **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
5. *Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson**, in Sudan teaching a course on homiletics to African refugee pastors.* / Pray for the discipleship and ministry of **Miller (and Stephanie) Ansell**, church-planting intern, Houston, Tex. / **Andrew (and Cyndi) Myers**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.
6. **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. (downtown). Pray for the strengthening of Gospel Life Presbyterian Church's core group in love and unity. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that many will attend Bible lessons held in local villages each week. / **Andrew Farr**, yearlong intern at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, Mich.
7. **David and Rashel Robbins**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for their health and strength as they labor in a tropical climate. / Home Missions associate general secretary **Al Tricarico**. / Short-term missions coordinator **David Nakhla**. Pray that the labors of summer short-term



Miller and Stephanie Ansell

- teams and individuals would be used by the Lord to draw the hearts of all involved to himself.
8. **Phil Strong**, Lander, Wyo. Pray for open doors for the gospel and for Grace Reformed Fellowship's willingness to step through them. / Missionary associate **Angela Voskuil**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for students and teachers as the new school term begins. / Pray that the production of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* will go smoothly and efficiently.
 9. **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray that they will be an encouragement to members of their ministry team. / **Jeremy and Gwen Baker**, Yuma, Ariz. Pray for increasing outreach opportunities at Yuma OPC. / **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the finance director, and **Doug Watson**, part-time staff accountant.
 10. Pray for **Bill and Margaret Shishko**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Connecticut and Southern New York. Pray that God would provide more contacts from Bill's radio program. / **Church in the Horn of Africa**. Pray for the many suffering believers in this country. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.
 11. **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for those providing leadership in the church. / **Mike and Katy Myers**, Royston, Ga. Pray for a smooth and God-honoring transition when Heritage Presbyterian Church becomes an organized congregation. / **Stephen Pribble**, OPC.org senior technical associate.
 12. **Larry and Kalynn Oldaker**, Huron, Ohio. Pray for fruit from Grace Fellowship OPC's outreach efforts. / Missionary associate **Janine Eygenraam**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for follow-up with those who attended this summer's English Bible camps. / Pray for **stated clerk Ross Graham** as he works to produce the minutes and yearbook of the 84th General Assembly.
 13. **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for spiritual growth in the church families on La Gonâve and in Port-au-Prince. / **Paul and Sarah Moureale**, St. Louis, Mo. Pray that God would make Gateway OPC's community outreach fruitful. / Pray for **the students and instructors** at the Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC's Intensive Training, held this week at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.
 14. **David and Rebekah Graves**, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Pray that God would continue to add new members to Coeur d'Alene Reformed Church. / Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray for their efforts to witness for Christ in their community. / Pray for Christian Education general secretary **Danny Olinger** as he serves as director of the MTIOPC.
 15. Affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne**

- and **Linda Karner**, Japan. Pray for effective outreach programs. / **Matt and Elin Prather**, Corona, Calif. Pray that members of Corona Presbyterian Church will continue to grow in love for God and neighbor. / **Scott (and Elizabeth) Creel**, summer intern at Calvary OPC in Tallahassee, Fla.
- 16.** Home Missions general secretary **John Shaw**. / Pray that the Lord would provide for the needs of our retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Cal and Edie Cummings, Greet Rietkerk**, and **Young and Mary Lou Son**. / *Ordained Servant* editor **Greg Reynolds** and proofreader **Diane Olinger**.
- 17.** Pray for **Mr. and Mrs. J. M.** and their family, Asia, as they adjust to their new living and working situation on the foreign field. / **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray for God to add to the congregation of Keys Presbyterian Church. / **Jeremy (and Kourtney) Brandenburg**, summer intern at Calvary OPC in Glenside, Pa.
- 18.** **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, Fla. Pray for wisdom for Christ the King Presbyterian Church in finding a new facility. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia (on furlough). Pray that their time of furlough will refresh and strengthen them for future service. / **Daniel (and Marcy) Borvan**, yearlong intern at Merrimack Valley Presbyterian Church in North Andover, Mass.
- 19.** Pray for a quick adjustment to life on the foreign field for new missionary associates **Schylie La Belle**, Uganda, and **A. P. and M. S.**, Asia. / Pray for God's blessing on **Ryan (and Rachel) Heaton**, church-planting intern, Naples, Florida. / **Zachary (and Annie) Simmons**, yearlong intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Ill.
- 20.** **Jason and Amanda Kirklin**, Waco, Tex. Pray for Trinity OPC, that God's elect will be brought in. / Pray for tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia, as she and the other teachers prepare for the fall term at the university. / **James (and Ella) Clark**, summer intern at Grace OPC in Lynchburg, Va.
- 21.** **Mr. and Mrs. M. M.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. M. as he examines men for licensure and ordination. / **Jim and Eve Cassidy**, Austin, Tex. Pray for God's blessing on South Austin Presbyterian Church's outreach and visitation. / Summer interns: **Brendan Westerfield** at Redeemer OPC in Beavercreek, Ohio, and **Ben Petersen** at Bonita OPC in Bonita, Calif.
- 22.** **Lowell and Mae Ivey**, Virginia Beach, Va. Pray that God would bring new people to Reformation Presbyterian Church. / Pray for tentmaker missionary **T. D.**, Asia, assisting the M. family with their children's education. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
- 23.** Pray for the labors of missionary associates **E. K.**, Asia, and **Kathleen Winslow**, Czech Republic. / **Christopher and Ann Malamisuro**, Cincinnati, Ohio. Pray that Good Shepherd OPC's hope and joy in the Lord will be sustained in the days ahead. / **Jeremiah (and Natalia) Dickinson**, summer intern at Lakeview OPC in Rockport, Maine.
- 24.** **Daniel and Amber Doleys**, Springfield, Ohio. Praise God for his continued blessing on Living Water OPC. / Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic. Pray that more people eager to know the Lord will attend worship services. / **Zach (and Sandra) Siggins**, summer intern at Living Hope OPC in Gettysburg, Pa.
- 25.** Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he reports to the Committee on Foreign Missions this week. / **Tim and Deborah Herndon**, West Lebanon, N.H. Pray that the Lord would raise up local officers for Providence OPC. / **Benjamin (and Tiffany) Ward**, summer intern at Redemption OPC in Gainesville, Fla.
- 26.** **Chris and Nancy Walmer**, area home missions coordinator, Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania. Pray for church planting exploratory work in the region. / Pray for Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Katrina Zartman**. / *New Horizons* managing editor **Jim Scott** and editorial assistant **Pat Clawson**.
- 27.** **Ethiopian Reformed Presbyterian Church**. Pray that seekers will respond in faith to the message of salvation. / **Kim and Barbara Kuhfuss**, Eau Claire, Wis. Pray for God to raise up elders at Providence Reformed Church. / **Mark Lowrey**, director of publications at Great Commission Publications.
- 28.** **Mika and Christina Edmondson**, Grand Rapids, Mich. Pray for continued development in the ministry of New City Fellowship. / **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for our missionaries as they interact with their neighbors. / **Daniel (and Victoria) Garcia**, yearlong intern at Escondido OPC in Escondido, Calif.
- 29.** **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for contacts who are hearing the gospel for the first time. / **Josh and Kristen McKamy**, Chambersburg, Pa. Pray that new contacts will attend worship and consider a new members' class at Covenant OPC this fall. / **Aijalon (and Jana) Church**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Sinking Spring, Pa.
- 30.** **Matthew and Lois Cotta**, Pasadena, Calif. Pray for Pasadena Presbyterian Church, that the lost will be brought in. / Missionary associates **Markus and Sharon Jeromin**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for Markus as he assists in the Mission's ministries. / *New Horizons* cover designer **Chris Tobias** and proofreader **Sarah Pederson**.
- 31.** Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Rebecca Call** and **Sabrina Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay. / **Bob and Grace Holda**, Oshkosh, Wis. Pray that members and visitors at Resurrection Presbyterian Church will grow in faith and love through God's ordinary means of grace. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund administrator, and **Mark Stumpff**, OPC office assistant.

THE REFORMATION COMES TO "CATHOLIC" QUEBEC

// BERNARD WESTERVELD, JR.



The congregation of the Église réformée St-Marc in Quebec City, Quebec

The Reformation penetrated Catholic Europe five hundred years ago. Today an interest in the Reformation is penetrating "Catholic" Quebec.

I speak of "Catholic" Quebec with quotation marks because the religious convictions of Quebecers do not match our general perception of classic Roman Catholicism. While past generations bitterly recalled the scandalous conduct of priests, and while converts decry the heretical teachings that blinded parishioners in the past, today Quebecers are by and large only culturally Catholic. It is part of their heritage, but not an active practice. This religious ambivalence creates an openness to explore other religious expressions, including the Protestant Reformation, in quite unprecedented ways.

A Bit of History

The City of Quebec was founded in 1608 by Samuel Champlain, who had been baptized in the Reformed Church of La Rochelle, France. However, Champlain eventually converted to Catholicism, and the city and colony that he founded also became staunchly Roman Catholic.

When Jesuit priests were sent to New France in 1625, one of their objectives was to eradicate the "*RPR—religion prétendue réformée*" (the alleged Reformed religion). Extensive historical research has never found any trace of a Reformed place of worship having been established in the French colony. Most of the devout Huguenot believers moved south into the Thirteen Colonies. Others left the Reformed faith, though occasionally remaining Protestant at heart—as French Bibles and Huguenot Psalters confiscated by priests testify.

Harsh opposition to any Reformed French-language mission work or places of worship continued well into the late twentieth century. You may have read D. A. Carson's tribute to his father, *Memoirs of an Ordinary Pastor*. As early as the late 1940s, Tom Carson, originally from Ontario, Canada (like

me), undertook missionary work among the French-speaking Quebecers. He and particularly his converts faced severe opposition from the Catholic priests and parishioners.

But times have changed in Quebec. The Quiet Revolution of the 1960s dethroned the Catholic hierarchy. While some 80 percent of Quebecers still identify themselves as Catholic, barely 5 percent attend mass, and most of them would be quite elderly.

Reformation Interest

Today many Quebec Catholics, who pride themselves on being open-minded (but rarely committed), are interested in exploring, studying, and even investing in the discovery of the Reformation. *Radio Galilée*, an all-Catholic radio station broadcasting in three major urban areas, is airing information about the Reformers. The layman appointed by Quebec City's diocese to handle ecumenical relations approached me, as well as other Protestant and evangelical leaders, to learn what we were doing to celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. He personally spearheaded the presentation of a film about Martin Luther, and he regularly informs the Quebec City ecumenical network of other Reformation celebrations, including our conference and concert, detailed below.

The theological faculty of Laval University, still recognized by the Vatican for training its priests, has offered a weeklong intensive course on the Reformation. One of the guest professors is Dr. Jason Zuidema, an ordained servant of the *Église réformée du Québec* (ERQ: the Reformed Church of Quebec). A Reformation conference is being planned for this autumn. On a related note, the same Catholic faculty has signed administrative agreements with three evangelical seminaries and recently established a chair of Protestant evangelical missions in the French-speaking world. Ironically, the university bears the name of the Catholic bishop who founded the seminary: Laval.

We should be clear that the interest in the Reformation

shown in Roman Catholic circles is not fueled by a thirst for the truth or a longing to calm guilty consciences by the gospel of grace. Catholics in Quebec are open to exploring all religions. Tolerance and pluralism are their rallying cry.

On the other hand, as observed by Normand Bédard, an elder at one of our churches, these initiatives to learn about the Reformation are “unheard of.” We thank our sovereign Lord for this providential opportunity to spread the faith, and we seek ways to get our message through this open door, so that some Catholics might hear, understand, and believe the gospel of grace.

Reformation Conference

Interest in the Reformation and Reformed teaching is also growing in evangelical circles in Quebec. In January, an elder at a local Brethren assembly contacted me, explaining that their elders were interested in hosting a Reformation conference. He asked for our help since, apparently, our congregation is the “expert” in church history. (We have hosted at least two such conferences in the past twelve years.)

Rather than inviting some “big-name” Reformation historian to speak (most of the big names were already booked long before we started planning), we are asking several local pastors and teachers to give presentations on different Reformers. The weekend conference, scheduled for October 13–14, will introduce evangelical believers to the historical context of the Reformation, to the men of God who sought to return the church to faithful, scriptural teaching, and to the effects of their efforts upon the church and upon society even today.

Evangelical believers in Quebec City, mostly first- or second-generation converts, are terribly ignorant of church history. As Dr. Zuidema likes to quip, “Most born-again believers think that after the ministries of Jesus and Paul, their beloved pastor came on the scene.” We long to help them discover, not only other men of God used by the Lord to build his church, but also the depth and richness of their preaching.

Reformation Concert

Last year Marc Drouin, an elder of our congregation, threw out the wild idea of finding a secular choir to sing the Reformation psalms and hymns for the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. I replied, “Go ahead, Marc,” thinking that the idea would never fly. But it did!

Our congregation is paying the conductor and musicians of a semi-professional choir to sing the songs of the Reformation in the most prestigious concert hall in Quebec City, Palais Montcalm. The concert, to be held on Saturday, October 28, will be preceded by three mini-conferences exploring congregational singing during the Reformation, as well as the first evangelical praise book published in Quebec.

A committee from our congregation will be selecting all the songs, printing the words in the program, and introducing the historical context and theme of each hymn. The

director has agreed to invite the audience to sing several stanzas. Imagine over five hundred voices singing “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” or Psalm 42 to the Genevan melody. What a wonderful testimony to the truth of God’s Word!

And the Catholics will be coming! Since a concert of this magnitude entails significant costs, Marc Drouin has solicited sponsors from various Christian organizations and local businesses. One of the largest contributions is coming from the local Roman Catholic diocese! Even though the bishop will not be speaking at the concert, he is willing to encourage his parishioners to come and hear the gospel of grace explained and sung.

Reformation Solas

Ten years ago, a group of evangelical pastors, mostly Baptists, launched an educational conference for evangelical believers throughout the province of Quebec. Inspired by, and now associated with, the Gospel Coalition, the group adopted the name SOLA, as well as a confession marked by a distinctly Calvinistic soteriology. Speakers at the conference have included John MacArthur, Albert Mohler, and Kevin DeYoung. More recent seminars have included ERQ pastors, who have distinguished themselves with solid, passionate preaching.

The name SOLA has inspired a growing desire to learn about the five *solas* of the Reformation. Several evangelical pastors whom I personally know in Quebec City are doing sermon series based on the *solas*. (I have integrated them into a series of sermons on the epistle to the Romans.)

We are thankful that useful resources are available in the French language, including a translation of the Cambridge Declaration (1996), edited by the late J. M. Boice and B. E. Sasse, which I have personally distributed to evangelical pastors in Quebec City. In addition, Reformed Baptist pastor Pascal Denault has written an excellent book, *Solas: La quintessence de la foi chrétienne (Solas: The Quintessence of the Christian Faith)*. The publisher of the book has also begun reprinting classics of Puritan authors that are available in the French language. And finally, a fellow ERQ pastor, Paulin Bédard, writes, translates, and reviews articles for the website *Ressources chrétiennes*, downloaded by believers throughout Quebec, France, and French Africa.

Reformation Prayer

While we rejoice in the opportunity to make our Reformed heritage more widely known, we should not presume that a major revival will sweep across the province of Quebec. In the Areopagus of Athens, the apostle Paul found a large audience willing to listen to his exposition of the gospel, but only a handful converted. Quebecers are similarly hardened. Please pray that the Spirit would till the hard soil and prepare it for the seed of truth.

The author is the pastor of Église réformée St-Marc in Quebec City, Quebec, and a missionary serving in the OPC’s Quebec Project.

LIVING WATER ORGANIZED IN SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

// SEAN D. GREGG



John Sutter (left) and Dale Parsons being ordained as ruling elders at Living Water OPC

Living Water OPC was organized as a particular congregation on May 26. At the same service, Daniel Doleys, formerly a Christian school teacher who had served as a ruling elder on Living Water's overseeing session, was ordained and installed as the church's pastor. Two ruling elders were also ordained and installed at the service. As Living Water becomes a particular congregation, they enjoy a good pattern of worship, fellowship, and outreach.

After a yearlong Bible study, the group began holding evening worship services on February 1, 2015, at the Courtyard Marriott in downtown Springfield. Today about sixty people worship each week in a church building that Living Water has use of throughout the week and which she allows a small Spanish-speaking group to use. This building has served the church well, but they are considering whether to move to a more permanent location. Attendance at worship tends to dip a bit in the summer, when the college students head home.

Sunday school classes are held after worship each week, and on fifth Sundays the congregation stays for a fellowship meal and afternoon service.

The church also holds a weekly morning men's study and a midweek home group gathering.

The congregation invited family members and friends to a recent visitor's Sunday, and eighty people, including a number of unbelievers, attended worship. Many of the visitors

stayed for a fellowship meal afterwards. Some members have regularly invited people to come to worship. There have also been a number of regular visitors. A number of new families have expressed interest in becoming members, and Rev. Doleys will soon begin a new members' class with some of them.

The congregation has effectively reached out to local colleges. About a dozen Cedarville University students meet weekly for a Bible study, and many of them regularly worship at Living Water. A member who was a student at nearby Clark State began a campus Bible study with the help of Brad Peppo, who has engaged unbelievers in the area regularly, sometimes appearing as a guest on the Miami Valley Skeptics' podcast.

An evangelistic Bible study will be held this summer, and the congregation plans to have a presence at local festivals, where they hope to have gospel conversations and make new contacts in the community.

The congregation does not have any ordained deacons, but one man has been nominated and is in an officer training class. There are many diaconal needs in the community. The congregation requests prayer for guidance and for opportunities to share the gospel while trying to meet these needs.

Rev. Peppo, who labored for several years as the group's organizing pastor, is now laying the groundwork for a church plant west of Dayton, Ohio. A small core group currently meets for prayer, fellowship, and study every other Sunday. Brad has also begun a weekly meeting with some local contacts outside the core group to discuss the doctrine of infant baptism. The group plans to launch a weekly study of the Westminster Shorter Catechism in August. Pray that efforts to get to know more people in the area will be fruitful.



Pastor Daniel Doleys

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org.
New editions: August 9, 23; September 6, 20.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS



Participating in the ordination and installation service for Jeremy Baker were (from the left): Dan McManigal, Danny Hyde, Jeremy Baker, Jim Blake, and Dave Crum

BAKER ORDAINED IN YUMA, ARIZONA

David Crum

On May 20, a beautiful spring day in the Sonoran Desert, in the southwest corner of Arizona, the Presbytery of Southern California ordained and installed Rev. Jeremy R. Baker as an evangelist to serve as the organizing pastor of Yuma Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Baker, since his seminary days at Mid-America Reformed Seminary, has had his heart set on serving this city of over 90,000 souls. This special day was the fulfillment of a dream shared by Jeremy and his wife Gwen (and their daughters) for many years.

In addition to being a military and farming town, this is “snow bird” country. Brethren from “the Land of Sunlit Ice” contribute wonderfully to the life of this spiritual oasis during the winter months.

The Rev. Danny Hyde (URCNA) preached the sermon to the congregation. The Rev. Dan McManigal (PCA) gave the charge to Yuma’s new evangelist. Both are longtime friends of Mr. Baker.

Rev. David Crum, regional home

missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California, was appointed to serve as moderator pro-tem of the meeting, and he encouraged the new congregation. Ruling elder Jim Blake (on the Yuma overseeing session) prayed for Jeremy, that God would richly bless his ministry.

The folks of Yuma OPC provided a delicious lunch for everyone to enjoy following the service.

UPDATE

CHURCHES

• **Living Water OPC** in Springfield, Ohio, formerly a mission work, was organized as a particular church of the Presbytery of Ohio on May 26.

• **Trinity Reformed Church** (Ronald L. Beabout, pastor), a mission work in Gaithersburg, Md., held its last service on May 7.

MINISTERS

• On May 20, **Jeremy R. Baker** was ordained by the Presbytery of Southern

California and installed as an evangelist to serve as the organizing pastor of Yuma OPC in Yuma, Ariz.

• **Daniel J. Doleys**, formerly a ruling elder, was ordained as a minister and installed as pastor of Living Water OPC in Springfield, Ohio, on May 26.

• **Jonathan M. Loerop**, formerly a PCA pastor, was installed as associate pastor of Redeemer OPC in Ada, Mich., on May 5.

• **S. Scott Willet**, formerly pastor of Redeemer OP in Doraville, Ga., was installed as pastor of Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church in Mount Airy, N.C., on June 23.

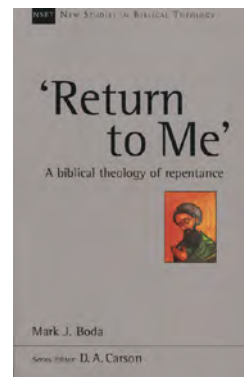
• **Z. Bulut Yasar** was ordained as a minister and installed as copastor of New Life OPC in Montoursville, Pa., on May 19.

REVIEWS

‘Return to Me’: A Biblical Theology of Repentance, by **Mark J. Boda**. InterVarsity Press, 2015. Paperback, 232 pages, list price \$24.00. Reviewed by OP pastor **Zach Keele**.

In this volume, Mark J. Boda offers a comprehensive overview of Scripture’s theology of repentance (p. 19) against the background of various controversies on the subject. His goal is to lay out the consistent witness of Scripture concerning the essential place of repentance in Christian theology and life.

Accordingly, Boda traces the theme of repentance through every Old Testament book, before surveying the New Testament briefly. As he does so, he operates with a definition of repentance as



a sinner returning to a faithful relationship with God that is behavioral (change in lifestyle), affective (full engagement of one's heart), and verbal/ritual (confession accompanied by other rites) (p. 31). His definition aligns nicely with Shorter Catechism 87, at least for the most part.

This book, however, will leave the student of Reformed theology curious and uneasy at several points. First, for those familiar with Vos's biblical theology (whom Boda does not cite), the title sounds like a methodological misnomer. Repentance belongs to the *ordo salutis*, while biblical theology traces the development of the *historia salutis*. By definition, repentance does not develop over time, but remains the same as saints are saved through faith and repentance in Christ in all ages. For this reason, Boda shows how each book of the Bible presents the same elements of repentance, which makes his book a work of systematic theology.

Secondly, Boda understands the "final form" of Scripture in a way that causes him to consider the exilic community as the primary audience of the Old Testament (pp. 23–24). For him, the primary, canonical audience of the Torah is the exiles, not Israel fresh out of Egypt under Moses. Also, Boda uses the higher-critical terminology of "priestly" and "holiness code" for the respective sections of Leviticus (pp. 38–42). He speaks of First, Second, and Third Isaiah (pp. 67ff.). And his use of "traditions" within the "final form" sounds remarkably like source criticism. Yet, behind this canonical approach, his own position is hard to discern.

Finally, even though his definition of repentance is helpful, one point from the Catechism's answer is obscured: "apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ." Boda's examination of the Old Testament is almost completely Christless. He doesn't connect repentance in the Old Testament to a Mediator. He speaks of grace, but it is not the grace of Christ administered through types and shadows (Confession of Faith 7.5). Boda does wrestle with the issue of divine enablement to repent in passages like Deuteronomy 4 and 30, Jeremiah 31, and Ezekiel 36. Yet his answer does not enable the reader to answer the critical question: "What comes first,

regeneration or repentance?" Boda fails to answer the question that every child coming for profession of faith is expected to answer. In fact, Boda concludes that the Calvinist-Arminian debate is a mystery (p. 192). For this reason, his book falls short, for it does not rise to the level of *sola gratia*.

***An Able and Faithful Ministry: Samuel Miller and the Pastoral Office*, by James M. Garretson. Reformation Heritage Books, 2014. Hardback, 425 pages, list price \$35.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Shane Lems.**

To learn about the lives of God's servants who have gone before us is often an edifying lesson. The "faith of our fathers" is an old teacher that can give great instruction to Christians in the present. This certainly applies to the life and ministry of Samuel Miller, a Presbyterian pastor and professor at Princeton Theological Seminary in the early nineteenth century. In *An Able and Faithful Ministry*, James Garretson has done the church a favor by capturing the essence of Miller's pastoral ministry—a ministry that was full of godly wisdom, piety, and instruction.

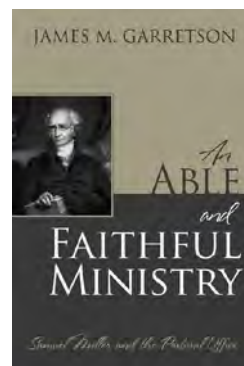
The book has four main parts. In the first part, Garretson summarizes Miller's life, his pulpit ministry, and his work as a seminary professor. In the second part, the book gives more details on Miller's teaching, including chapters on the importance of a pastor's studies, the various aspects of writing and preaching a sermon, notes on public worship, and so on. The last two, shorter parts discuss the manners and habits of a pastor and Miller's legacy.

Garretson's biography of Miller's life and ministry is a big help for pastors and elders. I read this book because I continually need pastoral guidance in my own ministry. I also read this book because I was interested in Miller's comments on sermons, preaching, and application. The book did not disappoint! Many of Miller's insights on these topics are immensely helpful, especially his advice to seminary

students (which also apply to pastors). Elders too can benefit from parts of Garretson's book, such as his notes on public worship and his advice on the godly habits and manners of the pastor (which applies to elders as well). Laypeople might also be interested in these things, along with the Presbyterian history in the book.

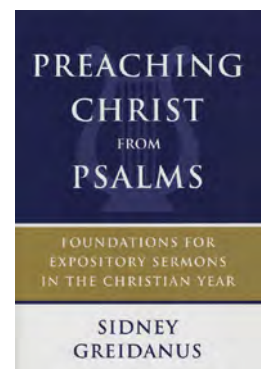
No matter who is reading this book, he or she will grow from hearing about Miller's emphasis on the gospel and his clear teaching on the necessity of solid doctrine and godly living. Another lesson that every reader will learn from this book is what it means to be an obedient

servant of Christ. As Miller said, "I will go wherever the great Head of the Church, in his infinite wisdom may send me, and will labour, to the extent of my opportunity and ability, to be prepared for any place." Miller was a servant of Christ. His life and ministry are examples of Christian service, and this book is a fine teacher to that end.



***Preaching Christ from the Psalms*, by Sidney Greidanus. Eerdmans, 2016. Paperback, 615 pages, list price \$40.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Everett Henes.**

The Psalms have given words to generations who want to praise God, to cry out to him in anguish or confusion, to call out for salvation, or simply to re-



count his wondrous deeds and marvelous provisions. They are, as Calvin wrote, "an anatomy of all the parts of the soul; for there is not an emotion of which any one can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror."

At the same time, the Psalms can be a real challenge for the pastor to preach. Perhaps this is due to their scarcity in our worship. It might also be due to the

fact that they are not historical narrative, prophecy, or epistles, but poetry.

A good tool to help think about the Psalms for preaching can be a big help. Sidney Greidanus's works on preaching Christ from the Old Testament are well known to many readers. He is committed to preaching Christ from all of Scripture, and this book is no different. The pastor will find many helpful insights on preaching from the Psalms, along with ample examples of sermons.

The introductory chapter, "Issues in Preaching Christ from Psalms," is a helpful guide to thinking about the various challenges and approaches to the Psalms.

Greidanus then lays out the various interpretive approaches: literary, historical, theocentric, and Christocentric. He applies these approaches to preaching Christ from an Old Testament text: redemptive-historical progression, promise-fulfillment, typology, analogy, longitudinal themes, New Testament references, and contrast. He also gives attention to applying the Psalms.

The rest of the book is filled with examples from various psalms. While not every psalm is touched on, Greidanus does cover the different types of psalms, so that the preacher learns how to handle the whole book.

While this book is a great help, there are a couple areas for caution. First, he asserts that the church's acceptance and use of the Psalms are what make them the Word of God for the church: "Though many psalms originated as a human word to God, every psalm is now part of the Psalter and was accepted in the canon as God's word for Israel" (p. 3). Here he cites father of canonical criticism, Brevard Childs. This is the kind of position that would trigger a slew of follow-up questions during a theology exam in presbytery.

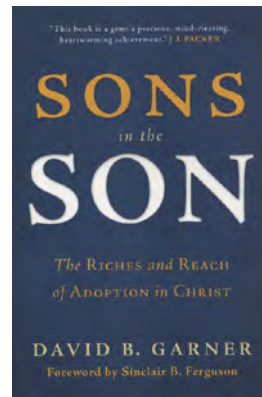
Another interesting, and possibly challenging, feature of the book is its layout. The author fits various sermons into the seasons of the liturgical calendar. The regulative principle of worship raises serious objections to imposing such a calendar on the church. Nonetheless, this book can still be of great use to pastors and laypersons alike. In fact, it can be helpful to see

how the Psalms fit in with events in the life of Christ. This serves to underscore the thesis of the book: the Psalms should be preached, and Christ should be faithfully preached from them.

***Sons in the Son: The Riches and Reach of Adoption in Christ*, by David B. Garner. P&R, 2017. Paperback, 400 pages, list price \$24.99. Reviewed by OP pastor James J. Cassidy.**

If the saving grace of adoption has been marginalized in church doctrine, which is the contention of Professor Garner in this book, then this book seeks to "replace" (p. 312) adoption, recognizing its proper—central—role in salvation.

In part one, Garner surveys the historical use



of the word and idea of adoption from ancient civilization to the New Testament. The second part consists of an exegetical and theological study of the adoption and sonship motifs. Of special interest here is how Christ, by virtue of his resurrection, is adopted by the Father and declared to be Son of God. In part three, Garner deftly navigates the choppy waters of distinguishing and relating how Christ's eternal sonship (as the second person of the Trinity) relates to his "becoming" sonship in history by his resurrection. He further shows how Christ's sonship becomes the source from which believers receive their sonship in union with him. Our adoption into the family of God is accomplished and applied to us by Jesus Christ, the resurrected and glorified,

BENEDICT OPTION

[Continued from page 13]

smart phones are distractions from religious meaning in the world. Dreher follows that line of conservative thought that sees cult (or worship) as the basis for culture. The logic inherent in tracing culture to cult might make sense of Old Testament Israel, but the example of Christ and the apostles does not. They gave little attention to culture (beyond ending Old Testament requirements) because they were more interested in salvation than assessing the polyglot world of the Roman Empire. Had Dreher started with a concern for the salvation of the next generation of Christians, he may well have had to distinguish among the branches of Christianity the one with the true gospel.

Despite this defect, Dreher deserves credit for embracing counterculturalism, and readers will find in parts of this book sound advice for evaluating unhealthy activities or reconsidering seemingly benign assumptions about modern life. At the same time, Dreher is late in his critique. Not only did Machen see in

his day how accommodating culture had compromised mainline Presbyterianism, but fifty years before the OPC was formed Abraham Kuyper also recognized the path on which liberal European society was headed and took measures to preserve a Christian witness by forming separate institutions (church, schools, media, political parties). Because Reformed Christians have been worried about the culture for over a century, some of what Dreher writes may sound familiar and even repetitive. For that reason, readers may also wonder after reading Dreher what took Christians like him so long to wake up. The book is a testimony to the dangers that even mainstream Christians now see in the wider world. If mainline Protestants had not been so dismissive of Machen and the OPC eight decades ago, the Machen Option might be as worthy of consideration as the Benedict Option that Dreher now proposes.

The author, an OP ruling elder, teaches history at Hillsdale College. The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation, by Rod Dreher, is published by Sentinel, 2017. Hardback, 262 pages, list price \$25.00.

2017 Midwest Women's Presbyterial

October 7 • Neenah, Wis.

- Speaker: Pat Clawson
- Focus: The book *Choosing the Good Portion: Women of the OPC*
- Venue: Apple Valley Presbyterian Church, Neenah, Wis.
- Questions? Contact Elaine Laczny at emlaczny@gmail.com

adopted Son of God.

Anyone who is familiar with Reformed theology in the tradition of Geerhardus Vos, John Murray, and Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., will be at home with this volume. To use more technical language, Garner stands in this tradition as he brings together the “already” and “not yet” of New Testament eschatology, the *historia salutis* and *ordo salutis*, and the disciplines of biblical and systematic theology. The book is full of insights from the best of Reformed theology.

Readers, however, should be aware of two things about the book before diving in. First, the book is a revision of the author's Ph.D. dissertation. As we might expect from a doctoral dissertation, the book is not written at a popular level. That is a good thing, but the reader should not expect to find ready-to-go Sunday school material.

Second, I have some reservations about Garner's proposed reordering of the *ordo salutis*. If I understand his position correctly, he proposes that adoption is the primary benefit of our union with Christ, with justification and sanctification being subsidiary benefits of adoption (see fig. 10.5 on p. 308). So central is adoption that he can say, “The gospel is filiocentric; the gospel *is* adoption” (p. 306). Earlier in the book, he is critical of theologies that have a “forensic fixation,” wanting to prioritize justification over other saving benefits (pp. 224–27). That is a good criticism, but has he replaced one fixation (forensic) with another (filial)?

And is it proper to say that adoption is a benefit that yields other benefits? Our confessional standards seem to teach that justification and sanctification flow directly from our union with Christ, unmediated by other benefits of redemption (e.g., WSC 30 and 32; WLC 69). The Catechisms teach that justification, adoption, and sanctification are coequal and coeval benefits of our union with Christ. But Garner seems to raise the benefit of adoption to such a place that it serves the same *ordo* function as union. While he does make a formal distinction between union and adoption, it is hard to see how any actual function is left for union, given adoption's comprehensive role.

Those concerns aside, Garner's book is a most welcomed and needed addition to the literature available on an important topic.

True Beauty, by Carolyn Mahaney and Nicole Whitacre. Crossway, 2014. Hardback, 128 pages, list price \$15.99 (paperback, \$12.99). Reviewed by OP member Victoria Van Dixhoorn.

Carolyn Mahaney and Nicole Whitacre have crafted an exceptional book—partly a refutation of the world's view of beauty and partly an affirmation of the biblical alternative. Through careful biblical study, *True Beauty* details what it means to be lovely in God's sight. Its arguments are

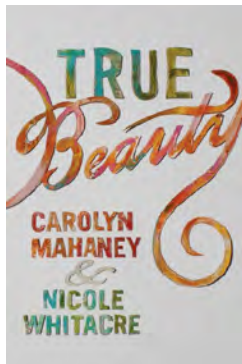
Positions Available

Pastor: Resurrection OPC in State College, Pa., seeks a full-time pastor with a strong sense of calling, who excels in expository preaching and has a steadfast commitment to confessional Christianity and the standards of the OPC. Resurrection is committed to a historical model of worship and ministry. We are a small, but growth-minded congregation, financially stable, with Sunday morning and evening services and about 50-60 worshipers. The State College area has a population of about 150,000, including about 50,000 Penn State students. Go to resurrectionopc.org for more information and email psc-input@resurrectionopc.org to express interest.

Pastor: Grace OPC in Hanover Park, Ill., seeks a pastor. Hanover Park, a diverse community in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, is a field ripe for harvest. Grace OPC desires to extend its ministry through community engagement and discipleship. Pastoral candidates should be prepared to lead the congregation in outreach and evangelism to the unchurched living in the community and possess or seek to develop strong inter-personal communication skills and an ability to preach, teach, visit, and shepherd a flock with a broad range of ages, demographics, and spiritual maturity. For additional information, email kbaldwin1@wowway.com.

Associate Pastor: Redeemer Presbyterian Church (OPC) in Ada, Michigan, is seeking to call an associate pastor. The associate pastor will be characterized by vision and passion to see young people reached and discipled, with his ministry priorities focused on youth, college students, and college-age adults. His ministry of the Word will be exercised primarily in individual discipleship and small-group contexts, with opportunity to preach (on average) once a month, primarily in the evening service. Interested applicants may request a role description from Pastor John Currie at jcurrie@redeemer-opc.org.

supplemented by personal stories and examples of people dealing with poor self-image and other personal struggles relating to beauty. Many of the stories are from



people with varying backgrounds, making the book relatable for a wide audience.

True Beauty addresses a multitude of topics regarding beauty, including modesty, clothing, purity, and aging, while constantly reminding us that the world's standards are wildly incorrect. Mahaney and Whitacre state that since we are made in the image of God, we are beautiful in his eyes and our self-worth can be found in him.

True Beauty carries this one step further and addresses beauty within. It reminds us of the value of inner beauty—a beauty that is everlasting, immeasurable, and glorifying to God. After all, as the authors assert, our purpose in life as Christian women is to glorify God by his grace and enjoy him. When we display godly characteristics that flow from our beauty within, we reflect God's own beauty and wisdom.

The message of *True Beauty* is especially relevant in our society today. The world has an ever-changing view of beauty, which grows increasingly unrealistic. In a culture in which appearances usually trump inner beauty, *True Beauty* provides practical and theological reasons why beautifying our hearts is vastly more

TRUCK CRASHES INTO CHURCH

On Sunday evening, April 30, a pickup truck slammed into the building where Grace Presbyterian Church in Norman, Oklahoma, had just concluded its evening service two hours earlier. Although the church belongings were damaged (and the fine upright piano was demolished), no one was hurt in the incident. The truck driver suffered a seizure or blackout, and lost control of his vehicle. It hit a pillar, crashed through the front windows, and ended up “parallel parked” inside the sanctuary.

Pastor Todd Dole said the church members were stunned, but grateful to God that everyone had gone home before the accident happened.



Cleanup beginning at Grace OPC in Norman, Okla.

Grace OPC had just moved into its new building a couple of months earlier and put a lot of work into fixing it up. The building where the church was renting space has had to be gutted because of major structural damage.

Church services are being held at a temporary location provided by the owner of the building until it can be rebuilt.

important. As a girl in high school, I often think that as I grow older, I will not feel the pressures of achieving the world's standard of beauty so intensely. But in reality this is a problem that every woman feels acutely throughout her life. Women nowadays feel pressure more than ever to keep up with new beauty trends and appear “flawless.” Social media is flooded with new beauty regimes; magazines are swamped with young, ageless celebrities; television commercials constantly feature new beauty products, stating they are essential for your personal well-being and happiness. In light of this, *True Beauty*

is especially helpful because it addresses both specific, modern-day problems and questions of beauty that women have faced for centuries.

Additionally, Mahaney and Whitacre have created a book that is easy to read, making it accessible to both young girls and older women. It is straightforward and clear, while remaining colorful and entertaining.

True Beauty reminds me to focus on what God considers beautiful and to consider how God himself is beautiful in all his perfections. *True Beauty* is a refreshing book, and I commend it heartily.