

NEW HORIZONS

in the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Ruling elder Scott Sistare (Reformation OPC, Oviedo, FL) reenacting the life of Martin Luther at the recent meeting of the Presbytery of the South. The Luther cutout was produced by Hugo Reijm as a fundraiser for Reformation OPC's building program.



JOHN CALVIN AND THE *DIRECTORY FOR THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD*



TERRY L. JOHNSON // It can be argued that John Calvin is among the most important liturgists in the history of the Christian church. Indeed, I have attempted to make the case that his Genevan Psalter of 1542 and its *Form of Church Prayers* established a norm for worship.

The *Form's* stress on the ordinary means of grace (word, prayer, sacraments), its emphasis on preaching and congregational singing, its elimination of extra-biblical ceremonies, and its relative simplicity and austerity, have had a decisive influence on all subsequent worship, whether Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Anglican, or even post-Vatican II Roman Catholic.

In contrast, the most important document among English-speaking Presbyterians, the Westminster Assembly's *Directory of the Public Worship of God* (1645), has often been treated by scholars as a liturgical wrong-turn, a devolution, even dismissed contemptuously as being "the only liturgy to consist entirely of rubrics." Among some conservative Presbyterians who care about well-ordered and reverent worship, it has been regarded as inferior to, if not a betrayal of, the pattern of worship established by Calvin.

However, I would argue that the *Directory* stands in continuity with Calvin's *Form* and, indeed, represents true development from and even improve-

ment upon the Genevan standard. The *Directory*, if properly utilized, is a superior guide to the worship of the Reformed church, over Calvin's *Form*.

Continuity with the *Form of Church Prayers*

What does the *Directory* maintain that was standardized by Calvin's *Form*? It maintains the basic elements that are characteristic of Reformed worship and does so in detail. The *Directory* is deeply indebted to its continental predecessor for the following: a full diet of biblical prayer; expository preaching; Scripture reading; psalm-singing; and administration of two sacraments. To these elements it adds nothing.

The *Directory*, like the *Form*, disallows extraneous ceremony and ritual, unauthorized postures and gestures, and extra-biblical symbols. Only "such things as are of divine institution" are allowed. Both the *Directory* and *Form* eliminate the various liturgical responses of congregation in the medieval mass (usually spoken by priests or monks). The *sanctus* ("Holy, holy, holy Lord..."),

Kyrie eleison ("Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy), *Gloria* ("Glory to God in the highest..."), *Sursum corda* ("Lift up your hearts"), and other congregational responses (e.g. to the greeting, to Scripture readings), have been eliminated. In the Reformed service the congregation responds by singing. Calvin's *Form* has more fixed elements: the Creed and liturgical prayers being two examples, while the *Directory* recommends only the use of the Lord's Prayer. Yet the basic elements are the same, resulting in a worship that is spiritual, simple, and recognizably of the same liturgical family.

Positive Development

The most obvious distinction between the *Directory* and Calvin's *Form* can be found in the fact that the Westminster Divines produced a directory and not a liturgy of set prayers. Some explanation is in order. Yet before doing so we should note that six basic prayers of Calvin's *Form* are present in the *Directory's* model (invocation, confession, thanksgiving, intercession, illumination, and benediction), and even the five-fold

intercessions are evident (sanctification of the saints, Christian mission, civil authority, the church's ministry, and the sick). This is substantial continuity, yet with positive development. The *Directory's* prayers are considerably richer, fuller, and deeper than those of Calvin's *Form*. Nearly one-third of the entire document is devoted to prayer. Who can fail to be moved by the *Directory's* expansive model prayers for before and after a sermon?

Still, why a *Directory* rather than a set *Form*? Because the "long and sad experience" had proven that an imposed liturgy would suffocate spiritual vitality. Uniformity was sought, but not the limiting word-for-word uniformity of set prayers. Unity was the goal, but not a unity that stifled the work of the Holy Spirit. Calvin expresses the same concern for freedom, but not to the same degree. While not opposed to set prayers in principle, the concern for the exercise of the gift

of prayer was paramount among the Westminster Puritans. The "Preface" to the *Directory* complains of "the reading of all the prayers" and the resulting "idle and unedifying ministry, which contented itself with set forms made to their hands by others, without putting forth themselves to exercise the gift of prayer."¹

This concern for free prayer persisted. It reappeared years later in the Presbyterians' "Exceptions Against the Book of Common Prayer" presented to the Anglican Bishops in May of 1661. They urged that in a revised prayer book the liturgy not be "too rigorously imposed; nor the minister so confined thereunto, but that he may also make use of those gifts for prayer and exhortation"

that Christ has given to the church.² When rebuffed and faced with the prospect of praying "in no words but are in the Common Prayer book," they bitterly complained of the "brevity, ineptness, and the customariness" of those prayers and of their inevitable impact of taking "off the edge of fervor with human nature" and of preventing the "enlargedness, copiousness, and freedom as is necessary to true fervor." They maintained that "A brief, transient touch and away, is not enough to warm the heart aright; and cold prayers are likely to have a cold return...." The resulting uniformity would produce unity, but this would be "to cure the disease by the extinguishing of life, and to unite us all in a dead religion."³

Again, they were not opposed to liturgy or set prayers or fixed forms. The preface to the *Directory* complains of "the reading of all prayers"—not just some prayers but all, robbing the prayers of the

church of urgency, fervor, and specificity. The models of prayer supplied by the *Directory* could be and indeed were turned into actual prayers as early as 1645 with the publication of *A Supply of Prayer for Ships*, intended for circumstances when no minister, that is, no one with the gift of prayer, was available. Rather, they urged in their "Exceptions" in 1661, "We would avoid the extreme that would have no forms, and the contrary extreme that would have nothing but forms."⁴ It was essential to the English Puritans throughout their history that place be given to free prayers, that the gift of prayer might be exercised. Alexander Mitchell (1822–1899) is right to clarify that "nothing was further from their intentions

than to encourage unpremeditated or purely extemporaneous effusions."⁵ Rather, "they intended the exercise of prayer to be matter of thought, meditation, preparation and prayer, equally with the preaching of the word."⁶

Liturgical scholar Horton Davies regards the *Directory* as "a notable attempt to combine the spontaneity of free prayer with the advantages of an ordered context or framework of worship." Indeed, "It aimed at avoiding the deadening effect of a reiterated liturgy as also the pitfall of extempore prayer—the disordered meanderings of the minister." This latitude is a positive development from Calvin's *Form*. The *Directory* allows both types of prayers, and yet, says Davies, "is itself the direct lineage of the Calvinist liturgies."⁷

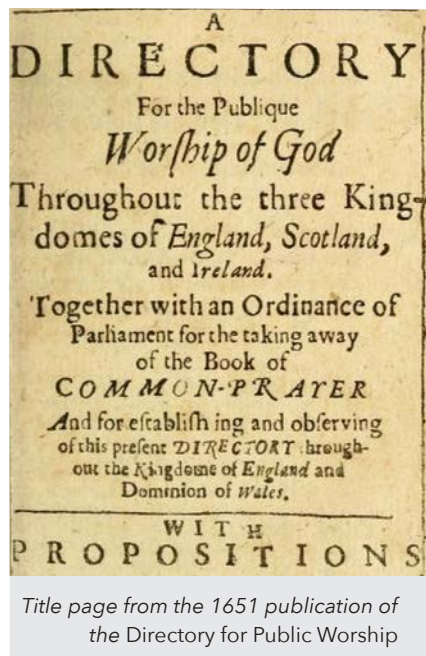
Other Improvements

The *Directory* not only descends from but improves its Genevan predecessor. Hughes O. Old points out that the Westminster Puritans "developed a number (of other) insights of the sixteenth-century Reformers in a most positive manner."⁸ Indeed, in many ways the *Directory* is superior to Calvin's *Form*. Note the following twelve features:

1. The *Directory* provides several paragraphs addressing the congregation's preparation, attitude, and behavior in worship; the *Form* has no such directions.

2. The *Directory* provides a model invocation. Calvin's *Form* has no invocation beyond Psalm 124:8. It provides no model for the opening prayer of praise. Hughes Old classifies the *Directory's* invocation as among the "most mature devotional insights" that Protestant theology produced.⁹

3. The *Directory* includes substantial prayer both before and after the sermon; the *Form* envisions only the prayer of illumination prior to the sermon. Old finds that the "sense for the full range of prayer found implicitly in the Strasburg and Genevan psalters is elaborated explicitly in the Westminster *Directory* for Worship."¹⁰



Title page from the 1651 publication of the *Directory for Public Worship*

4. The *Directory* commends only one fixed form, the Lord's Prayer, yet it does not forbid the moderate use of creeds and written prayers, leaving the decision to use or not use to individual pastors and churches.

5. The *Directory* provides substantial and specific directions for Scripture reading (canonical books only, one chapter of each Testament in each service, lectio continua, read by the ministers, etc.); the *Form* has no directions at all.

6. The *Directory* includes classic directions for preaching of which Calvin's *Form* has no parallel. Indeed, B. B. Warfield calls the *Directory's* instructions "a complete homiletical treatise."¹¹

7. The *Directory* includes the requirement that there be a communion preparatory service that "all may come better prepared to that heavenly feast."¹² Indeed, Mitchell argues that "the materials of the preliminary exhortation supply the outlines of one of the most complete and impressive addresses to be found in any of the Reformed Agenda."¹³

8. Old cites the *Directory's* superior communion epiclesis, in which the minister calls upon the Holy Spirit

to sanctify these elements both of bread and wine, and to bless his own ordinance, that we may receive by faith the body and blood of Jesus Christ consecrated for us, and so feed upon him, that he may be one with us, and we one with him.¹⁴

The continental Reformers invoked the Holy Spirit, Old notes, "but in nothing like the fullness we find here."¹⁵

9. The *Directory* requires a collection for the poor following the post-communion thanksgiving. This too, says Old, "had been an important aspect of the eucharistic piety of Continental Reformed churches," but rarely specified in liturgical documents as it was in the *Directory*.¹⁶ Mitchell's view is that the *Directory's* communion service as a whole is "more complete in all that such a service should embrace than any similar office either in the reformed or the ancient church."¹⁷

10. The *Directory* includes a more fully developed covenantal theology, as evidenced in the baptismal administration with multiple references to the "covenant" or "covenant of grace," and baptism's "sealing" function.¹⁸

11. The *Directory* includes a baptismal invocation, the minister offering a prayer "for sanctifying the water for this spiritual use."¹⁹ D. B. Forrester, assessing the *Directory's* handling of the sacraments, notes that "the sections on baptism and the Lord's Supper have attracted favorable comment from liturgists of many traditions."²⁰

12. The *Directory* includes far more substantial guidance for both the "Solemnization of Marriage" and the "Visitation of the Sick."

Influence of the *Directory*

William D. Maxwell and many other liturgical scholars have been overly critical of the impact of the *Directory* and its Puritan originators. He speaks of the result being bare worship becoming "barer still."²¹

Warfield, for his part, leaves us with a happier assessment. He commends the *Directory* "for the emphasis it places upon what is specifically commanded in the Scriptures," for its "lofty and spiritual" tone, for its "sober and restrained" conception of acceptable worship that is "at the same time profound and rich." "The paradigms of prayers which it offers," Warfield says, "are notably full and yet free from overelaboration, compressed and yet enriched by many reminiscences of the best models which had preceded them."

The Word of God, read and preached, is given the prominence it deserves "as a means, perhaps we should say the means, of grace." Warfield finds the paragraph on preaching to be "remarkable at once for its sober practical sense and its profound spiritual wisdom," and thinks it "suffused with a tone of sincere piety, and of zeal at once for the truth and for the souls which are to be bought with the truth." He finds the *Directory* "notable for its freedom from petty prescriptions and 'superfluities.'"

In summary, the *Directory* "can scarcely fail to commend itself as an admirable set of agenda, in spirit and matter alike well fitted to direct the public services of a great church."²²

This is high praise from one of the greatest theologians and historians of the Reformed church. The *Directory* is, indeed, a worthy and faithful successor of Calvin the liturgist and his normative *Form of Church Prayers*. □

The author, a minister in the PCA, is senior pastor of Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah, Georgia.

1 Westminster Confession of Faith (Glasgow: Free Presbyterian, 1976), 373, 374.

2 Timothy J. Fawcett, *The Liturgy of Comprehension, 1689: An Abortive Attempt to Revise the Book of Common Prayer* (Mayhew-McCrimmon Ltd., 1973), 2 (my emphasis).

3 Horton Davies, *The Worship of the English Puritans* (1948; Soli Deo Gloria, 1997), 154.

4 Ibid.

5 Alexander Mitchell, *The Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standards; Being the Baird Lecture for 1882* (1883; Stillwater Revival, 1992), 228.

6 Ibid.

7 Davies, *Worship of the English Puritans*, 141.

8 Hughes O. Old, *Worship That Is Reformed according to Scripture* (1984; Westminster John Knox, 2004), 137.

9 Hughes O. Old, *Themes and Variations for Christian Doxology: Some Thoughts on the Theology of Worship* (William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 37.

10 Old, *Worship*, 173 (my emphasis).

11 B. B. Warfield, *The Westminster Assembly and Its Work* (Oxford University Press, 1932), 52.

12 *Directory*, 384.

13 Mitchell, *The Westminster Assembly*, 234.

14 *Directory*, 385.

15 Old, *Worship*, 138.

16 Ibid.

17 Mitchell, *The Westminster Assembly*, 235.

18 See also Shorter Catechism Q/A 92, 94; Larger Catechism Q/A 162, 165, 167, 174, 176; Westminster Confession of Faith XXVII.1; XXVIII.1.

19 *Directory*, 383.

20 D. B. Forrester, "Worship," in *Directory of Scottish Church History and Theology* (InterVarsity, 1993), 846.

21 William D. Maxwell, *A History of Worship in the Church of Scotland* (Oxford University Press, 1955), 106, 107.

22 Warfield, *Westminster Assembly*, 51, 52

GLORY VEILED IN SIMPLICITY



JOEL D. FICK // In the sixteenth century, a French monk named Antoine Cathelan visited a Genevan church and contemptuously opined on its simplicity of worship: “When the preacher appeared, all the people knelt down, except the preacher. And he began praying, with uncovered head, and his hands joined.”

“His prayer was entirely in French,” continued Cathelan, “created out of his own imagination, which was concluded with the Lord’s Prayer but not the Ave Maria. Then all the people responded quietly ‘Amen.’ And two times a week, [they] sing a Psalm before the sermon (but only in the cities). Everyone sings together while seated, men, women, girls, and infants” (Scott M. Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company of Pastors* [2013], 32).

Cathelan also described the simplicity of its setting. “It is altogether like the interior of a college or school, full of benches, with a pulpit in the middle for the preacher. . . . The stained glass windows are just about all knocked out, and the plaster dust is up to the ankles.” In comparison to the pomp and circumstance that characterized so much of Christian worship, the worship of the Reformation must have seemed uninspiring. Historian Scott Manetsch concludes that “Cathelan clearly found the entire experience disorienting” and “these features of worship in Geneva

scandalized the religious sensibilities of this Franciscan monk” (ibid.).

Fast-forward five hundred years and the average American Evangelical who wanders into a confessionally Reformed church might find the en-



A Protestant church in Poschiavo, Switzerland, built between 1642 and 1653 (image courtesy of Cayambe)

tire experience equally “disorienting.” A generation raised on the drama and drum kits of the contemporary worship service might again find their religious sensibilities scandalized by the sheer simplicity of Reformed worship. The

subject of the simplicity of worship is as relevant today, and as worthy of consideration by the heirs of the Reformation, as it was five hundred years ago.

Simplicity and the Eclipse of True Worship

A central concern of the Reformation was reforming the worship of the church. John Calvin said that worship and salvation are as the soul is to the body of the church, while the sacraments and church government are as the body is to the soul. True worship being the very soul of the church was of first and highest concern for Calvin. While Israel “had the Spirit shadowed forth by many figures, *we have it in simplicity*,” said Calvin in *The Necessity of Reforming the Church* (emphasis added).

The principle of the simplicity of worship, together with the regulative principle of worship (which holds that God is the one who determines and regulates how he is to be worshiped), was at the heart of the Reformers’ con-

cern. Both Guillaume Farel who preceded Calvin and Theodore Beza who followed him would articulate this concern in similar ways. Farel wrote,

The Church should be decorated and adorned with Jesus Christ and the Word of his gospel and his holy sacraments. This great Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ, and the light of his gospel, have nothing to do with our burning torches and our candles and candelabras. God has instead ordained that by true preaching and by the holy sacraments practiced in their simplicity this light might be manifested and illumine us with all glory. (Manetsch, 36)

Similarly, Beza preached:

The church is not a building that we enter to see the beautiful shapes of vaults and pillars, or to admire the splendor of gold and silver and precious stones. Nor is it a place that we visit in order to fill our ears with the singing of choirs and the music of organs. Rather it is a place where the pure Word of God is clearly preached in the presence of each person, with words of exhortation, consolation, warning, and censure necessary for salvation. (Manetsch, 37)

Simplicity and the Eschatology of True Worship

Jesus's discussion in John 4 with the woman at the well gives insight into how to worship. She asked about the place where worship is to be conducted. Jesus answers that in this new hour, there is a new place, a new realm, a new mountain, a new sphere of worship appropriate to the climactic fulfillment of God's purposes in sending his Son and in his sending of the Spirit. True worshippers now worship the Father "in spirit and truth" (v. 23, emphasis added).

Geerhardus Vos identifies this realm of the Spirit as the heavenly reality the Spirit embodies. The heavenly reality is the holy habitation of the Spirit and divine throne room where the resurrected Christ is seated at the

right hand of the Father. It is to this reality that the author of Hebrews speaks when he distinguishes between the typological and ceremonial rituals of the Law and the fulfillment of those shadows in Christ (Heb. 9:23–24).

This heavenly reality is the realm of "spirit and truth" and it is into this reality that believers, now indwelt with the Spirit of the risen Christ, ascend by faith. This heavenly reality is the realm of the Spirit, or what Meredith Kline calls "the Endoxation of the Spirit" (*God, Heaven, and Har Magedon* [2006], 13–15). It is not an earthly mountain like Sinai, Jerusalem, or Samaria—but it is a mountain nonetheless. "For you have not come to what may be touched ... but you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:18, 22).

Simplicity and the Exercise of True Worship

The eschatological character of worship in Spirit and truth informs our actual practice as we gather for worship in these last days. It may be objected that the far-surpassing glory of participation in the heavenly realities argues not for simplicity but rather for greater external extravagance. But that could only be true if the symbols had greater glory than the realities to which they pointed. New Covenant worship is a participation in heavenly realities and an assent to the heavenly Zion (the realm of Spirit and truth), but that assent is nevertheless an assent by faith and enabled by the Spirit. The present age in which believers already partake of "the good things that have come" (Heb. 9:11) is what Vos called "semi-eschatological" and our participation in these realities is by faith, "for we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7).

It is by faith that God's people have always been made partakers of the heavenly unseen realities (Heb. 11:1, 7, 9) and it is by faith that we now fix our eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:2). For "though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that

is inexpressible and filled with glory" (1 Peter 1:8). Our faith, and not our sight, is presently "filled with glory." When Jesus returns, faith will become sight, but for the present, the glory of those heavenly realities is veiled in simplicity.

The subject of the simplicity of worship is as relevant today as it was five hundred years ago. The Reformed principle of simplicity is simply a "theology of the cross" applied to worship. If it scandalizes someone's religious sensibilities, whether they be a Jewish Christian tempted to return to the ceremonies of the Old Covenant, a Franciscan monk like Cathelan visiting Geneva, or an American Evangelical visiting a confessionally Reformed church, the feeling of disorientation is likely due to the fact that they have imbibed a philosophy of worship characterized by a "theology of glory." However, in worship, the glory of the age to come is veiled in the simplicity of the ordinary means of grace.

What is needed, then, is not a greater level of external encumbrances to worship (be they smells, bells, or bands), but a greater appreciation of the eschatological realities to which by faith we have access. Our *Book of Church Order* sums it up beautifully:

By the Spirit of the exalted Christ, God draws near to his people and they draw near to their God. They come by grace to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, joining innumerable angels and all the people of God in joyous and reverent communion with him.... Public worship is to be conducted in reliance on the gracious working of the Spirit of the exalted Christ, which alone can make anyone capable of such sincerity, reverence, devotion, awe, expectation, and joy. *Hence, from its beginning to its end, public worship should be conducted in that simplicity which manifests dependence on the Spirit of Christ to bless his own ordinances.* (Directory for Public Worship I.B.3, emphasis added) □

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A GREATER PRIEST, A GREATER SACRIFICE, A HEAVENLY PLACE



EVERETT A. HENES // It doesn't take much time reading the Old and New Testaments to notice some significant differences between them when it comes to corporate worship. The differences are clearly seen when considering the three primary elements of Old Testament worship: the place, the priest, and the sacrifice.

Old Testament Worship

In the Old Testament, there was a specific place where the people would gather for worship. Often it would be the place of God's very own presence. This begins in Exodus 24, with the gathering of the people of God at Mount Sinai. God appeared at the top of the mountain and, from there, he called certain people to approach him (vv. 1–2). Not just anyone could approach God!

Then sacrifices were offered. These were not sacrifices for sin, but rather had to do with the covenant that God would make with the people. At the heart of their worship was the covenant, as expressed when Moses places the blood upon the people and they vowed obedience to God's commands: "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient" (v. 7). This is a reminder to us that God will be approached on his terms, and his people are to live before him according to his commands.

Following this blood-vow, select individuals ascended the mountain,

and there "they beheld God, and they ate and drank" (v. 11). In a sense, they shared a meal with God. God does not eat, but their eating in his presence, safely, was evidence of peace with God.

When Israel was preparing to leave Mount Sinai and travel to the Promised Land, Moses was given instructions for building the tabernacle—the structure in which the Levitical priests would offer sacrifices to God as the people wandered through the wilderness. In this tabernacle was the altar for sacrifices, the table for the bread of the presence, and the golden lampstand, along with many other items.

As the priests went about their work in the outer courts and holy place of the tabernacle, they would come to the Holy of Holies. This was where the presence of God would descend. Incense would be offered up, and once a year the blood of the atonement would be placed upon the mercy seat.

This was Old Testament worship. It was offered by a priest, centered on the sacrifices, and repeated year after year. The Israelites were to be led by

the Levitical priests, with the High Priest performing the central tasks. The tabernacle takes center stage, the altar continually sizzling with the sound and smell of the sacrifices. The sin of Nadab and Abihu, who offered unauthorized worship to the Lord (Lev. 10:1–3), reminds us that the people were called to offer worship according to God's commands in reverence and awe.

New Testament Counterpart

The book of Leviticus gives an overview of the work and worship that the people of God were to participate in. Some have wondered whether there is a New Testament counterpart to Leviticus. We find comparatively sparse instructions when it comes to worship in the New Testament. In Acts, we see how the people of God worshiped. We read of abuses of worship in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. Although these books and passages have a bearing on worship, they don't provide the counterpart to Leviticus that we need. That counterpart is found in the book of Hebrews.

I believe that Hebrews was written prior to 70 AD, so the temple was still standing, the high priest was still working, and the sacrifices were still being offered up. The New Testament Christians worshipping in this environment were tempted to return to the worship of the Old Testament. One can understand this draw. After all, the temple stood in all its beauty with the priest in his robes and the ongoing sacrifices that were part of one's tradition and upbringing. What did the Christians have? They met in homes, engaged in lengthy studies of Scripture, sang songs, and partook of the Lord's Supper together. By comparison, it looked not just simple but weak.

In our day, we are not drawn to temple worship (although there are some Christians who move back to the types and shadows by celebrating Old Testament feasts). The temptation currently has far more to do with the external show of churches like the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox, or even the big-production Evangelical churches. The root of the issue is the same: desiring the external over what God has given.

This is where it is helpful to remember the words of Westminster Confession 7.6, which concludes a consideration of the difference between the Old and New Testaments ordinances this way: "Though fewer in number [in the N.T.], and administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them it is held forth in more fullness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy." This, it seems, is the argument of the book of Hebrews. Why should Christians not move backwards into the types and shadows of the external? Because those were but shadows, and the reality has come.

No Longer Types and Shadows

Several passages in the book of Hebrews bear this truth out. Regarding the high priest, Hebrews clearly shows that Christ is a greater High Priest than the Old Testament line! He is able to sympathize with us but is without sin

(Heb. 4:14–16). Thus, he does not need to offer sacrifices for his own sins (7:27). He is a priest, forever, as opposed to the others who could only serve until their death (7:23–25).

Christ is not only the greater High Priest, but he is also the greater sacrifice. The entire Old Testament pointed toward this greater sacrifice. In the Old Testament, the one who offered the sacrifice could not himself be the sacrifice. The sacrifices had to be spotless and without blemish. None of the priests could claim that. However, Jesus could. He was born without sin and lived a perfect life according to the Law of God. Where Adam and Israel had failed, Christ did not.

The author of Hebrews makes clear to us the difference between the types and shadows and the reality.

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. (Heb. 10:1)

The sacrifices of the Old Testament were only efficacious because they pointed forward to Christ's one perfect and final sacrifice. Hebrews makes clear, then, that the sacrifice of Christ is not just a better sacrifice, but the only sacrifice that secures salvation for God's people.

What about the place for worship? The temple was such an integral part of the Jewish understanding. The idea that believers would no longer have a specific place to gather would have been very difficult for New Testament Christians to accept. The author of Hebrews acknowledges the special place: "Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness" (Heb. 9:1). He goes on to describe the tabernacle that was built exactly according to the pattern Moses saw on the mountain. The tabernacle, and later the temple, was a replica of heaven, the place where God dwelt. When the saints of the Old Testament

gathered for worship, they were coming to a replica of heaven.

What, then, did Christians have? Hebrews 12:18–29 tells us the glorious truth: New Testament Christians gather at heavenly Mount Zion! They may have been meeting in homes, or later in the catacombs, or today in buildings; but, wherever they are, heaven breaks in. We no longer need replicas of heaven because, by faith, we worship there every week. Meredith Kline expressed this well:

This earthly gathering is not a mere symbol of the Mount Zion above and the assembly there of the Lord and his angels and the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. 12:22–24). It is an actual earthly extension of that heavenly reality. (*God, Heaven, and Har Magedon* [2006], 196)

Content with Acceptable Worship

This understanding of spiritual—and far more efficacious—worship not only helped the early Christians to avoid the pull back into Judaism, but later would also help the Reformers in their discussions of worship. By looking at passages from Leviticus and Hebrews (among many others), they understood that the worship of God was to be regulated according to the Scriptures. God's people were to approach him as he had instructed them.

The Reformers saw the movement back to the outward and visual worship as akin to returning to Judaism. Indeed, once we have the glories of approaching God in heaven through the one Mediator and perfect sacrifice for sins, why would we be tempted to replace that reality with the types and shadows? It's a question that continues to be pressing in our day; the pull to overvalue the external is still strong. Yet we have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Our response must be to offer acceptable worship to our God, with reverence and awe. □

The author is the pastor of Hillsdale OPC in Hillsdale, Michigan.

TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS IN A “WILDERNESS” CLASSROOM

// T. L. L.



T. L. L. will be concluding her missionary service in Asia in February

When I was appointed to serve as a missionary associate to Asia in 2010, I thought I was going to be a teacher. That seemed to be the job description. When I met with Foreign Missions Committee representatives, they enhanced it with significance as they read from Isaiah 30:20–21:

And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.

In the years since, I have come to see that I was actually the student entering a classroom, my “wilderness” where the Lord was my Teacher. What have I learned?

This week, I’ve been sitting in my room with an elevated, twisted ankle and a head cold, scribbling for various writing assignments. The university where I teach has been shut down for the week because the central heating isn’t yet in compliance with new local codes. So no heat, no school. The next five weekends are now teaching days to make up for the lost week. Phone and internet lines are temporarily disconnected. I missed the fine print written in an Asian language on the contract, so no communication. Power and water might sud-

denly go off, too—if the previous three times this week are any indication.

Some elements to this scenario are unusual, but we live under the real stress of the unexpected and, for the most part, this is normal life on this mission field. Nevertheless, it’s easy to complain. The natural man focuses on the perceived hardships. “Why live in these conditions?” “I feel sorry for myself.” Or, “look what I am suffering!” I could wander into cynicism: the value of one person’s work in proportion to the large population of Asia seems like a drop in the ocean. I can’t compete with those numbers! Is it time to go home yet? Irony of ironies: even when I try to buy a plane ticket online, my credit card won’t work—the purchase looks too suspicious.

When such attitudes arise, the Lord teaches me that his work is not premised on a sense of well-being in this material

world. The mission field holds real hardship, but it also brings insight to the unseen work of God, who is glorious in his power to save and sanctify. Thus, it has been my joy and wonder to see his good news stir the hearts of the people we serve here.

Just a week ago, in this same room, I was studying Hebrews 2 with a young lady by the light of our cell phones during a power shortage. We read:

What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? You made him for a little while



T. L. L. (center) teaching students in her home

lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet. (Heb. 2:6–8 on Ps. 8)

As we discussed our relationship as heirs to the Heir, Jesus Christ, our thoughts were alight with the awe of such grace that drives away fear in the face of present darkness.

Like others who have sat here with me learning together, she is a new believer in the church in Asia who is forsaking material goods and security to follow Jesus Christ and be faithful to his Word. As the men and women of our team reach out across Asia, it's amazing to view the Lord's work in the many courageous congregations seeking biblical accountability in spite of reprisal.

Each Sunday at the local Reformed church plant, I listen to the preaching of the Word and witness the growth of the members. I'm glad for the small part I have in bringing people to church and in encouraging the application of the message in the lives of the women. Even as we fellowship together in underground places and share the personal difficulties of this material life, we are learning about the love of God, which undergirds the sweet communion of the saints in his family. It's been a privilege to gather to pray, cook a meal, bake a cake, or drink cups of hot water with our brothers and sisters here.

This is no small gift: this place, this experience, and this time—even this room! Here reside the contributions of those who built me up in the Lord through past trials, which were difficult to bear. Here is evidence of the blessing of the church family at home. These walls have been covered by cards and letters expressing the well wishes and prayers of believers from churches across the United States, some of whom I have not met, yet who are united to the Lord's work here.

Thank God for the service and accountability of a team, a session, and a church, whose godly teaching and prayerful support have been instrumental in equipping me for the work. As a result, here is a place where the curious may ask questions; where the lonely may find company; where the heartbroken may cry out; where together we may seek the Lord. What a gift to have been in this wilderness classroom, to be taught by the Lord through many trials and triumphs, to point to him, and to see the harvest of his kingdom.

As I read about Paul at the end of his life, sending in-

structions to bring his cloak and books to him in prison, I learn that the work of the good news doesn't end in this material world. Paul is looking forward to "the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have

loved his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8). If the work of the good news can be vitally affected by externalities, I have placed too much confidence in this world and in myself. Thank God that the good news doesn't consist in what we do, but in what God has already done in Jesus Christ. As he very clearly says in 2 Corinthians 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

As my term of service on the field ends, I am thankful for the Lord, my Teacher, and all he has taught me, just a student, often weak and wrong-headed, in this wilderness classroom. While it is his absolute right to appoint the wilderness, it is his grace to create

in it a place of joy that a witness caught up in his redemptive work in Jesus Christ might see and wonder at all he has done. Praise the Lord, and thank you for your love and prayers.

T. L. L. will conclude her missionary service in Asia and return to the United States in February to become the administrative assistant for the Committee on Foreign Missions.



T. L. L. (left) teaching a class at the university

What's New

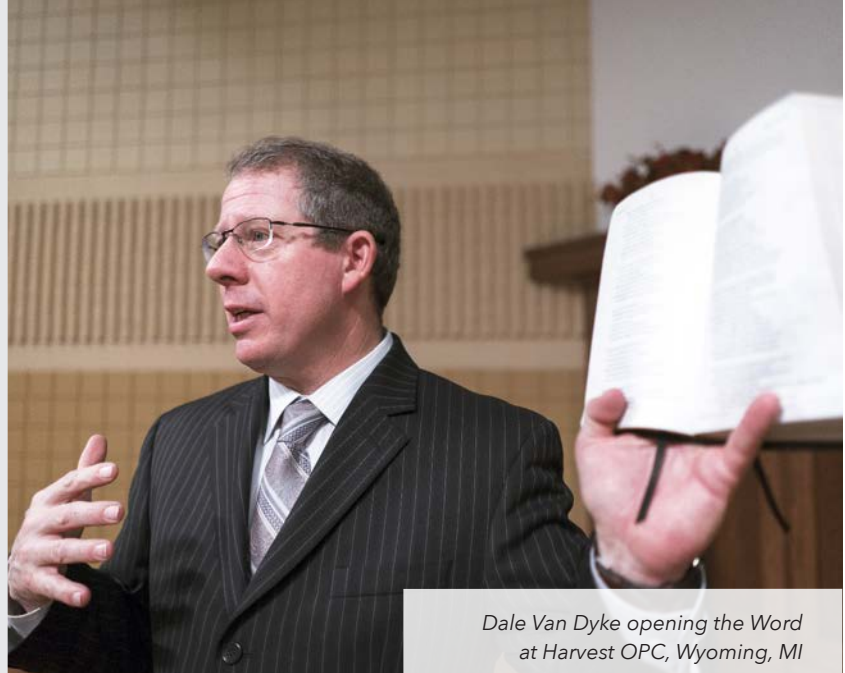
// Appointments

Dr. and Mrs. Filippus R. "Flip" (Anneloes) Baardman, M.D., (Groningen-Oost Gereformeerde Kerk Vrijgemaakt, Groningen, The Netherlands) have been appointed to serve as missionaries in Uganda, where Dr. Baardman will serve as the medical doctor for Akisyon a Yesu Presbyterian Clinic in Nakaale, South Karamoja. The Baardmans are scheduled to arrive in Uganda in February 2018.

Mr. and Mrs. K. (former yearlong intern at First Church of Merrimack, OPC, Merrimack, NH), following Mr. K.'s ordination and installation as a missionary evangelist to Asia and completion of missionary orientation training, are scheduled to arrive in Asia in March 2018.

GROW IN PREACHING THROUGH AN MTIOPC CLASS

// PATRICIA E. CLAWSON



*Dale Van Dyke opening the Word
at Harvest OPC, Wyoming, MI*

As the newest instructor of the Ministerial Training Institute of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (MTIOPC), Dale Van Dyke believes that preaching God's Word is the ordinary means of grace God uses to grow his church.

"I am convinced that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation and the Word of God is living and dynamic," said Van Dyke. "As we simply open up that Word and proclaim that gospel—with Holy Spirit clarity and zeal—God will carry out his miraculous mission of building a church out of lost rebels!"

The church that Van Dyke pastors, Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Michigan, serves as a fine example. Since Van Dyke arrived in 1995, the congregation has grown slowly but steadily from 90 to 338 communicant members—a 375 percent growth.

"I love to preach and I love what God does through preaching," he said. "I enjoy seeing the drama of the text and letting that drama captivate the minds and hearts of God's people. Most importantly, I've been able to consistently preach

the gospel in a way that God has used to change lives."

Van Dyke will join Douglas Clawson as co-instructors of the Spring 2018 Homiletics class, which is offered by MTIOPC for experienced pastors, licentiates, and men under care of an OPC presbytery. The course is not meant to be a comprehensive "how to" course in preaching. Rather, it is designed to help a class of eight or ten men identify their gifts and weaknesses, then encourage them to grow in those areas.

"Our goal is to do all we can to encourage and strengthen and equip those who attend," said Van Dyke. "There will be some very practical instruction and some confidence-building reminders of what a great thing it is to be called as a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Great Preaching Takes a Unique Moving

MTIOPC Director Danny Olinger believes the students will benefit from Van Dyke's "nearly quarter-century of preaching, his ability to communicate with sound theological grounding, and his ability and giftedness to help those aspiring to the gospel ministry."

The students also will profit because both instructors were

MTIOPC FAQ

When do the next MTIOPC courses begin?

Classes will begin on **February 5, 2018** with online assignments, then a mandatory in-person Intensive Training at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Michigan, will be held **May 15–17**.

What are the classes?

Homiletics (taught by Dale Van Dyke and Douglas Clawson), Ecclesiology (taught by A. Craig Troxel), and Form of Government (taught by Alan Strange)

How much does it cost?

Tuition is free for OPC ministers, licentiates, and men under care. OPC elders pay \$50 in tuition for either the Ecclesiology

or Form of Government classes. All students must also pay a \$50 registration fee, which is fully refundable upon successful completion of the course. To help defray the cost of travel to Intensive Training, travel scholarships of up to \$350 are available for OPC ministers, licentiates, and men under care. If necessary, an additional \$100 in travel reimbursement is available if the student's session or presbytery matches that amount.

Where do I apply?

Applications are available at www.opc.org. Go to Worldwide Outreach, then Christian Education, then Ministerial Training. Click on MTIOPC.

What's the deadline?

The deadline for registration is **January 31**.

trained in preaching from different institutions—Van Dyke from Westminster Seminary California and Clawson from Westminster Theological Seminary. While Van Dyke has been a longtime church pastor, Clawson has served as both a pastor and an evangelist.

“I believe that with Dale, the man you get in the pulpit is the same man who sits in your living room opening up God’s Word to you and your family,” said Clawson, who twice taught the course with Bill Shishko. “Dale has been used by the Lord to pastor a church that has grown a lot during his ministry. Therefore he has the breadth of experience that will be faced by the men who are pastors or preparing for the pastoral ministry.”

Although he has twenty-four years of preaching under his belt, Van Dyke is not coming as someone who has figured it all out. The experience has been helpful, he said, because he’s made just about every mistake. “I’ve learned the benefit of receiving good criticism. I’ve seen God use a sermon vastly above and beyond what I’ve put into it and seen a ‘gem’ fall like a lead balloon. I’ve learned that good preaching takes a lot of hard work and patience. There are no shortcuts. Great preaching takes a unique moving of the Spirit of God.”

Some Homiletics students have been in the ministry in excess of thirty years while others have had very little pulpit time, said Clawson. “In each class, we’re trying to help that individual where he is at. My personal goal for the class is that as I read and listen to their sermons, I will pick out one or two important areas that I can focus on to help the students improve.”

Perhaps the biggest beneficiaries of this course, however, will be those in the pews.

“The preaching of the Word is how God communicates to his church, calling the lost to saving faith and sanctifying believers,” said Clawson. “In so far as preaching can be improved, it makes the preaching a better instrument for the Spirit’s work.”

☆ Congratulations

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

- **Cole Bennett**, *Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Neon, KY*
- **John Grant**, *Grace OPC, Vienna, VA*
- **Hannah Long**, *Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Neon, KY*
- **Helen Long**, *Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Neon, KY*
- **Reuben Long**, *Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Neon, KY*
- **Claire Montgomery**, *Geneva OPC, Marietta, GA*

OUR MEMBERSHIP VOWS Can We Comprehend God?

Glen J. Clary

The doctrine of the Trinity (which we covered previously) is difficult to understand. In fact, it’s impossible for us to fully understand. It is a mystery that reminds us of the fact that God is God, and we are not. It reminds us of our limitations as creatures—particularly the limitations of our mind. Since God is infinite (unlimited) and we are finite (limited), we cannot fully comprehend him. The finite cannot grasp the infinite. Consider how it is impossible to hold all the water of the ocean in a cup. The ocean is too vast, too immense! But even the ocean is finite. God, however, is infinite! He is infinitely more vast and immense than the ocean. And for that reason, it is impossible for our finite minds to comprehend him. Reformed theologians refer to this teaching as the incomprehensibility of God. God is incomprehensible. He is beyond our ability to understand.

Since God has revealed himself to us, we certainly have true knowledge of him, but that knowledge is limited. It is necessarily limited because we are limited. The human mind is limited in its ability to understand simply because we are finite creatures. When we are in heaven, we will know God more fully, but we will never have a comprehensive knowledge of him, even though we will spend the rest of eternity with him. God will always be incomprehensible to us because we will always be finite creatures.

The incomprehensibility of God should humble us in recognition of our finitude, but it should also evoke awe and wonder as we worship the triune God. As Paul contemplated the incomprehensibility of God, he exclaimed:

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! ... For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (Rom. 11:33, 36)

● Out of the Mouth . . .

As we drove by a large graveyard, my seven-year-old began to ask questions about what happens after death. Following my answer to his very important question, I asked him, “Do you know another name for a graveyard?” Deep in thought, he quietly looked at me, then finally shouted, “Yes! It’s called a seminary.”

— Allison Guirgues
Morehead City, NC

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

CASTING THE NET WIDE THROUGH EVANGELISM

// JOHN SHAW AND MILLER ANSELL



Church-planting intern Miller Ansell with his wife, Stephanie, and their children Kaleb, Sterling, and Audrey

Last month, we introduced Ryan Heaton, who is serving in Naples, Florida, as one of two interns in the new church-planting internship program. This month, we introduce Miller Ansell, who is serving in Houston, Texas.

This internship program, which is supported by the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, has several goals. First, we hope to train some of the next generation of Orthodox Presbyterian church planters. Second, the interns will navigate some of the steep learning curve of church planting before they are serving as a church planter; and they will do so under the watchful eye of an experienced man. Third, these interns will increase in gifts that will prepare them well no matter where they serve—gifts of evangelism and leadership, in particular. Fourth, like any good internship program, some men will learn that the Lord has not called them to serve in a mission work, at least for now.

In the future, church-planting internships will continue as a joint project between the Committee on Home Missions and the Committee on Christian Education. Both committees believe church-planting internships will provide another tool to support the Great Commission work of the whole denomination.

Please pray for the Lord to bless the two current interns, Ryan Heaton and Miller Ansell, and their families, as they grow in their gifts under the careful mentorship of experienced church planters. Also, pray for the Lord to bless this program by preparing men to serve in future church plants of the OPC.

In this issue, Ansell explains his work in southwest Houston. He serves under the leadership of Mark Sumpter, the regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southwest. Together, they are working with a group, the Good Shepherd OPC Bible study in southwest Houston under the oversight of Cornerstone OPC (Jersey Village, Texas). Direct evange-

listic and outreach ministry fills a significant portion of their weekly time together.

Miller Ansell on Serving in Houston, Texas

I was raised in a Southern Baptist household and confessed my faith at an early age. My family was at worship every Sunday morning, every Sunday evening—and every Wednesday evening. My wife, Stephanie, was raised Methodist for a time, then non-denominational. When we started getting to know each other, she came to the Baptist church with me that my father pastored. After we were married, we were interested in attending a Calvinistic church, but didn't know of any in the area. We attended various churches until I finally learned that there was a conservative Presbyterian church nearby—an OPC congregation, Christ Covenant Presbyterian in Amarillo, Texas. At first I thought we'd just go on Sunday evenings, but, after hearing Rev. Moody expositively preach the Word, I knew this was our church. We've never looked back!

Those early years were a time of spiritual growth spurts for us. I have always loved theology, became deeply interested in apologetics in college, and majored in religion with the idea of teaching theology. But after some encouragement to consider the pastorate, my heart began to change. Christ Covenant was very supportive of my pursuing the ministry, so we moved to Philadelphia to study at Westminster Theological Seminary. Since graduating in 2016, I have spent a year as a pastoral intern at Faith Presbyterian in Garland, Texas, and am now serving as a church-planting intern in southwest Houston.

The Work of Evangelism

Evangelism is one of the main reasons I was interested in the church-planting internship. In my pastoral internship, I did some evangelism, but it was not always at the forefront of my mind throughout the week. This internship, in contrast, has allowed me to lay aside many of the duties of a pastoral internship and focus on planting a church, which means that

I must reach people.

I am not a type-A extrovert, and, perhaps like many readers, the thought of engaging a stranger with the gospel makes my knees shake, face sweat, and tongue stammer. Yet, this church-planting internship has been invaluable because my mentor, Mark Sumpter, who has a great deal of evangelistic experience, has led me into the deep waters of evangelism one step at a time.

Through the work we've done, I am finding that once one is immersed in evangelism the nervousness subsides; where fear once was, calmness takes its place. Engaging those first two strangers on the street, or knocking on those first two doors, is nerve-racking, but after that, one becomes accustomed to it and enjoys the opportunities. I hope readers find some encouragement in that and decide to undertake an evangelistic venture themselves!

Mark Sumpter and I have aimed to cast the net wide through our evangelism. We have done the more common methods of door-to-door visits, flyer distribution, college campus outreach, and park outreach. Our more uncommon methods include public hymn-singing and, my favorite, foam board outreach. I stand in a busy area on Friday night with a question on a foam board, and then ask people to write their answers. The questions are basic: What is God? Why does humanity exist? What happens when you die? What is sin? The foam board questions have proved fruitful, leading to many substantial, spiritual conversations. The conversations range from sharing the good news with Muslims to being encouraged by a brother in Christ.

Another means of outreach has also come up that we did not plan for earlier in the summer: Hurricane Harvey outreach. In the wake of the destruction from tornadoes and flooding, we were a bit dazed as to where to start. But as volunteers came in, the daze wore off, and we have reached out to



Miller Ansell speaking with interested students at a book table

friends and neighbors with both physical and spiritual relief.

The ability to minister to people from our Bible study who were affected by the hurricane has been incredible. We focused on several texts relevant to the disaster. We reminded them that when Christians pass through the flood waters, God is with them (Isa. 43), that there is a hope beyond this calamity (Job 17; Rom. 8), and that we must lean upon Christ (Matt. 11).

The Harvey outreach extended beyond the Bible study into the homes of those affected. We have shared meals, Scripture, and prayer with the aim that people would rest in Christ and the promise of a new earth where hurricanes do not destroy.

The Details of Church-Planting

Of course, the church-planting internship is not solely about outreach and evangelism. I am also learning a great deal about planting a church. Currently, our Bible study, Good Shepherd, meets Sunday evenings in southwest Houston. We pray that it may one day be a particular church, but reaching that goal requires direction and guidance from the leader, Mark Sumpter. We discuss weekly how the study is going, what could be done better, who needs follow up, how to advertise, keeping the website updated, and many more items. These meetings are incredibly helpful to me as I witness and

participate in planning that I could not have accomplished without a mentor.

Although the majority of my time is spent focusing on church-planting, it is also important that I continue to develop other pastoral qualities. So I am afforded occasions to preach, teach Sunday school, attend session meetings, and read.

I am most grateful for the opportunity to be a church-planting intern, as I have been stretched out of my comfort zone for the sake of reaping a harvest in southwest Houston. This internship is unique as I learn evangelism and lead a group toward being a church. It has rounded me out as a future minister of the gospel, so that I have not only seen the pastoral side of serving in an established church, but also the evangelistic side of serving at a potential church plant. I pray that God may continue to be glorified and the Spirit work mightily through this internship at Good Shepherd.

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org.
New editions: January 3, 17, 31.

PSALM 23 CHANGES EVERYTHING

// JOHN KEEGAN

A right understanding and application of the relatively short but theologically rich Psalm 23 changes everything we think about God, about ourselves, and about the mission of the church.

We begin with David’s confession in verse 1: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” As David meditated on the nature and character of God and reflected upon his promises and his abundant provision, he was led to this great conclusion: the one who called him from the care of his father Jesse’s flocks to be king over Israel is the Good Shepherd who cares comprehensively for his covenant people.

In verse 2, David testifies of the providential nature of God’s care: “He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.” The promised presence and provision of the Lord is the heritage of God’s people: “I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you” (Gen. 17:7).

Verse 3: “He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” David knew that God’s grace is not only restorative but transformative. God is holy and his will for his covenant people is their holiness (Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:14–16).

Verse 4: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” David knew the “valley of the shadow of death” from experience—as a youth on the run from King Saul and then as an elderly king fleeing Jerusalem because of his own son Absalom. But David knew that death also comes from sin. Christ delivers us from this fear of death:

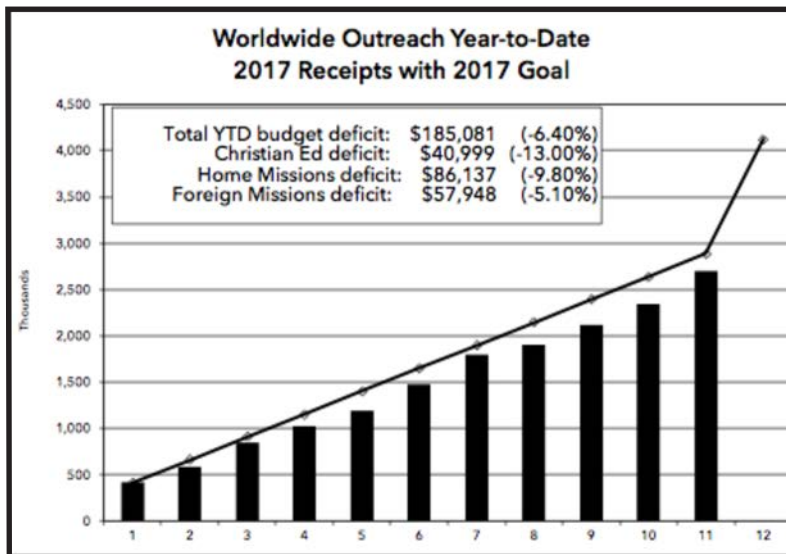
But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.... Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. (Heb. 2:9, 14–15)

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who comprehensively cares for the sheep (John 10:1–11). He demonstrated such care in the greatest of all possible ways—by laying down his life for us (v. 11). Even as the cross loomed, Jesus prayed to the Father on our behalf, that where he is in glory, we would one day also be (John 17:24).

Glory is where David leads us in the concluding verses of Psalm 23: “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” (vv. 5–6).

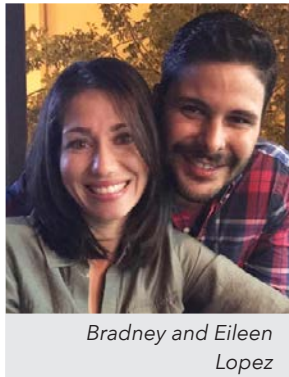
Psalm 23 *changes everything* because our triune God has provided everything we need to know him and live for his glory until he returns or brings us home (2 Peter 1:1–3). Psalm 23 frees us to participate in and serve with and give to the great work of the proclamation of the good news to the nations through Home Missions, Foreign Missions, and Christian Education, so Jesus’s other sheep might come to confess, “The Lord is our shepherd; we shall not want.”

The author is the pastor of Grace OPC in Fair Lawn, New Jersey.



JANUARY

1. **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for continued growth and spiritual development in the church in L'viv. / **Bradney and Eileen Lopez**, Arroyo, Puerto Rico. Pray for members of **Iglesia Uno Reformada** to proclaim God's Word in their communities, families, and workplaces. / Navy chaplain **Cornelius (and Deidre) Johnson**.
2. Pray for **Dave (and Elizabeth) Holmlund**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Philadelphia. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia (on furlough). Pray that they will give a vision for missions to the churches they visit. / Pray for students to enroll in the spring semester of the **2017 Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC (MTIOPC)** before the January 31 deadline.
3. **Mr. and Mrs. M. M.**, Asia. Pray for the church leaders with whom Mr. M. M. works. / **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, TX. Pray for children at San Antonio Reformed Church who look forward to professing their faith. / **Stephen (and Felicia) Lauer**, yearlong intern at Redeemer OPC in Beavercreek, OH.
4. **Jason and Amanda Kirklin**, Waco, TX. Pray for wisdom, love, joy, and boldness in outreach to neighborhoods surrounding Trinity OPC's new location. / Pray that tentmaker **T. D.**, Asia, will have many opportunities to share the gospel. / **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the finance director.
5. Pray for **Mr. and Mrs. J. M.**, Asia, as they prepare to move to a new ministry location in Asia. / **Chris and Megan Hartshorn**, Anaheim Hills, CA. Pray for new visitors to come to church. / **Zachary (and Annie) Simmons**, yearlong intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, IL.
6. **Larry and Kalynn Oldaker**, Huron, OH. Pray for the fruitful discipleship of Oberlin College students and that many would come to Grace Fellowship OPC. / Tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia. Pray for those attending special English Corner outreach programs. / Army chaplain **David (and Jenna) DeRienzo**.
7. Missionary associates **E. K.** and **M. S.**, Asia. Pray for their witness through English Corner outreach in January and February. / Pray for Home Missions associate general secretary **Al Tricarico**. / **Scott (and Elizabeth) Creel**, yearlong intern at Redemption OPC in Gaines-



Bradney and Eileen Lopez

- ville, FL.
8. **Jim and Eve Cassidy**, Austin, TX. Pray for the Lord to bless South Austin Presbyterian Church's outreach, visitation, and planning for the future. / **Mr. and Mrs. K.**, Asia. Pray for the family as they prepare to move to the mission field. / Pray for **Andrew Moody**, OPC.org website technical assistant.
 9. Pray for **Mark and Carla Van Essendelft**, Nakaale, Uganda, participating in a missionary training program this month. / **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Andover, MN. Pray for the Lord to add four new families to Immanuel OPC in the new year. / **Aijalon (and Jana) Church**, year-long intern at Covenant OPC in Sinking Spring, PA.
 10. **Brett and Maryann Mahlen**, Orland Park, IL. Pray that the Lord would equip Brett to defend the truth against opposition in the prison. / Pray for medical doctor **Flip and Anneloes Baardman**, Nakaale, Uganda, participating in a missionary training program this month. / **Doug Watson**, part-time staff accountant.
 11. Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic. Pray that seekers would clearly understand God's Word. / **David and Rebekah Graves**, Coeur d'Alene, ID. Pray that participants in the new members' class would become involved members of Coeur d'Alene Reformed Church. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Diane Olinger**.
 12. Pray for **David and Jane Crum**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Kathleen Winslow**, Prague, Czech Republic, and **Janine Eygenraam**, Quebec, Canada. / *New Horizons* managing editor **Judith Dinsmore**.
 13. **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray that God would expand the outreach of St-Marc Church. / **Matt and Elin Prather**, Corona, CA. Pray that the efforts of Corona Presbyterian Church to reach the lost would be fruitful. / **Daniel (and Victoria) Garcia**, yearlong intern at Escondido OPC in Escondido, CA.
 14. **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, FL. Pray for the Lord to add new families to Keys Presbyterian Church. / **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray that the Lord would add new families to the church in Montevideo. / **Andrew Farr**, yearlong intern at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, MI.
 15. **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for wisdom as the Uruguay Mission considers a new meeting location. / Pray for a fruitful **Church Planter Training Conference**, Jan. 15-19, in St. Augustine, FL. / **Andrew**

(and Cyndi) Myers, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, PA.

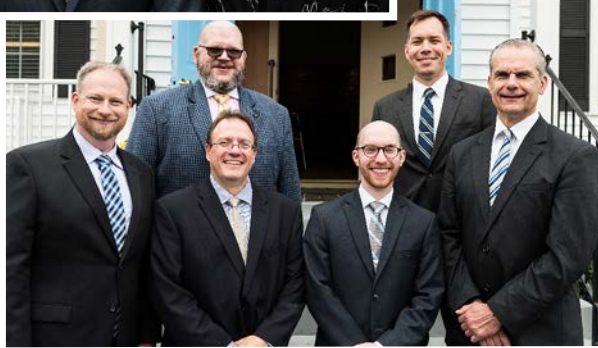
- 16. Matthew and Lois Cotta**, Pasadena, CA. Pray for the discipleship and ministry of Pasadena Presbyterian Church. / Missionary associates **Markus and Sharon Jeromin**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for wisdom in the use of time and resources. / *New Horizons* cover designer **Chris Tobias**.
- 17.** Pray for affiliated missionaries **Linda Karner** (on furlough) and **Craig and Ree Coulbourne**, Japan. / Pray for Home Missions general secretary **John Shaw**. / Short-Term Missions Coordinator **David Nakhla**. Pray for wisdom as individuals and churches consider participating in short-term missions and disaster-response efforts in 2018.
- 18. John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, IL (downtown). Pray for the people of Gospel Life Presbyterian Church to catch the vision for discipling others. / Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he speaks at the Home Missions church planters' conference. / *New Horizons* proofreader **Jessica Johnson**.
- 19.** Pray for Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Katrina Zartman**. / **Lowell and Mae Ivey**, Virginia Beach, VA. Pray that visitors to Reformation Presbyterian Church will join in the Lord's time. / Pray for safe travel for Christian Education general secretary **Danny Olinger** as he visits churches.
- 20.** Pray for **Miller (and Stephanie) Ansell**, church-planting intern, Houston, TX. / **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Ask God to make the congregations on La Gonâve a powerful witness in their communities. / Pray for stated clerk **Ross Graham** as he begins preparations for the next general assembly, convening on June 11, 2018.
- 21.** Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray that the preaching of the Word would bear much fruit in Haiti. / **Paul and Sarah Mourreale**, St. Louis, MO. Pray for wisdom for Gateway OPC's oversight committee as they look to the future of their work. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Pat Clawson**.
- 22. Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, KY. Pray for Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church's organization as a local church by 2020. / Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson**, speaking at a pastors' conference in Colombia this week. / *Ordained Servant* editor **Greg Reynolds**.



Ben and Heather Hopp and family

- 23.** Retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Cal and Edie Cummings, Greet Rietkerk, and Young and Mary Lou Son**. Pray for good health during the cold winter months. / Pray for Home Missions administrative assistant **Katie Stumpff**. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.
- 24. Daniel and Amber Doleys**, Springfield, OH. Pray for continuing unity and growth at Living Water OPC. / Missionary associates **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that the people whose lives they touch will see Christ through their words and deeds. / **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
- 25.** Missionary associate **Leah Hopp**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Karimojong families reached through the community health work. / **Jeremy and Gwen Baker**, Yuma, AZ. Pray for increasing outreach/evangelism opportunities at Yuma OPC. / Pray for **Mark Lowery**, director of publications at Great Commission Publications.
- 26.** Pray for **Ryan (and Rachel) Heaton**, church-planting intern, Naples, FL. / **Charles and Connie Jackson**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Charles's preaching and teaching ministries. / Pray for the work of **Alan Strange** and **Derrick Vander Meulen**, coeditors of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.
- 27. David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that Nakaale Presbyterian Church would grow in faith, maturity, and new believers. / **Mika and Christina Edmondson**, Grand Rapids, MI. Pray for God's continuing blessing on New City Fellowship. / **Mark Stumpff**, Loan Fund administrator.
- 28. Tim and Deborah Herndon**, West Lebanon, NH. Pray for the men beginning officer training and for marriages growing in godliness at Providence OPC. / **David and Rashel Robbins**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that God would grant them health and strength for their labors. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund document specialist.
- 29. Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for those providing instruction to the children in the church. / **Josh and Kristen McKamy**, Chambersburg, PA. Pray for Covenant OPC to have effective evangelism and teaching opportunities among new contacts.
- 30. Bob and Grace Holda**, Oshkosh, WI. Pray that members and visitors of Resurrection Presbyterian Church grow in faith and love. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Sarah Jantzen** and **Paige Vanderwey**, Mbale, Uganda. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
- 31.** Missionary associates **Schylie La Belle** and **Angela Voskuil**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that God would equip them to disciple the students they teach. / **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, FL. Pray that the Lord would give Christ the King Presbyterian Church wisdom in reaching families in the community.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS



Christopher Bush with his fiancée, Kelly Morse (top left), Michael Bobick preaching at Christopher Bush's ordination (top right), and participants in the ordination of Christopher Bush (bottom)

SONG ORDAINED AND INSTALLED

Mary Erickson

On Sunday evening, October 15, Columbia Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Columbia, Maryland, gathered with joy and thanksgiving to ordain and install Jonathan G. Song as pastor of youth ministries.

Rev. Irwyn Ince preached the sermon, and a special exhortation was given by the Rev. Young Sun Song, Pastor Song's father. Rev. Francis Van Delden of New Hope OPC (Frederick, Maryland) administered the ordination and installation questions, Dr. Peter Lee (RTS) gave the charge to the minister, and Columbia Presbyterian Church's team leader pastor, Rev. Randy Lovelace, gave the charge to the congregation.

Jonathan Song had been called to serve as director of youth ministries at CPC in November 2015, and the congregation has enthusiastically and prayerfully supported his pursuit of ordination in the OPC. Family, friends, fellow elders, and members of CPC celebrated together with a buffet dinner hosted by Song's parents.

BUSH INSTALLED AT RINGOES, NJ

Kelly Morse

On October 14, 2017, Calvary OPC in Ringoes, New Jersey, which had been without a pastor for over three years, was blessed with the ordination and installation service of Christopher Bush.

Bush first felt God's calling on his life while interning at a local evangelical church his senior year of high school. A pastor there challenged him to consider a future in the ministry. Also around this time, a close friend encouraged him to look into the Reformed faith. In high school, then especially while attending Grove City College, Bush grew to embrace Reformed theology. He sought a Reformed church to attend after college, and his research led him to speak with Rev. Jim Cassidy, then pastor of Calvary OPC. An instant connection was made. Bush visited the church on Christmas break and, after graduation, became a member. Rev. Cassidy became an important mentor and encourager to Bush.

He went on to study at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, graduating with a Masters of Divinity in May 2017. He was licensed to preach in the Presbytery of New Jersey in September 2016 and, after being unanimously called by Calvary OPC, was ordained and installed to the pastorate of the church. Rev. Michael Bobick preached, Rev. Jim Cassidy provided the charge to the minister, and Rev. Tim Ferguson the charge to the congregation.

The church is filled with joy and anticipation to see what God will do through the ministry of Pastor Bush.



Jonathan Song with his parents after his ordination

IN MEMORIAM

Archie Allison

Doris Jean Williamson, beloved wife of OPC pastor and author G. I. Williamson, joined the church triumphant on November 14, 2017. Married during World War II on May 3, 1944, while G. I. served in the army, the Lord blessed them with three daughters, eleven grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

Born on January 4, 1926, the Lord gave Doris new birth while G. I. was studying for the ministry. Kind and loving, she faithfully helped G. I. minister God's word for more than sixty-five years in the United States and twice in New Zealand. She desired that the theme of her funeral service be "Prepare to Meet Your Maker."

MORGAN INSTALLED AT JANESVILLE, WI

William Muether

On November 3, 2017, Rev. Patrick J. Morgan was installed as pastor of Christ Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Janesville, Wisconsin. Rev. Camden M. Bucey moderated the service and Rev. Lane B. Keister preached the sermon. Rev. David W. King gave the charge to Pastor Morgan, and Rev. John R. Hilbelink gave the charge to the congregation.



Participants in the ordination of Patrick Morgan (left to right): John Hilbelink, Lane Keister, Dave King, Patrick Morgan, Christian McShaffrey, Camden Bucey, and Casey Bessette

MR. K. ORDAINED

Allen Tomlinson

On October 6, Mr. K. was ordained



Doris and G. I. Williamson, circa 1955

to the gospel ministry at First Church of Merrimack, in Merrimack, New Hampshire. Previously a yearlong intern at First Church of Merrimack, Mr. K. has accepted a call from the Foreign Missions committee to serve with Mr. F. in Asia. Rev. Stephen Tracey preached and Rev. Douglas Clawson delivered the charge to Mr. K.

UPDATE

CHURCHES

By action of the Presbytery of the Central United States, Caney OPC in Caney, KS, was dissolved on June 11, 2017, and its final service was held that same day.

On August 25, the Presbytery of the South dissolved Heritage Presbyterian Church in Mobile, AL, effective September 30; its last service was held on August 27.

Penobscot Bay OP Chapel in Bucksport, ME, a mission work under the oversight of Living Hope OPC in Brunswick, ME, held its last service on October 8.

MINISTERS

At its fall meeting, the Presbytery of New York and New England dismissed David S. Phillips to Heritage Presbytery of the PCA; he was installed as associate pastor of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Kemblesville, PA, on October 8.

On October 15, Jonathan G. Song was ordained as a minister and installed as pastor of youth ministries at Columbia Presbyterian Church in Columbia, MD.

Harold E. Thomas, pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church in Niceville, FL, retired on October 28.

By mutual agreement, the pastoral re-



At the ordination of Mr. K.: (back row) Douglas Clawson, Nathan Thomlinson, Gordon Cook, Mr. F., Carl Durham, Chris Jennings, Ken Streeter, Ron Downing, Lee Turnbull; (front row) Stephen Migotsky, David Koenig, Joe Jager, Allen Tomlinson, Mr. K., David Booth, and Chris Liff

lationship of Kevin L. Medcalf and New Hope OPC in Hanford, CA, was dissolved by the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada on October 30.

On November 3, Patrick J. Morgan, formerly a PCA minister, was installed as pastor of Christ Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Janesville, WI.

MILESTONES

• **Doris J. Williamson** (née Short), wife of Rev. G. I. Williamson, died on November 14.

LETTERS

BROKEN FOR US

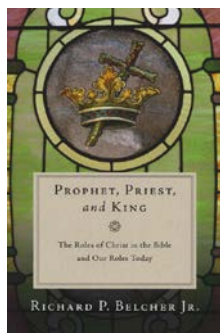
In response to "Jesus' Body Was Not Broken," December 2017

David Noe and John Muether (authors of "The Spirit of the Reformation," October 2017) concede that the textual evidence favors more contemporary readings of 1 Corinthians 11:24. All that the Scripture denies, however (and which we did not affirm), was that Christ's bones were broken. Our secondary standards (Larger Catechism Q/A 169) clearly affirm that the body of Christ was broken for us.

REVIEWS

Prophet, Priest, and King: The Roles of Christ in the Bible and Our Roles Today, by **Richard P. Belcher Jr.** P&R, 2016. Paperback, 224 pages, \$13.00. Reviewed by OP pastor **Jeffrey M. Scott**.

I would venture to say that most Christians who self-consciously trace their theological roots back to the apostolic foundation of the church through the Protestant Reformation are not only familiar with, but also greatly encouraged by, the biblical insight that our Savior Jesus was anointed as the Christ to be our chief prophet, our only high priest, and our eternal king. He came to fulfill those crucial roles or offices for us



as our Redeemer, and all of his work on our behalf—past, present, and future—is subsumed under them.

But how many of us appreciate the connection between Christ's anointing and our own by his Spirit, as the Heidelberg Catechism so beautifully does? The catechism calls me to confess that I am called a Christian "because I am a member of Christ by faith, and thus a partaker of his anointing, that I may confess his name, present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to him, and ... fight against sin and the devil in this life" (Q/A 32). The catechism implies, at this point, that life in the Spirit makes the Christian a participant in Jesus Christ's ministry to his church and this world as prophet, priest, and king.

In his valuable new work, *Prophet, Priest, and King: The Roles of Christ in the Bible and Our Roles Today*, Old Testament scholar Richard Belcher skillfully probes the significance of Jesus Christ's threefold office for both the church's worship and her service.

Belcher handles the pertinent biblical texts with impressive exegetical prowess while examining the roles of prophet, priest, and king from the garden of Eden under Adam and Eve to the New Jerusalem under Jesus Christ and his bride.

While drawing freely from the Reformed tradition's insights into the threefold office of Christ and engaging with demurring positions, Belcher demonstrates how Jesus Christ "fulfills and transforms these roles in his earthly ministry and continues to exercise them in his heavenly ministry from the right hand of the Father" (178). He then goes on to amplify for the reader ways in which many activities of "the corporate church, the elders of the church, and individual believers ... can be defined by these roles" (178–79).

Both students and teachers should find useful the detailed analytical outline, the robust selected bibliography, the Scripture and subject/name indexes, and the study questions at the end of each chapter. This book will prove both wonderfully accessible to the uninitiated reader and pleasantly stimulating to those well acquainted with these biblical themes. It will also generate in the Christian fresh adoration for Jesus Christ and encouragement to intently pursue life in union with him as our chief prophet, only priest, and eternal king.

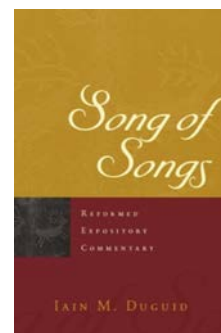
Song of Songs, by **Iain M. Duguid**. P&R, 2016. Hardcover, 216 pages, \$17.00. Reviewed by OP elder **Joseph W. Smith III**.

Iain Duguid's *Song of Songs* has two appealing features that you might not expect in a commentary on this unique book of the Bible: humor and an emphasis on Christ.

Naturally, Christian scholars want to draw a messianic perspective out of any book of the Old Testament, but that is especially difficult with the Song—which does not contain a single reference to God, with the possible exception of some wordplay in two passages.

In this entry in the Reformed Expository Commentary series, Duguid manages to celebrate romantic love while also pointing the reader past it to the greater love of God for his people through Christ. And he does so with a funny, frank, and friendly tone that will please contemporary readers.

Having already penned a detailed study of the Song for the Tyndale Old



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2018 Faith Church Women's Retreat

March 16-17 • Cape May, NJ

- Topic: The Life-Changing Power of God's Word in Your Life
- Speaker: Maureen Sutton
- Location: La Mer Beachfront Inn
- To register, email faithopsecretary@gmail.com. For more information, call Gayle Ellis at 856-521-0199

Early bird registration through Jan. 15 (\$15 off).
Registration open through Feb. 21.

Testament Commentaries in 2015, Duguid provides his own translation here, bringing clarity and smoothness to a text that has often befuddled readers and scholars.

In the commentary itself, Duguid's handling of the textual difficulties is expert and assured, yet not overly technical. He brings out many fascinating details, such as the fact that the word "bride" is not used until the famous consummation passage in 4:16-5:1, thus emphatically linking sexuality and marriage. He also points out that this material falls precisely in the middle of the book, with 111 lines coming both before and after it.

Having dealt handily with various linguistic, cultural, and historical details, each of Duguid's twelve chapters moves on to apply the Song's truths to our daily lives, placing a salutary focus on what it says to a society obsessed with sex—while also addressing the sexual brokenness that is so widespread even in the church.

Duguid is especially adept at tying the Song to other passages of Scripture, showing how this seemingly anomalous book really does fit into God's grand scheme. For example, he links the Song's vineyard imagery to Isaiah 5, its garden passages to Genesis 1-3, and the

"lover at the door" episode in Song 5 to Revelation 3:20.

Of course, not all readers will agree with Duguid's take on every passage. As an example, it's tough to see the material on Solomon's glories (3:6-11) as a negative contrast with the simplicity of the woman and her lover.

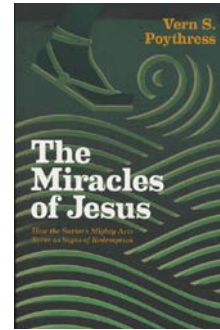
Nonetheless, this fine new volume is both terse and conversational, both doctrinal and practical, both traditional and modern. As such, it proves an invaluable resource for

anyone studying or teaching this difficult book.

The Miracles of Jesus: How the Savior's Mighty Acts Serve as Signs of Redemption, by Vern S. Poythress. Crossway, 2016. Paperback, 272 pages, \$19.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Glen J. Clary.

The miracles of Jesus are not merely displays of divine power evincing the divine nature of Christ, but signs of redemption that foreshadow his death and resurrection. Christ's death and resurrection form the key to interpreting the miracles and the bridge that connects them to the Christian life.

This is Vern Poythress's thesis in *The Miracles of Jesus*.



Each miracle "functions as a small picture of Christ's glory and of his mission of salvation. The miracles tell stories that show analogues to the grand story of redemption....

The small stories of redemption point especially to the climax of redemption in Christ's crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension, reign, and second coming" (29).

Poythress covers the seven miracles recorded in the gospel of John. Each one points forward "to the great miracle of

OPC Disaster Response Volunteers



OPC Disaster Response continues to carry out hurricane relief efforts in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico. Our Regional Coordinators have done a great job of local oversight. Joel King has led operations in Florida; in Houston, it's been Regional Coordinator Steve Larson, along with Jeff Davis and Mark and Peggy Sumpter. The Sumpters completed their service as Hospitality/Volunteer Coordinators in December, saying, "We are amazed at God's provisions—generous, generous donors and amazing volunteers, and our super, super Site Coordinator, Jeff Davis." Please consider serving! Both skilled and unskilled volunteers are needed. As OPC Pastor Jon Shishko recently wrote about relief work, "We are called to be first responders in prayer, support, and service. We are called to 'be doers of the word, and not hearers only' (James 1:22)." Visit OPCDisasterResponse.org for further information.

Oakland Hills OPC Women's Conference

March 9-10 • Farmington, MI

- Topic: The Beauty of God's Design: Masculinity and Femininity
- Speakers: Rev. Jeffrey Wilson, George Kelly, LPC, Tamara Kelly, LPC
- For details and registration information, call Tamara Kelly at 248-651-0900.

Christ's resurrection" (46)—even his turning water into wine and his walking on water. Each miracle involves movement from trouble to resolution, which anticipates the movement from death to resurrection. This movement is further “organically related to the movement from a broken to a restored and harmonious endpoint in every sphere of life” (51).

Once the connection between a particular miracle and the resurrection of Jesus is discovered, the Christian may proceed to apply the text to himself, but only in light of his union with Christ and his own experience of death and resurrection. The miracle narratives do not apply to us directly, but to Jesus first and then to us by virtue of our union with him. Poythress shows how the triangle diagram developed by Edmund Clowney “to summarize how to go about interpreting *types* in the Old Testament” may also be applied to the miracles of Jesus (65).

No less than twenty-eight chapters of the book are dedicated to the miracles recorded in Matthew's gospel. They could have been reduced to less than twenty. He has five separate chapters, for example, entitled “Many Healings,” which cover five different summary passages of Jesus healing the multitudes. It would have been better to combine these texts and similar miracle narratives instead of having a separate chapter for each one, which makes the book repetitive.

I have three main criticisms of the book. First, most of the material on how to draw applications from the miracles is geared toward the individual Christian

rather than the church. Second, I am a bit uncomfortable with the parallel the author frequently makes between physical healing and spiritual healing. It would have been better to use an eschatological dualism (already/not yet) rather than an anthropological dualism (body/soul) in making applications. Finally, the sacraments are barely mentioned in the book, even though some of the miracles of Jesus are linked to the sacraments and contribute significantly to the sacramental theology of the church.

Overall, this book is an excellent contribution to biblical scholarship, and I highly commend it to anyone interested in understanding the meaning and relevance of the miracles of Jesus.

***The Person of Jesus: Radio Addresses on the Deity of the Savior*, by J. Gresham Machen. Westminster Seminary Press, 2017. Paperback, 125 pages, \$7.00. Reviewed by OP minister Gregory P. Hoadley.**

Because of the continued attacks on Christianity in our day, J. Gresham Machen's writings are as relevant as ever. This is why the Church owes Westminster Theological Seminary a debt of gratitude for its publication *The Person of Jesus: Radio Addresses on the Deity of the Savior*. Consisting of seven transcribed radio addresses given by Machen in the 1930s, this short book offers a succinct defense of the person and deity of Jesus Christ. This material previously appeared in *The Christian Faith in the Modern World* (Eerdman's, 1947); Westminster has made some adjustments to enhance readability.

As is typical of Machen, he fearlessly takes on his opponents and exhorts Christians to stand firm: “Every true man is resentful of slanders against a human friend.

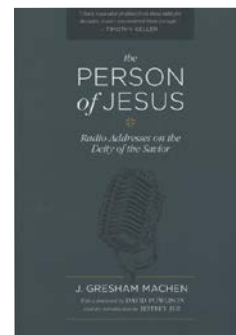
Should we not be grieved ten times more by slanders against our God?” (4).

Machen begins by defending the Trinity, and shows how God, through the inspired Scriptures, “allowed us sinful creatures a look into the very depths of the being of God” (14). In the next two chapters, Machen defines and defends the deity of Christ, pointing out the folly of man in denying this critical doctrine: “It means that he has worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, and that is a sin indeed” (26).

Machen then turns to the Sermon on the Mount. Here he notes the irony of many liberals who, while denying that Christ is God, nonetheless profess their love of this sermon. Do they not see, Machen wonders aloud with his readers,

how Christ so clearly states his divine authority? Do they not recognize that only one of his stature could recount, “You have heard that it was said ...” about some aspect of God's law, and respond with, “But *I* say to you ...”?

Next, Machen considers Christ's miracles and resurrection. He discusses how critics have sought to dismantle these



Positions Available

Head of School: Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy near Philadelphia is searching for a Head of School. The successful candidate will be committed to Christ, the church, and Reformed Christian education; have significant financial/management capabilities; and be able to inspire faculty, students, families, and donors. Salary: \$65,000, plus benefits. Start date: July 1, 2018. An application is available at <http://www.phil-mont.com/wp/about-2/head-of-school/newhead/> and, along with a cover letter and resume, should be sent to Board president Michel Hatem at board@phil-mont.com.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS *Continued*

supernatural events while holding on to a more “historical” Jesus. But, as Machen notes, if you were to free Jesus from all the miracles in Scripture, he “would not be worth believing” (75), because he would be just another man.

Lastly, he turns to the resurrection, and demonstrates why it matters:

You say, my friend, that you have never seen a man who rose from the dead after he had been laid really dead in the

tomb? Quite right. Neither have I. ... But what of it? You and I have never seen a man who rose from the dead; but then you and I have never seen a man like Jesus. (99)

Throughout these radio addresses, Machen’s arguments are both clear and profound. This makes *The Person of Jesus* a very helpful little book for both new and mature Christians in defending the Christ of the Scriptures.

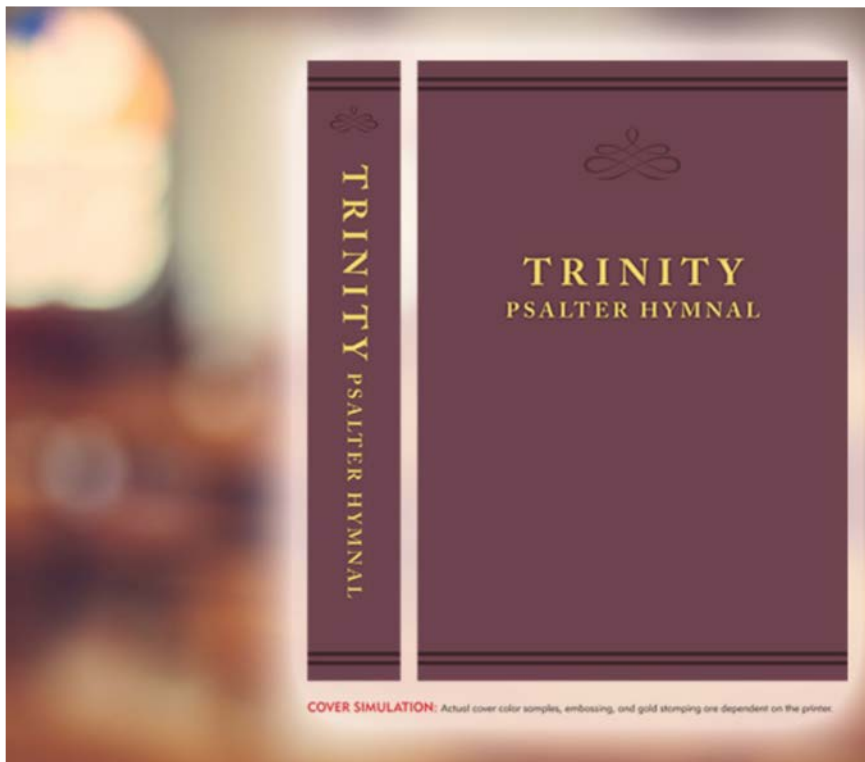
PRE-PUBLICATION DISCOUNT ON THE TRINITY PSALTER HYMNAL

Great Commission Publications is offering a *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* pre-publication 15% discount from December 4 to February 23 on case lots of twenty. The regular price for the pew edition is **\$23.00**. The discount price is just **\$19.55** (USD). *Trinity Psalter Hymnal’s* accompanist edition will also be pre-publication discounted 15 percent from \$45.00 to \$39.25 (USD).

The target shipping date is **April 30**. Pre-publication orders will not be invoiced until shipment is made. Shipping costs are extra. We encourage all churches to pay with checks rather than credit cards.

There is free shipping for those churches that can pick up their order at the OPC General Assembly or URC Synod being held jointly in Wheaton, Illinois, **June 11–15, 2018**. Don’t forget to tell customer service representative Beth if you can pick up your order in Wheaton.

TRINITY PSALTER HYMNAL now available for purchase



Ordering Details:

GCP Customer Service Contact:
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(800) 695-3387 or (770) 831-9084
customer.service@gcp.org

When ordering specify:
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