

# NEW HORIZONS

≡ *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ≡

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in Church //**  
*by Judith M. Dinsmore*

OCTOBER 2019

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David E. Haney //**  
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MINISTERING TO THOSE IN  
**ADDICTION**

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## New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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On August 11, Kalamazoo Community Presbyterian in Kalamazoo, Michigan, celebrated its fortieth anniversary. The event included the premiere of a hymn written by the church's pastor, Jonathan Cruse, and based on Psalm 127: "Unless the Lord." Four current and former pastors helped to lead the worship service (from left to right): Jonathan Cruse (pastor, 2017-), Tim Bero (pastor, 1996-2013), Ken Smith (pastor, 1988-1994), and Larry Wilson (associate pastor, 1983).

Photo courtesy of Seth Vander Band.



# MINISTERING TO THOSE IN ADDICTION



**JAMES H. BERRY // “Deaths of despair” is the appropriately grave moniker for the plague of premature deaths that has expanded across the United States over the past few decades. Middle-aged and young adults are dying at such record rates that the average life expectancy has declined each year since 2015.**

The last time the United States saw a decline like this was in 1918, when World War I and especially the Spanish flu decimated large swaths of the population. But this time, the epidemic is not fueled by a virus or a war. Rather, elements much more pernicious and vexing are to blame: drug overdose, suicide, and liver failure due to drugs and alcohol. They are truly deaths of despair. The fact that these deaths are entirely preventable and rooted in human behavior adds a layer of maddening frustration.

As a psychiatrist who specializes in treating addiction, I am keenly aware of the frustration. Through my work, I have personally known scores of people who died too young.

When I graduated medical school and entered a psychiatry residency, I expected to see death in the intensive care units or the halls of hospice centers as elderly patients at the end of long lives were either kept alive by modern technologies or provided symptomatic relief as they passed from this life to the next. I expected to see death in emergency rooms as ambulances transported

victims of gunshots or traumatic car accidents. I certainly did not expect to see death routinely in a psychiatric practice. Yet I am a daily witness to the self-destructive nature of addiction and the catastrophic consequences experienced by loved ones.

At the same time, I am a daily witness to lives reclaimed from the ashes. People do recover. People do change. Believe me; if this were not the case, I would have changed professions long ago. I actually love the work I do. There are few other areas of medical practice where a physician can see such dramatic improvement in the wellbeing of a patient. Fathers become better fathers. Wives become better wives. Students become better students. Employees become better employees. You get the picture. People begin attending to responsibilities, accomplishing goals, and enjoying life. Addiction is not a hopeless condition. It is a condition amenable to correction and treatment.

I am convinced that the church has a vital role in countering the deaths of despair. What is the antidote to de-

spair? Life filled with hope, connection, and purpose. The church offers this life in abundance. Last year in *Ordained Servant*, I introduced the medical model of addiction (see “[Flesh and Thorn: Understanding Addiction As Disease](#),” *Ordained Servant Online*, June/July 2018) to help church officers understand the nature of addiction as a biologic, psychological, and social malady. In this article, I seek to give some guidance on ministering to those who are suffering from addiction.

## Hope for Those in Addiction

In the throes of addiction, it is tempting to believe that nothing will change and one will be forever stuck on the treadmill of failure—failure to resist temptation, failure to obey God, failure to meet the simple obligation of choosing not to pick up the drug or the drink one more time. After a particularly hurtful or embarrassing episode, those in addiction frequently promise themselves or others to never use again—then fail.

For all of us, even apart from or



Dr. Berry in his office at West Virginia University

before addiction, life is hard. Suffering is real. Finding relief by temporarily anesthetizing a hopeless certainty of perpetual physical and mental distress is a seductive solution. Done repeatedly over time, it becomes as natural as breathing. To cease using is akin to cutting off oxygen. Life without the substance becomes unimaginable, and thus giving into failure becomes an acceptable option.

Here we apply the hope of the gospel. In this body, we *are* stuck on the treadmill of failure. All of us. We are corrupt in every ounce of our being. We constantly fail to live according to the holy standards of God's law. Thankfully, Christ succeeded by obeying God perfectly. His substitutionary death and glorious resurrection contain the hope of a new body to enjoy a new heaven and new earth upon Christ's return. Through faith in Christ, we have the freedom to pursue righteousness. The Holy Spirit now dwells with our spirit and is a guarantee that failure is not our end. As we abide in Christ, he promises to carry us through this failure to glory.

For more on this topic from Dr. Berry, listen to his lecture series "Understanding the Insanity of Addiction" given at Mid-America Reformed Seminary on March 12, 2019, and found on [sermonaudio.com](http://sermonaudio.com).

Our salvation does not depend on our sobriety. Neither our justification nor sanctification depend upon our efforts. Fostering hope by constantly drawing people to this truth is a balm for suffering souls.

### Connection for Those in Addiction

How does one abide in Christ? By faithfully making use of the means of grace in the context of his body, the church.

Addiction is an intensely isolating condition that breeds soul-deadening guilt and shame. This guilt and shame further isolates those in addiction, in an unhealthy feedback loop. Often, the very community Christians suffering from addiction need the most is the community they most wish to avoid. We need to cultivate a culture of embracing broken people as broken people.

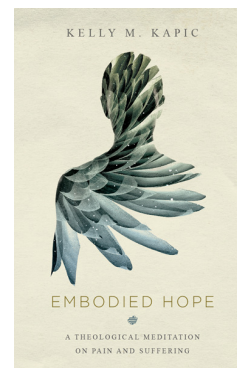
Here, I believe a renewed call for the church to return to the biblical practice of confession could be particularly useful. (For more on this practice, see Kelly M. Kopic, chapter 10, "Confession and the Other," in *Embodied Hope* [2017].) The receiver of the confession could be an elder or trusted member who accepts the confession not as one who is perfect, but from a position of brokenness. This serves to benefit both the confessor and the one receiving. Verbally acknowledging sin to another

relieves the burden carried by oneself and encourages accountability. There is also something incredibly powerful in hearing God's word of forgiveness from a brother or sister.

Confession also allows the one receiving the confession to examine himself or herself and recognize that there are no "acceptable" sins. We all have our own pet idols we crave more than God, pet idols to which we offer our worship. Possessions, recreations, recognition, career advancement, food—when these become idols, they are not as overtly or obviously destructive, and may even be socially acceptable, so we let ourselves off too easy. We should not.

Even more basically, Christians in the church should be spending time with one another. Fostering hospitality and inviting each other to supper or a bonfire or a game night can help those in addiction move beyond the shell of isolation. Shared activities can also create alternatives to times when one would typically engage in addictive behaviors. If you know that someone in your church is struggling with an addiction, ask which times of the day or week he or she is most vulnerable. Offer to be available by text or call whenever needed to help ride out the cravings or to talk through a difficult period. Your conversation or quiet presence can be a much-needed lifeline.

During time with one who is suffering, avoid the trap of believing that you need to fix the problem. You cannot fix it. No words or actions of yours have the power to truly heal anyone. Often those in addiction simply need to be heard or have a space where nothing is said at all. Just being with someone who is suffering may be therapeutic. Do not be afraid to say you do not know what to say, but that you are committed to being there for them.



## Purpose for Those in Addiction

Addiction lends itself to an exaggerated focus on self that is not helped by contemporary culture. As America celebrates choice and individual empowerment, we are constantly bombarded by messages of restlessness, of change, of self-fulfillment.

Participating in the life and fellowship of the church, however, gives one purpose beyond meeting one's individual desires. Regular Sabbath-keeping and participation in the liturgical rhythm of worship shapes and forms us in a way that is a corrective to a culture that preaches instant satisfaction and dismisses delayed gratification. Keeping the Sabbath is radically countercultural. We do not get to choose whether or not to have a Sabbath day. God has determined it for us. In keeping it, we learn submission, patience, and communal joy.

During worship, we reorient our identity, passions, concerns, and desires to our God-given purpose of glorifying him. We come before God's throne as sinful creatures in need of salvation and not just sick creatures in need of healing. We communally confess this reality and seek God's forgiveness. We receive the declaration of his forgiveness and formally receive peace from his throne through his minister. God's Word cleanses us as we hear Christ preached. With our tongues, we pour out our lamentations and praise in prayer and song. In the Lord's Supper, we taste that the Lord is good. We do not grasp nor gorge upon the elements. God gives the elements to us through the hands of his church. We connect the reality that our physical sustenance, like our spiritual sustenance, is entirely dependent upon God. We look forward in eager anticipation to the overflowing richness of the table set for us in glory. On earth, the satisfaction of our food and drink lasts but a short while, but in heaven our enjoyment will be limitless as we feast upon our limitless God.

Service to others through diaconal needs or even simple tasks such as setting out snacks and coffee extends one

beyond the self. All church members should be challenged to serve, but there is a particularly restorative value for those burdened by addiction to focus on the care of others. I encourage deacons to enlist these folk to help whenever there is opportunity.

We all wrestle with sin and are called to be holy. We all are to throw off everything that enslaves and ensnares. Our world is broken, and addiction is a manifestation of this brokenness. The church is for broken people. In her, we

find the only sure fount of hope, connection, and purpose. We should open her doors wide and invite a dying world to enter and taste the goodness of the Lord. □

*The author is a ruling elder at Reformation OPC in Morgantown, WV, an addiction psychiatrist, associate professor, and interim chair of the Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry at West Virginia University. Photo on page 3 courtesy of West Virginia University.*

## A BRIEF LOOK AT THE ADDICTION EPIDEMIC

70,000

people died from drug overdoses in 2017.

47,600

of those deaths involved opioids.

399,000

is the total of US deaths from overdoses involving opioids from 1999–2017.

In 2017—the most recent year for which data has been released—more than 70,000 people died from drug overdoses. Opioids (synthetic forms of opiates) were involved in 47,600 overdose deaths.<sup>1</sup>

How did we get to this point? According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the opioid epidemic can be described in three waves: first prescription opioids, then heroin, then synthetic opioids.<sup>2</sup> In the 1990s, opioids began to be prescribed with more frequency, and overdose deaths involving prescription opioids rose year by year since 1999. Then from 2010–2013, overdose deaths involving heroin rapidly increased. In the third wave, overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids, particularly fentanyl, have been rising since 2013.

All told, the CDC estimates that, from 1999–2017, more than 399,000 people in the United States died from overdoses involving opioids. More people die each year from overdoses than from car accidents and firearms.

James Berry is quick to note that the opioid epidemic is changing quickly and that, although opioids have grabbed headlines, the addiction epidemic spreads more widely still. As he testified before Congress on February 28, 2019,

Our addiction epidemic extends beyond opioids and is rapidly evolving. Opioids have captured our national attention and rightly so due to the staggering jolt of acute overdose deaths. However, please note that these deaths remain outpaced by the number of people who die every year from alcohol or tobacco-related causes.... The epidemic will require long-term solutions. There is no quick fix.<sup>3</sup>

1. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates>

2. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/analysis.html>

3. <https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/02.28.19--Berry%20Testimony.pdf>

# THE RECOVERING ADDICT IN CHURCH



**JUDITH M. DINSMORE // When Patience walked into Neon Reformed OPC in Neon, Kentucky, she was two years and four months clean of drugs and alcohol. Her addiction had begun at age thirteen, when a close relative started smoking pot with her. They lived in a small coal town in West Virginia, right across the Big**

Sandy River from Kentucky. At around eighteen, Patience was given her first line of heroin, again from her relative, who wanted a using buddy. Next, Patience tried thirty-milligram oxycodone tablets, or “thirties.”

“I would use just anything and everything to alter my state of mind and the way that I felt, both emotionally and physically,” Patience said.

After a few years, Patience needed something stronger, so her boyfriend taught her how to intravenously inject heroin, a cheaper and more potent choice than the thirties. She would shoot up in hospital parking lots because, as she figured, overdosing was a matter of *when* not *if*.

When she was twenty-three, Patience’s boyfriend took her for a drive and spun into a parking lot that she didn’t recognize. “He said that he wanted to quit using drugs and that if I didn’t go to this meeting with him, he’d leave me,” she remembered. Severely co-dependent, Patience agreed.

It was more of an intervention than a meeting. The CEO of the faith-based Addiction Recovery Centers (ARC) told the two his testimony. Both Pa-

tience and her boyfriend accepted the offer for treatment, and through the preaching of a Reformed Baptist chaplain at her rehab facility, Patience came to Christ in December 2015. “It was one of those moments you just never forget,” she said.

## Welcoming Recovering Addicts

Patience’s story is no longer unusual. In the past twenty-five years, opioid use has spread rapidly into states inexperienced with drug addiction but often ripe for trouble from economic downturns. Some of these states include OP congregations: West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Hampshire, and Maine.

Neon, Kentucky, in particular, is next door to some of the worst opioid use in the country. When the local hospital responded to the epidemic in 2017 by forbidding doctors to prescribe painkillers, one practitioner came out of retirement to open a clinic nearby. To this day, when the clinic is open, the parking lot is packed, said M. Jay Bennett, pastor of Neon Reformed. The practitioner writes the prescription for opioids, and “patients” can walk to a mom-and-pop

pharmacy to fill it.

Although Patience’s background was not uncommon, as a recovering addict she found little help from area churches. She has some guesses why. “Churches who stigmatize addiction tend to brush you off. They engage, but it’s not genuine.” Patience now works at one of ARC’s in-patient facilities in Prestonsburg, Kentucky. Her clients recently told a story that lined up with her own experience: They attended a non-denominational church one morning and were informed afterward that they came at the wrong time. If you’d like to come again, the ushers said, you must come to the *third* Sunday morning service, not the second one.

Heavy addiction rates can cause local churches to be less open to recovering addicts. Members may have been stabbed in the back by loved ones who are addicted, Patience explained, making them unwilling to trust a recovering addict. Or, the church might feel awkward. “Addicts’ social constructs are sometimes backwards,” Patience laughed. “We have a different way of socializing.”

Neon Reformed, however, welcomed her. “They’ve been wonderful to

me,” Patience said. “People actually take the time to talk to me as an individual.” She is currently in the new members’ class.

Learning that the pastor himself had a history with drugs also gave Patience a “sense of comfort.” Recovering addicts like her are easily overwhelmed, she explained. Many are convinced that no one understands or cares. Time and time again, what breaks through the

barrier is when those who have experience with addiction—who can understand—demonstrate that they *do* care. “Neon gives me hope that church fellowship and community is real,” Patience concluded.



Patience

## Reformed and Addicted

But perhaps more challenging than welcoming the recovering addict is loving well the addict already inside the church.

Travis Lamb was a PCA deacon in Nashville, Tennessee. Addicted to alcohol, he’d show up to church in a suit and come to all the committee meetings in what he now calls a 24/7 obsession with deception. “I would be teaching Sunday school and absolutely hammered at nine o’clock in the morning,” Lamb remembered.

By this point, he had already gone through treatment once. “I was living just to drink and to use. I was all day, every day, keeping up appearances while everything was just rotten on the inside,” he said. “It was the end of the road.”

The church didn’t respond well, Lamb said. Although warning signs were all over the place, the leadership didn’t know what to do. “It wasn’t any kind of willful blindness, but simply an issue that was pushed into a corner,” he

explained. “There was no sense of urgency.” Lamb himself didn’t help. Like many in addiction, he was accomplished not only at deceiving others but also himself, thinking that he could “feed off of some living faith without repentance.”

In time, however, Lamb walked into an intervention with a guy who understood the urgency: Patrick Padgett, a recovering alcoholic and the son of Great Commissions Publications’ executive director, Marvin Padgett. Patrick Padgett runs several halfway houses in the Nashville area for men coming either out of treatment or off the street. Lamb spent six months in one of Padgett’s houses in 2016. Today, he is two and a half years clean.

## A Different Solution

Churches need to treat addiction like any other ingrained sinful behavior or habit, Lamb said, and look for actions, not promises. No one expects a church member to shake off greed or lust in thirty days, or even six months. The disconnect may be that Reformed Christians seem to categorize drug addiction as “different,” Padgett observed. When Christians think of addiction as an “other” sin or a “worse” sin, they may be too quick to believe an addict’s promises because they assume the addict would want to shake off the embarrassing problem as quickly as possible.

For the addict, however, the substance is not a problem. “I tell this to families all the time,” Padgett said. “You’re not asking your husband or your wife or your child to stop drinking or to stop doing drugs. You’re asking them to give up—by *far*—the most important thing in their lives. You’re asking them to give up what they worship, what they idolize, what their lives are based on. You’re not asking them to give up a problem. You’re asking them to give up a solution.”

As Lamb put it, the solution is destructive, but it does work, for a few hours. “Everything that I’m promised in Christ—I can get that instantly in alcohol. Forget the joys of heaven, I can

have it right now. And it’s not that expensive.”

“People ask me why I drank too much, and my answer is that I was seeking release,” Padgett explained. “And if you’ve ever been a little buzzed on alcohol, you cannot possibly comprehend how powerful opiates are.” Anything we set up as an idol can destroy our lives, Padgett said. How much more so when you’re taking something that’s physiologically addictive!

Both Lamb and Padgett grew up in the church. Both knew better. But both found Christ-replacements, nonetheless. Isn’t that the temptation for us all?

“Given our Reformed view of mankind, of total depravity, it shouldn’t surprise us in the church that our children, and we ourselves, are falling prey to bondage by addiction,” Padgett concluded. “The Reformed church should be better suited than anyone to deal with addiction because we understand the real seat of bondage. At the end of the day, if my solution is myself or anything outside of Christ, I’m lost.”

These truths played out dramatically in Patience’s life when she relapsed after her conversion. “I wasn’t happy with anything in life,” she remembers. “The only relief I found was when I would go off by myself and contemplate the Lord. It was that desire for more of him that caused me to flee my sin and run to him. It was his goodness and grace.”

“It’s a gift to get to the point of realizing that I, left to my own devices, can do nothing,” Lamb reflected. “The solution that works is to put my faith in Christ and follow him and down the road we go.”

He phrases his recovery in age-old terms: learning to battle idolatry, sloth, bearing false witness. “There’s no sitting still when you’re fighting addiction—just like any other sin,” he said. Day by day, Lamb never stops asking himself this sobering question: “What am I grabbing onto too tightly that has no eternal consequence whatsoever?” □

*The author is managing editor of New Horizons.*

# IN MEMORIAM: DAVID E. HANEY (1963-2019)

ROSS W. GRAHAM // David E. Haney was just twenty-six years old when, in 1989, he began employment with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as the controller for the fledgling Committee on Coordination that had been created just five years before. A graduate of the University of the Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business, he had been

rising through the ranks in the Prudential Insurance Company, which seemed to point him toward a career as an executive in the insurance industry. But when the opportunity came to work for his church in his field of finance, he applied for the position. His pastor-father, the Reverend George E. Haney, who served at the time as general secretary for the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, beamed with pride, but recused himself from voting on the matter.

Once on the job, David introduced a computer accounting system, restructuring and reorganizing how accounts were handled, and presented to the Committee on Coordination a clear picture of the finances of the church.

In the early 1990s, it was the Church Extension Fund that occupied much of Haney's time and energy. Organized in the late 1950s, the fund, a savings-and-loan of sorts to help churches build new buildings, needed an overhaul in order to comply with new investment regulations. By 1994, Haney took on the additional role of manager for the new OPC Loan Fund,

established by the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension. Haney began to learn about construction design and practices, driving around in his pickup truck to promote the Loan Fund and meet with building committees.

By 1996, with the OPC growing, new financial opportunities presenting themselves, and the confidence of the whole church in Haney's financial abilities and ministry, the Committee on Coordination expanded his work by changing his title to director of Finance and Planned Giving, the position that he held from then until his death.

It was his careful analysis of the balance sheets and the budget comparisons, and his ability to always comprehend



*George, Lauren, and David Haney at the OPC office building.*



the big picture of the OPC's finances, that gave the church confidence that the giving of God's people was being well managed, God was meeting our needs, and we could move forward in faith to do more than we had done in the past.

But that is not the whole story of the ministry of David Haney as a servant of Christ.

In 1994 the congregation of Gwynedd Valley OPC, in Ambler, Pennsylvania, elected David Haney as a ruling elder. For the next twenty-five years, serving on the session of Gwynedd Valley, then moving to New Jersey and serving on the sessions of Faith OPC in Elmer, and New Hope Presbyterian in Bridgeton, Haney threw himself with abandon into the work of caring for the spiritual needs of the church's people, and spending long hours visiting them and loving them. Stories of his warmth and tenderness of care for people abound, and throughout the church and far beyond just the three congregations he served, many cherish the love that he showed.

And just this past June, the Eighty-Sixth (2019) General Assembly elected David E. Haney as their moderator, an honor that had also been bestowed on his father in 1979, forty years before.

But there was yet one more providential turn that David Haney would experience when Hurricane Katrina roared through the Gulf Coast in 2005 and devastated a huge swath of Louisiana and Alabama. Newly elected to the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, primarily for his financial skills, he found that many of his Dutch-connected friends in the upper-Midwest were desperately trying to find ways to relieve suffering and lend

a helping hand to people in the South whose homes and livelihoods were destroyed by the storm. So he took it upon himself to lay plans, organize teams, purchase equipment, find needy areas, and go with them to help. In so doing he discovered in himself another aspect of being a servant of Christ.

Through that one event, the Committee on Diaconal Ministries (CDM) was repurposed, and a great movement of young men serving as deacons were raised up to go and show Christ's love in times of need. Elected first as treasurer and then several years later as president of the CDM, he showed the church both leadership and a passion



*David Haney at the Eighty-Sixth General Assembly (2019), where he served as moderator*

for us to be involved in works of compassion. Then, he stepped away from the committee to let others learn and lead and serve.

Compassion and service to those in need so gripped him, however, that he began to pursue advanced studies on the subject. He enrolled at the University of Maryland and, working nights and weekends, received a master's degree in aging services in 2011. When the Eighty-First General Assembly (2014) established a Committee to Study the Care for Ministers of the Church, they named David Haney as convener. Three years later, a new Standing Committee on Ministerial Care was established, and, in their

first report to the General Assembly in 2018, they announced their intention to employ David Haney as Director of Ministerial Care.

Until the moment he went home to be with his Lord, David Haney wore all of these titles and did all of these things simultaneously, contributing so much to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

It was during a trip on behalf of the OPC Loan Fund to discuss a building opportunity with Covenant OPC in the Milwaukee suburb of New Berlin, Wisconsin, that David Haney suffered a massive heart attack. His family came to his side: his wife of thirty-six years,

Becky, his daughters Lauren and Shelley and their husbands, and his son, Scott. David and Becky's fourth grandchild, Garrett David Westra, was welcomed into the world a week early as the family waited together at the hospital. David Haney passed away early Friday morning, August 16, at the age of fifty-six.

He never hesitated to share his love, his skills, and his wisdom,

with the wider kingdom of God as well. At the time of his death he was also the treasurer of Keys Evangelistic Ministries in Key West, Florida, and the chairman of the Board of Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa.

Upon learning of his death, the Board of Dordt University summed up for all who knew him his kingdom contribution: "In an environment full of leaders, David was, by universal acclamation, our chair. That was not because he took up the mantle of leadership, but because he led in the manner of Christ—as a servant." □

*The author is stated clerk for the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.*

REVIEW:  
MACHEN'S  
*CHRISTIANITY  
AND LIBERALISM*

// VICTORIA VAN DIXHOORN



Victoria Van Dixhoorn is a sophomore history major at the University of Virginia

The words “me too” have come to refer to a shared experience, often among women, and always painful. But they have a much longer usage, along with “yes,” “I know what you mean,” and “I agree.” We say these words when we are seeking common ground, often in those awkward moments when we are meeting people at college, church, or a new job. Some level of agreement feels essential for survival in some of these contexts. But the search for me-too experiences and perspectives also reflects a human tendency to feel most comfortable when we share an identity with those around us. We can find it hard to say “not me” when the Christian faith calls us to disagree.

J. Gresham Machen addresses this perennial problem in his recently republished work, *Christianity and Liberalism*, now accompanied by a collection of essays written by faculty of the institution he founded, Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. The “Christianity” popular in many churches today is a religion meant to be approachable that has abandoned key tenets of the Christian faith in hope of reconciling it with modern views. Machen argued already in the 1920s that this modernism or liberalism is a “Christianity” so compromised as to be a different religion entirely. He explains how liberalism equivocates, cloaking a moralistic naturalistic worldview in orthodox Christian phrases, and minimizes, representing differences of opinion as mere disagreements about biblical interpretation rather than divergence from foundational truth.

Many books address this issue, but *Christianity and Liberalism* should top the list for several reasons. First, as Machen studied under the leading liberals of his day, he presents their position with clarity and fairness. Second, of benefit to busy and distracted readers, Machen’s conversational style facili-

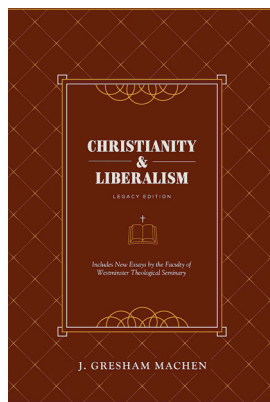
tates an easier grasp of his efficient, biblical arguments. While the author does address circumstantial issues less pertinent today, the book remains acutely relevant; our world parallels that of the 1920s as institutions pursue change and “progress,” guiding their members to the authority of science and individual feeling as the postmodern “truth.”

Like Paul, Machen staunchly defends doctrine, recognizing that in a world that values agreement over truth, we cannot compromise either the historical accounts or divine inspiration of Scripture. For Christianity is a “life founded upon a message” based on doctrine, an account of facts, while liberalism is founded “upon the shifting emotions of sinful men” (81). Mere submission to the person of Jesus, inner feelings, or the Golden Rule is unfounded and leads to despair (78–80).

Contrary to Christianity, liberalism diminishes the separation between God and man, replacing consciousness of sin with “supreme confidence in human goodness” (65). As the real authority for liberals is the “Christian conscience” or “Christian experience,” this conclusion, while expected, nevertheless collapses with an accurate understanding of its pantheistic un-

dertones and of the world around us. Too often we garnish Christian experience with biblical teaching; the latter should be the main dish and experience, the accompaniment.

Machen decries the liberal claim that Jesus’s teachings or life purpose can replace the Bible’s revelations, noting that liberalism actually rejects even this in its denial of Jesus’s atonement. It creates a moralistic Bible consisting of those “isolated ethical principles” of Jesus’s teaching that “agree with modern ideas” (78). Liberalism does not view Christ as God but as an example—an idea that affords eventual despair as he is either an unachievable or unworthy example. In the section on salvation, Machen laments how liberalism preaches



that every man is “plenty good enough to pay the price of sin” (127). Machen writes, “The grace of God is rejected by modern liberalism. And the result is...the wretched bondage by which man undertakes the impossible task of establishing his own righteousness as a ground of acceptance with God” (148).

Machen concludes with a call to the church for a renewal of Christian education and steadfast preaching. As this book so clearly explains, we cannot minimize the differences between liberalism and Christianity even for the sake of unity. This is a fight between a true religion and a false one concerning an admirable man and a God who saves. Unfortunately, in the church’s own leadership, relational unity often trumps the supposed “narrowness” of doctrinal conviction. This problem compounds in college, as many students replace active church engagement and service with Christian groups or Bible studies.

The faculty essays affirm Machen’s call to the church and underline the seminary’s commitment to “defend preaching driven by the convictions of Scripture” with courage (210). They range from reflections on the book to carefully crafted explications of Machen’s fundamental arguments. As a college student, I found Edgar’s essay, “Machen and Apologetics,” particularly useful. Edgar rightly notes the inescapability of faith. But many mistakenly believe that faith is enough, just so long as it is faith (146). In addition, Edgar’s essay helpfully emphasizes not only Machen’s answers but also his manner: his tone is “always gracious, never bitter,” despite the social and occupational persecution Machen faced for his uncompromising faith. In the intellectually and socially competitive environment of college, Machen offers an alternative to the pressure to prove oneself right and fit in.

As we consider Machen’s argument, I find it helpful to cast it in terms of identity. Who is God? Who am I? Who is Christ for Christians? For liberals? And are there times when I am saying “me too” when I should be saying “not me”? Many college students have been taught the “false notion that Christianity is a life and not also a doctrine” (181). This book explains why we must not agree. Furthermore, as history and personal experience demonstrate, if our lives are not built on good doctrine and biblical teaching, our lives can come to resemble that of our unbelieving friends—whether sexually, ethically, or conceptually. As I wrestle with my own weakness, I am trying to take the message of *Christianity and Liberalism* to heart: both learning about Christian doctrine and living it out. As I focus on this, I strive to look with others, united in gratitude, to the cross and the empty tomb, for that is where our hope and identity lies. I hope you’ll say, “me too!”

*The author is a member of Grace Presbyterian in Vienna, Virginia.*

***Christianity and Liberalism: Legacy Edition*, by J. Gresham Machen. Published by Westminster Seminary Press, 2019. Paperback, 296 pages, list price \$16.99.**

## OUR MEMBERSHIP VOWS

### Church Discipline

*Glen J. Clary*

Church discipline is a good thing. It is necessary for our sanctification, which has, as its goal, our conformity to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). Therefore, we should not resent or resist church discipline but welcome it as a loving act of correction for our spiritual wellbeing.

Every time we sin against God, we should repent. God calls us to confess our sins and forsake them (1 John 1:9; Rom. 13:12–14). But that does not mean that every time we sin, we should be formally disciplined by the church. Formal church discipline is usually needed only when a member continues in sin and refuses to repent.

All sins are against God, but some sins are also against other people. And such sins require us to be reconciled with our brothers and sisters in Christ. But what are we supposed to do if someone sins against us and does not repent? Jesus tells us in the Gospel of Matthew:

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matt. 18:15–18).

Our Lord Jesus teaches us that formal church discipline is sometimes necessary to lead an offender to repentance and achieve reconciliation. Christ also teaches us that he has authorized his church to exercise spiritual discipline in his name (see also Matt. 16:19; 18:20; John 20:23). Christ instituted church discipline for the spiritual wellbeing of his church.

## ☆ Congratulations

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

- **Liliana Scott**, *Covenant Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Roseburg, OR*

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

- **Grace Ann Long**, *Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Neon, KY*
- **Joanna Faith Bennett**, *Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Neon, KY*

# GOD'S FAITHFULNESS DURING CIVIL WAR

// ALICE CORNELIO



Alice Cornelio (far right) in Angola pre-1975 with a group of fellow teachers

*In 1998, Angola-born Alice Cornelio moved to Sharon, PA, after her husband's tragic death in a car accident in 1996. For years, Covenant OPC in Grove City, PA, twenty miles to the east of Sharon, held a weekly Bible study in Alice's home. Alice invited everyone she met—in her work, in stores, and on the street—to the study. In 2017, Covenant began Sunday afternoon services in Sharon with the ministry name of Living Hope Fellowship. This article is excerpted from Alice's unpublished memoir.*

The Lord has remained faithful to me through my whole life, through many difficulties, even to this very day. Looking back over the years, I can see how great was God's faithfulness even when my burdens seemed so hard to carry.

My relationship with God is rooted in my Christian upbringing. I was born in the evangelical mission of Bunjei, located in the province of Huila, Angola, and established by the American missionary Henry McDowell. It was the first and only mission to be exclusively led by African-American missionaries. The mission work reached many local Angolan families, and my father was one of the first locals to become an ordained pastor.

In 1974, after four hundred years of Portuguese colonial rule, Angola gained its independence. A political coup in Portugal and armed resistance by three prevailing nationalist parties contributed to the country's decolonization. In 1975, Portugal signed an agreement with the three nationalist parties, but a combination of ethnic tensions and international pressures led to the collapse of the negotiations. The Soviet Union and Cuba supported the MPLA party, which controlled the city of Luanda but little else. South Africa and the United States provided extensive support to the UNITA party. In October 1975, a massive Soviet airlift of arms and Cuban troops turned the tide in favor of the MPLA. By November 11, 1975, civil war had descended on the nation.

At thirty-two years of age, I was the mother of six children and alone in Angola. My husband, Aaron, had been sent by the UNITA party to America for education and training. At first, I did not realize how difficult life would be without him. We lived safely in the city that had become the headquarters of the UNITA guerilla movement. But one evening, my brother-in-law came to me with bad news. The Cuban soldiers were coming. "Leave everything," he said. So, my kids and I locked the door and walked away. We stayed with my parents in a nearby village, and, after two weeks or so, we received word that it was safe to return. When we arrived, we found that we had lost everything. The house had been ransacked by the soldiers and by looters. I was scared to face the future, but I took hold of God's promise of loving care and went back to my work as a teacher to provide for my family.

However, all around us there was now a lack of basic necessities, security, and peace. I could see it in everyone's faces, wherever I looked. Misery, despair, fear, lack of trust, and disrupted families were everywhere. Thinking about it brings tears to my eyes and scars to my heart that only the blood of Jesus can wash clean.

## One Step Forward

So, in 1977, I decided to give up my job, my homeland, and my relatives, and go to America to rejoin my husband. He could not safely return to Angola because the MPLA was now in control. It was difficult even writing to my husband in a way that avoided any suspicion from the new government. For this reason and others, I realized it would take a miracle for me to leave Angola without being jailed. But, I was going to try.

I traveled with my children to Luanda to start the immigration process. In order to apply for a travel document, I needed to get stamped approval from the Ministries of Finance, Health, and Education. One would not believe how many times I traveled to each ministry and waited in lines with many other people desperate to leave the country as well. At

the Ministry of Education, I must have waited every day for at least three weeks before being seen by an agent. When they finally attended me, I saw that the stack of applications was so high, mine was sure to be lost. "Have a seat," I was told. "Tell me your story." I forget how many times and to how many people I told this story.

"One of my daughters is very ill," I said. This was true. "I must travel to Portugal where a friend of the family's medical doctor will see my child."

After going through the pile of applications, the woman finally turned to me. "Sorry, yours was not approved," she said. "I can't help you."

"Oh!" I sank deep into my chair and held down my tears.

Just then, we heard a knock at the door. An employee from the executive office entered the room, carrying a big pile of applications in her hand. "Wait!" the woman at the desk said. "Here are the petitions." She looked through them all.

"What's your name again?" she asked. "Here we are! I found your application, including those for all your family members. Now, tell me again your story."

I explained one more time. I was shaking, but I hid my fear and instead thought of God's many wondrous works. I let God know one more time my desperate supplication: "Please, God, bless this officer, may your Spirit overwhelm her to do the impossible."

After I told my story again, the officer said, "OK," and signed my petition without hesitation.

### Obtaining Visas

Hold your breath because it's not over yet. I finally submitted the application to the Ministry of Immigration, and then we waited for our seven visas. Days and weeks went by as we waited and waited. The money I had saved for traveling was quickly used up. I would stand in long lines, leaning against the wall posts and listening for my name to be called. Everyone was, like me, waiting for the visa that was so important.

One morning as I waited in line, a lady touched my arm. "That man is trying to talk to you!" she said, pointing. "I see you here every day," this man said to me. "What is your problem?"

### Home Missions Today

For up-to-date news and prayer requests, receive our newsletter by e-mailing [HomeMissionsToday@opc.org](mailto:HomeMissionsToday@opc.org). New editions: October 9 & 23.

I did not know this man. I believe that he was obeying something he didn't have any control over. God can use all kinds of vessels to accomplish his purpose! He told me to come inside and asked about my name, my papers, and how long ago I had handed them in. I told him that I had been waiting for fifteen days.

He started digging through boxes and boxes of documents and eventually found my application—the whole family's paperwork—and asked me again for my story. "Come back in three days," he said when I finished, "and pick up your documents."

I could not believe my ears. "Please let it be true," I cried as I walked out of the office. "Bless this man whoever he is!" Three days later, I had the visas.

### The Last Straw

But just when I had collected everything I needed to leave Angola, we heard over the radio that there had been an attempted coup, and the MPLA had suspended

all travel outside the country. What a horrible situation I was in! Every day my plan was at risk of being discovered, and the risk would be even greater in my home city. But we had no choice; we were out of savings, and I had to go back to work.

Life went on despite the country being in a civil war. Lines formed outside of food stores; hungry people were everywhere. On one of those afternoons, standing in a long line for groceries on my way to work, I grew so tired of the whole situation that I ripped up my food ration card and left.

Shortly after that, my brother told me that Luanda had again opened up travel outside the country. We quickly packed our bags. This time, we stayed with a church elder in Luanda near the airport. This host family had been praying every day that we would be able to safely leave the country.

When we headed to the airport, I left my passport with this family because I was so worried the officials would guess that I was headed for America. (All I needed for Portugal was the visa.) At the airport, my suitcase was checked thoroughly and then taken to the plane. We were finally on our way!

God's presence at the airport was proven later when I received a letter from a friend in Luanda. He wrote to tell us that right after our plane took off, men in uniform showed up at the airport to prevent my leaving the country. Someone had tipped them off, and they were going to take me directly to jail. Instead, I and my six children were safely in Portugal and on our way to America, where we received political asylum and rejoined my husband.

Even though my life has not been easy, even challenged at times, God has always been faithful to me and my family.



Living Hope Fellowship after a service with Alice Cornelio on the far left

## SHORT-TERM MISSIONS

# 2019 SUMMER SPOTLIGHT ON BOARDWALK CHAPEL



Sunrise over Wildwood, NJ (Photo courtesy of Saraiah Philip)

## EVANGELISM IS A BLESSING

*Nali Gray*

The Boardwalk Chapel is a place of worship, fellowship, and family. It is a place for brothers and sisters in Christ to unite and spread the gospel using their gifts, while also developing areas where they are weak.



While we all were given the opportunity to street witness during our time at the Boardwalk Chapel, there were other opportunities to evangelize, whether it was by storytelling and face painting or the infamous “Heaven or Hell” machine. The conversations I had while doing evangelism are unforgettable. While I was helping work the Midnight Dinner on Wednesday, it started downpouring rain, and a family stopped in. I was able to have a conversation with the wife, and as she began to tell me about her family’s story, my heart leaped for joy and I praised God for giving me this opportunity to speak with her. She told me about her family’s experience with church-jumping and seeking out pastors who would answer their difficult questions. She said they were growing so much from Scripture that they wanted to find a church that taught them the truth. My family, having joined the OPC only two years ago, went through the same exact

thing, so being able to encourage her through this hard time in her life was a blessing from the Lord!

His sovereignty again encouraged me later that week as I had several opportunities to put into practice the exact techniques we learned in our training from the Boardwalk Chapel staff. I approached two women on a bench outside the Chapel while handing out tracts, and they were blown away by our ministry. They thought it incredible that I, a fifteen-year-old, was actually talking to them and participating in this ministry, which led to a really great gospel conversation. Praise God!

Finally, I deeply appreciated the friendships that were created or strengthened. Spending a week completely devoted to evangelism with my friends and the staff was an experience I will cherish forever. The Boardwalk Chapel reminded me that my fellow believers are my family, and the joy I gained from that one week was only a reminder of how much more joyful and glorious heaven will be.

*Nali Gray is a member of New Covenant Community OPC in Joliet, Illinois, and served at the Boardwalk Chapel in July 2019.*



*Nali Gray (far left) with teammates from the Boardwalk Chapel*

# INSPIRING

*Saraiah Philip*

If I could describe the Boardwalk Chapel in a word, I would say that it is inspiring.

The highlight of my week was my second night out evangelizing. I was with Chapel staff members and one youth group member from my church. One staff member and I went to pray while the other two began a conversation with a man sitting on a bench. When we were done praying, they were still talking to the man, so I walked up and joined their conversation. The staff member, Seth, was finishing a gospel presentation to this man, who had some questions in response. After we clarified a few things to him Seth asked him if he would call on Jesus right then and there. The man replied, “Wow, this is the first time I’ve ever heard this, and I realize that this is very important. I need to research and read about this more. What should I be reading?”

Seth gave the man a Bible and told him more about what to be reading. As we walked back to the Chapel, I remember this feeling of pure joy and excitement. Here was an example of God using me to bring people closer to himself.

That was the closest I came to witnessing a conversion that whole week, and I couldn’t help but think of Luke 15:7, which says, “Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

One of the other youth group members and I talked later about how these types of conversations inspired us to go out to our own cities and talk to people, just like we did at the Boardwalk Chapel. I am sure we were not the only ones who were inspired in this way.

The Boardwalk Chapel is a wonderful ministry, and one I hope God will continue to use for years to inspire his people and bring lost people to himself.

*Saraiah Philip is a member of Harvest OPC in San Marcos, California, and served at the Boardwalk Chapel in July 2019.*



*Saraiah Philip sharing her musical gifts*

## IN SUMMER 2019:

- ◆ **6 fields** received short-term missionaries: Boardwalk Chapel, New Jersey; Prague, Czech Republic; Puerto Rico; Quebec, Canada; Uganda; and Zoar, Wisconsin.
- ◆ **300 people on 16 teams** and many solo trips served on OPC STM fields.
- ◆ **50 OP churches** sent short-term missionaries to OPC STM fields.
- ◆ **11 non-OP churches** sent short-term missionaries to OPC STM fields.
- ◆ **22 states** (plus Ontario and Quebec) were represented.
- ◆ **13 presbyteries** were represented.

*For more information on the summer 2019 trips or to begin planning for 2020, visit [opcstm.org](http://opcstm.org).*



*Orland Park team members with staff on the boardwalk (photo courtesy of David Robinson)*

# THE LEVITES' INHERITANCE

// DAVID G. GRAVES

Lord's Day by Lord's Day, when the tithes and offerings are collected, I invariably say to the congregation, "Let us continue the worship of our God through the presentation of our tithes and offerings." But while we all know that God has ordained the tithes and offerings as his chosen economy for the maintenance of the pastor and his family, the church building, and the other ministries of the church, we may not have given much thought as to why their "presentation" is part of stated worship.

In the ancient world as well as in modern times, the conqueror has always obligated his vanquished enemy to pay tribute or reparations and has dispersed these tributes according to his decree. The Westminster Shorter Catechism asks, "How doth Christ execute the office of a king?" Part of Christ's execution of the office of a king involves subduing us (his enemies) to himself (our conqueror) by his work on the cross. God has woven this theme throughout the Scriptures, and God instructs his people as to how to collect and distribute the tribute, or tithe, that is due to him.

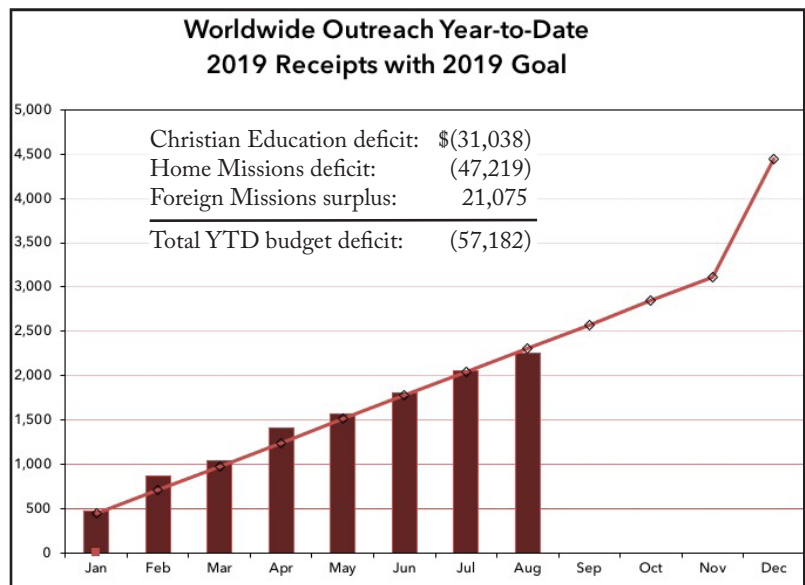
In the Old Testament, God, as Israel's Redeemer from Egypt, claimed the tithe for himself. He then instructed that the tithe ought to be given to the Levites for several reasons. First, God instructed that the tithe be given to the Levites for their preservation. In Genesis 49:5-7, Jacob had disinherited Levi and Simeon, but God in his mercy preserved them—Simeon through absorption into the territorial boundaries of Judah, and Levi through the establishment of the Levitical duties and the priesthood (see Exod. 32:25-29). In Numbers 18, God provided for the Levites in order to free them from agricultural labors so that they could perform the duties to which he had ordained them in Exodus 32. This sustained the Levites so that the rest of the people of God could worship the triune God as he had ordained under the Mosaic administration of the covenant of grace.

In the New Testament, Paul maintains this concept of a redeemed people joyfully giving back a portion of what their Redeemer has given them materially in the context of worship. For example, in 1 Corinthians 16:2, Paul instructs the Corinthians in their weekly gatherings on Sundays to take a portion of their offerings for the relief of Christians in Jerusalem.

In the OPC's Form of Government, the pastor's call to his congregation includes the phrase "free from worldly care and employment," in the congregation's promise to provide for him (FG 22.9). This language serves as a means to demonstrate that a congregation seeks to meet its biblical obligations seen in both the Old and New Testaments. It is a commitment not just to give joyfully and generously for benevolence purposes, but to sustain the one who prays for the congregation and administers the Word and sacraments to it.

As a young Christian, I often heard people asking the question, "Does God still require the tithe?" Our giving of our substance ought to flow from a cheerful recognition of our redemption by Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Lord of the conscience, and as such he must direct our giving, not external compunction. As Paul instructs the church at Corinth, "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). So, while the principle of the tribute should inform the Christian's thinking as he decides in his heart, the thinking process ought to flow along these lines: "If God set the tribute at 10 percent for redemption from slavery in Egypt, what does redemption from hell merit?"

*The author is the pastor of Coeur d'Alene Reformed Church.*





# OCTOBER



The Hacquebord family



The Souves

**1** Pray for the **COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** as it meets Oct. 1-2, for general secretary Danny Olinger, and for president Craig Troxel. / Pray for the labors of **HEERO & ANYA HACQUEBORD**, L'viv, Ukraine.

**2** Pray for **CHRIS (NANCY) WALMER**, area home missions coordinator for the Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania. / **BEN & MELANIE WESTERVELD**, Quebec, Canada. Pray that the Spirit would cause a hunger for the Word.

**3** *New Horizons* cover designer **CHRISTOPHER TOBIAS** and proof-reader **SARAH PEDERSON**. / Pray for fruit from recent summer internships, including that of **BEN PETERSEN** at Covenant Presbyterian in Abilene, TX.

**4** **BILL WELZIEN**, Key West, FL. Join Keys Presbyterian Church in praising God for three decades of ministry. / **JEREMIAH (NATALIA) DICKINSON**, church-planting intern at Harvest Church in East Haddam, CT.

**5** **SHANE & RACHELLE BENNETT**, Grand Rapids, MI. Pray for Reformation OPC as it seeks to bring people under the ministry of the Word of God. / Pray for **SHORT-TERM MISSIONARIES** as they reflect on and share their service.

**6** Affiliated missionaries **DR. MARK & LAURA AMBROSE**, Cambodia. Pray for Laura's Bible studies with the local women. / Pray with **MR. AND MRS. F.**, Asia, that their children in the US would enjoy healthy Christian lives.

**7** **BEN & HEATHER HOPP** and associate missionaries **OCTAVIUS & MARIE DELFILS**, Haiti. Pray that political unrest would not hamper the work of the new presbytery. / Intern **LOGAN SHELTON** at Covenant Community OPC in Taylors, SC.

**8** Praise God for the faithful work of the **ASIA MISSIONARY ASSOCIATES** this summer, especially among women and children of the community. / **CHARLENE TIPTON**, database administrator, and **ABBY HARTING**, CCE office secretary.

**9** **LOWELL & MAE IVEY**, Virginia Beach, VA. Pray for Reformation Presbyterian Church as they seek the Lord's direction and blessing. / Pray for **STEPHEN PRIBBLE**, senior technical associate for OPC.org.

**10** CDM administrator **DAVID NAKHLA**. Pray for the Lord's blessing on the Presbytery Diaconal Summit IV beginning today. / Pray for **JIM BOSGRAF**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Midwest.

**11** **RYAN & ROCHELLE CAVANAUGH**, Merrillville, IN. Pray for baptisms and positive growth at Mission Church. / Pray for yearlong intern **BRYCE (KELCIE) SOUVE** at Reformation OPC in Morgantown, WV.

**12** **MR. AND MRS. M. M.**, Asia (furlough). Pray that the Lord would open doors as they seek opportunities to return to the field. / **ANNELISA STUDLEY**, office manager.

**13** **MARK & CARLA VAN ESSENDELFT**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the farm project, which includes harvesting fifteen acres of cotton by hand. / **JASON & AMANDA KIRK-LIN**, Waco, TX. Pray for evangelistic fruitfulness at Trinity OPC.

**14** **DAVID & RASHEL ROBBINS**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the start of another year of home-schooling. / Yearlong intern **KEN (MANDY) KRUCKKOW** at Oakland Hills Community Church in Farmington Hills, MI.

**15** **JEREMY & GWEN BAKER**, Yuma, AZ. Pray that the Lord would add more year-round Yuma residents to Yuma OPC. / Pray for tentmaking missionary **T. D.**, Asia, as she considers the future of her missionary service.

OCTOBER



The Sumpters

**16** Pray for **MARK (PEGGY) SUMPTER**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southwest. / **DR. FLIP & ANNELOES BAARD-MAN** and missionary associates **CHRISTOPHER & CHLOE VERDICK** Nakaale, Uganda.

**17** **JAY & ANDREA BENNETT**, Neon, KY. Pray for evangelistic faithfulness and fruit and for more officers at Neon Reformed. / Pray for yearlong intern **JIMMY (KORINA) APODACA** at Providence OPC in Temecula, CA.

**18** **NAKAALE, UGANDA, MISSIONARY ASSOCIATES** Leah Hopp, Angela Voskuil, Joanna Groves, and Joshua Marcoux. / **TRINITY PSALTER HYMNAL** joint venture and its director Joel Pearce as they develop a digital edition.

**19** Home Missions associate general secretary **AL TRICARICO**. / **BRADNEY & EILEEN LOPEZ**, Arroyo, PR. Pray for Iglesia Presbiteriana Sola Escritura as they seek to build a culture of evangelism and look for a new place to worship.

**20** Pray for Foreign Missions administrative assistant **TIN LING LEE**. / Pray for yearlong intern **PEDER (ANNA) KLING** at Prescott Presbyterian in Prescott, AZ.

**21** **CHARLES & CONNIE JACKSON**, Mbale, Uganda (furlough). Pray for traveling mercies as they report to churches. / Pray for **FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND CO-WORKERS** of David Haney as they mourn his death and miss his leadership.

**22** **ETHAN & CATHERINE BOLYARD**, Wilmington, NC. Pray that Heritage OPC would have an evangelistic heart. / Missionary associates **DR. JIM & JENNY KNOX**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for their adjustment to the field.

**23** **BOB & GRACE HOLDA**, Oshkosh, WI. Pray for Resurrection Presbyterian Church to be grounded in Christ's love as they love others. / Pray for yearlong intern **JEREMY (AMY) ALLEN** at Covenant of Grace OPC in Oxnard, CA.

**24** Pray for good health for **RETIRED MISSIONARIES** Cal & Edie Cummings, Brian & Dorothy Wingard, Greet Rietkerk, and Young & Mary Lou Son. / Home Missions general secretary **JOHN SHAW**.

**25** Foreign Missions general secretary **MARK BUBE** and associate general secretary **DOUGLAS CLAWSON**. / **ANDREW & REBEKAH CANAVAN**, Corona, CA. Pray that Corona Presbyterian would point neighbors to Christ.

**26** **CHRIS & GRACE ANN CASHEN**, Clarkston, GA. Pray for many opportunities to clearly open the Scriptures with Muslim friends. / Pray for **ROSS GRAHAM**, stated clerk of the General Assembly, as he assists presbyteries and committees with their work.



The Stumpffs

**27** Affiliated missionaries **CRAIG & REE COULBOURNE** and **LINDA KARNER**, Japan, and **JERRY & MARILYN FARNIK**, Prague, Czech Republic. / Home Missions administrative assistant **KATIE STUMPF**.

**28** Pray for trustees of **GREAT COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS** as they meet today in Suwanee, GA. / **MARK & JENI RICHLINE**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for Mark as he teaches at the new Reformed Seminary in Montevideo.

**29** **CARL & STACEY MILLER**, New Braunfels, TX. Pray for the growing ministry at New Braunfels OPC. / Pray for yearlong intern **DAVID (ASHLEIGH) SCHEXNAYDER** at Calvin Presbyterian in Phoenix, AZ.

**30** Pray for missionary associates **STEVE & CARRIE HILL**, Montevideo, Uruguay, as they support the diaconal outreach of the church. / **GREGORY REYNOLDS**, editor of *Ordained Servant*.

**31** Pray for the new Foreign Missions secretary **SHENISE MEDINA**. / **DAVE (ELIZABETH) HOLMLUND**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Philadelphia.

# NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

## CASTLE ORDAINED AND INSTALLED IN LYNCHBURG, VA

*Hank L. Belfield*

On Friday, July 19, 2019, the Presbytery of the Southeast of the OPC held a special meeting in Lynchburg, Virginia, to ordain and install Bennie A. Castle, a licentiate of the presbytery and recent graduate from Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, as the new pastor of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Ryan McGraw, professor at Greenville Seminary, preached a sermon from John 16:8–15. Rev. Chris Strevel, pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church (OPC) in Buford, Georgia, led in the prayer of ordination during the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, and gave the charge to Mr. Castle thereafter. Regional Home Missionary DeLacy Andrews Jr. gave the charge to the congregation. Rev. James Clark, pastor of Garst Mill OPC, Roanoke, Virginia, offered the concluding prayer for the congregation, its new pastor, and the ministry of the gospel in Lynchburg. The meeting was well attended by several ministers and ruling elders throughout the Presbytery of the Southeast and by the entirety of the congregation of Grace OPC, as well as family and friends.

Bennie and his wife, Amanda, are now living in Lynchburg, a southern college town with an estimated 81,000 residents located in the picturesque foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains along the banks of the James River. Please pray for the Lord's blessing in his ministry in the coming years.

## DE BOER INSTALLED IN ADA, MI

*Daniel Adams*

Jeff De Boer was installed as pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, Michigan, on August 18. Rev. Dale Van Dyke of Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Michigan, preached on Hosea 3. The charge to De Boer was delivered by Rev. James Oord, pastor of Community URC



*Attending members of the Presbytery of the Southeast and other participants in the ordination and installation of Bennie Castle, sixth from left in front row*

in Schererville, Indiana, where De Boer previously served as associate pastor. Rev. Jonathan Loerop of Redeemer gave the charge to the congregation.

Before coming to Redeemer, De Boer served as a pastor at Peace Reformed Church (RCUS) in Garner, Iowa, and Hope Presbyterian Church in North Liberty, Iowa (PCA). He attended Dordt University, earning a bachelor of arts degree in 1995. After graduation, he worked for Feucht and De Boer Construction.

In 2000, he received his master of divinity degree from Mid-America Reformed Seminary, where he also served as director of enrollment management.

De Boer has also studied at the University of Iowa College of Law and Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. De Boer is married to Karen and has five children. In addition to pastoral ministry, Jeff enjoys baseball, metal working, and reading historical biographies.



*Elders and pastors of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario and other participants gathered for the installation of Jeff De Boer (second row, center)*

**IN MEMORIAM: JACK W. SAWYER JR., 1951–2019***John R. Muether*

On August 13, the Reverend Jack W. Sawyer Jr. took his own life after an intense struggle with severe depression.

A native of Fairhope, Alabama, and a graduate of the University of Alabama, Sawyer earned MAR and ThM degrees from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. After ten years of serving two congregations in the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, he returned to the United States and pastored Orthodox Presbyterian congregations in Mount Vernon, New York; in Forest, Mississippi; and, from 2000 until the time of his death, in Pineville, Louisiana, at Pineville Presbyterian Church.

For many years Sawyer chaired the Candidates and Credentials Committee of the Presbytery of the South. He distinguished himself by administering presbytery floor exams that were thorough, exacting, and pastoral. More than half of the current active ministerial members of the presbytery were directly shepherded by Jack through the process of their ministerial candidacy. He was also known as “Uncle Jack” at the presbytery’s annual Reformed Youth Camp that he faithfully attended, making the 1,600-mile round trip with a van-full of campers.

Since 2010, Sawyer served as the administrator of the OPC’s Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations (CEIR), where he passionately promoted closer bonds of fellowship in international

Calvinism. Under his leadership, the OPC strengthened its connection to several churches, and because of the contacts nurtured by Sawyer and CEIR, fraternal greetings from churches were perennial highlights of general assemblies. He modeled a brotherly affection for the broader church, and friends from across the Reformed world mourn his passing.

Rev. Sawyer is survived by his wife of forty-five years, Carolyn, four children, and two grandchildren.

## UPDATE

### MINISTERS

• On June 14, the Presbytery of the Dakotas dissolved the ministerial relationship between **Matthew W. Kingsbury** and Park Hill Presbyterian Church, upon his resignation.

• At the request of both parties, the Presbytery of the Midwest dissolved the pastoral relationship between **A. Craig Troxel** and Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, IL, on June 23, and it also approved the labors of Mr. Troxel as a professor at Westminster Seminary California in Escondido, CA.

• **Camden M. Bucey** was installed as evangelist of Hope Presbyterian Church in Grayslake, IL, on June 30 to serve as full-time executive director of Reformed Forum, a provider of Reformed theological resources. Mr. Bucey previously served as Hope’s pastor.

• On July 19, **Benjie A. Castle** was ordained and installed as pastor of Grace OPC in Lynchburg, VA.

• On July 20, the Presbytery of the Northwest deposed minister **Eric W. Tuininga**, previously a missionary in Uganda, and suspended him indefinitely from the privileges of membership in the church.

• **Ethan J. Bolyard** was ordained and installed as an evangelist of the Presbytery of the Southeast on July 26 to serve as organizing pastor of Heritage OPC in Wilmington, NC.

• On July 31, the Presbytery of Ohio dissolved the pastoral relationship between **Mark S. Melton** and Christ Covenant OPC in Sheridan, IN. With the congregation’s approval, Mr. Melton retired for health reasons.

• **Jeff D. De Boer**, previously a minister in the United Reformed Churches in North America, was installed as pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, MI, on August 18.

• **Timothy L. McClymonds** was installed as pastor of Christ Covenant OPC in Sheridan, IN, on August 30.

### MILESTONES

• **Jack W. Sawyer Jr.**, 67, died on August 13. He was the pastor of Pineville Presbyterian Church in Pineville, LA, and administrator of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations.

• Elder **David E. Haney**, 56, director of Finance and the Committee on Ministerial Care, died on August 16.

## LETTER

Editor:

I read with much interest Dr. Alan Strange’s review of *The Presbyterian Philosopher: The Authorized Biography of Gordon H. Clark* by D. J. Douma in the August-September issue of *New Horizons*. In my opinion, Clark’s definition of faith is more than deficient. It is biblically erroneous for two reasons: (1) Clark’s definition of faith is divorced from any act of repentance associated with saving faith, and (2) it does not involve the renewing work of the Spirit. James said it this way—“faith apart from works is dead” (Jam. 2:26). In substance, Clark’s view of faith is based on a Greek view of truth, which is not biblical.

Aureliano Tan Jr.  
Sugar Land, TX



*Jack Sawyer at a recent general assembly*

## REVIEWS

***A Tender Lion: The Life, Ministry, and Message of J. C. Ryle*, by Bennett W. Rogers. Reformation Heritage, 2019. Hardcover, 400 pages, \$21.00. Reviewed by OP minister DeLacy A. Andrews Jr.**

In this insightful intellectual biography of J. C. Ryle, Bennett W. Rogers takes an unusual approach to his subject. The chapters are not arranged as a chronological narrative but topically. The chapter headings are “Christian and Clergyman,” “Preacher,” “Pastor,” “Controversialist,” “A National Ministry,” and “Bishop,” followed by “Who Was J. C. Ryle?” as a concluding summary. I found this arrangement helpful, providing a comprehensive picture of the man under each heading.

It was interesting to learn that though Ryle’s paternal grandparents were evangelical believers and intimate friends with John Wesley, his own home was destitute of any real spiritual religion. His family was faithful in attendance at Christ Church in Macclesfield, England but little spiritual instruction was provided in the home. Ryle grew up not understanding the gospel. His conversion came near the end of his studies at Oxford, and thereafter he was a thorough-going evangelical.

Ryle’s call to ministry was quite remarkable. He had no intention of entering the ministry and followed his father in business as a banker. His father lacked management skills, and in 1841 the bank failed, forcing his father into bankruptcy. The family was ruined financially, and

though Ryle was not legally responsible for his father’s debts, he felt morally obligated to repay them. Unable to find any other way to support himself and repay the debt, he became a clergyman.

His career as a minister might have been uneventful had he not made a unique discovery. Initially, he found that his sermons were over the heads of his rural parishioners, and he developed what he called “the crucified style.” He began to preach more directly and simply to the congregation.

Rogers provides a perceptive comparison between Ryle’s preaching and that of the ritualist John Henry Newman and the dissenter Charles Haddon Spurgeon. The sermons were preached during the same time period and on the same biblical text. Contrasting Ryle with Spurgeon, Rogers notes that Ryle used nearly three times as many paragraphs and twice as many sentences. In fact, Ryle’s sentences were much shorter than either of the other two ministers. This made Ryle’s preaching more direct and

clear for the masses. This same style marked his writings and made him very popular.

The chapter on Ryle as a controversialist is especially intriguing. Through his writing, Ryle addressed practically every controversy in the church. He wrote against higher criticism with great fervor but saw the encroachment of ritualism as the biggest threat to the church. He was also a vigorous advocate of establishment, even though his theology was in step with the dissenters. When he became bishop, this commitment created significant issues for him. He was a leader of the evan-

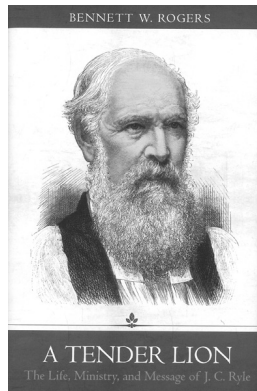
gelical party, but in a church that was not unified in doctrine. Ryle never let go of his commitment to establishment. In the end, much of what he defended was lost in the Church of England.

Rogers has provided an excellent biography for the church. I would highly commend it for both ministers and members.

***Dying and Death: Getting Rightly Prepared for the Inevitable*, by Joel R. Beeke and Christopher W. Bogosh. Reformation Heritage, 2018. Paperback, 89 pages, \$9.00. Reviewed by OP pastor William B. Kessler.**

Death: an inevitable end in dust or a door to eternal bliss? Joel Beeke and Christopher Bogosh make a biblical case for the latter in their short book, *Dying and Death: Getting Rightly Prepared for the Inevitable*. The authors are clear in their purpose: “The point of this book is that meditating on dying and death is actually profitable, even necessary.”

Their goal in writing the book, equally clear, includes three points: “First, to consider the basic issues concerning our dying and death. Second, to consider Jesus’s dying and death and the comfort that He



### Correction

In the August-September issue, the general assembly report should have listed not Kathleen but Carolyn Poundstone as the wife of Donald Poundstone.

### Positions Available

**Director of Ministerial Care:** The Committee on Ministerial Care is seeking applicants to serve in a full-time capacity as its Director of Ministerial Care. Inquiries may be directed in confidence to Lendall Smith ([lendall.smith@icloud.com](mailto:lendall.smith@icloud.com)) or Greg De Jong ([gkdejong@comcast.net](mailto:gkdejong@comcast.net)).

**Pastor:** El Camino OPC in Goleta, CA, is seeking a full-time pastor for a small congregation with a vision to reach the diverse, laid-back, yet urbane, greater Santa Barbara community. Our church property is located near the UCSB campus and growth areas of Goleta with young families and local tech professionals. The successful applicant will have a heart for church growth, preach expository sermons, and be an outgoing apologist for the Reformed gospel. Inquiries to [donnajdejong@gmail.com](mailto:donnajdejong@gmail.com).

## NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS *Continued*

can bring to us. . . . Third, . . . to provide some facts and ethical guidance” (x).

Part one, “The Basics,” includes observations from the Old Testament about death and resurrection, observations from science, and then concluding observations defining death as the wages of sin and describing issues with modern medicine. Part two is a systematic biblical treatment of Jesus’s dying and death. The authors focus on Jesus’s kingly authority as well as his willing submission in Gethsemane. Part three, then, concludes the book by dealing with contemporary issues and preparing for death. It offers guidance on preparing wills; prepayment for embalming, coffins, vaults, and cemetery lots; and speaking with the pastor about the funeral service.

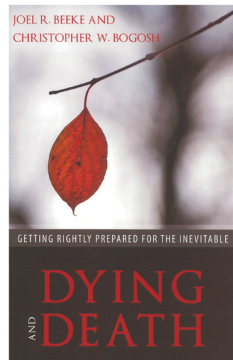
Dying and death is not an easy subject to discuss. To be sure, the authors are experienced pastors, and Bogosh specializes in palliative care. Both are faithful biblical writers. When it comes to dying and death, however, there is an existential component that transcends a more systematic, rational treatment. Death is often a messy, painful, powerfully complex event. The Scripture is essential for our understanding. But the style of the authors seems too studied. The title and all twelve chapters of the book are all alliterated, all beginning with the letter “D”: *Dying and Death* (title); “Dying De-

picted” (chapter 1); “Dying Demystified” (chapter 2); “Dying Defined” (chapter 3); “Dying Delayed” (chapter 4), etc. Is death really that orderly? Could the authors have reflected in the form of the book the ugliness of death, as well as its glory? Do any of us really know death?

The book has plenty of warnings: unbelievers in danger of a Christ-less eternity; believers becoming overly dependent upon, desperately seeking, and blindly idolizing the medical community for the “hope for the cure.” The assumption is that believers are in control of their circumstances in dying. They are warned to avoid dying desperately and to prepare “to die peacefully at home and in the context of the church, surrounded by loving family members and the communion of the saints” (26).

To be fair, the authors advocate palliative care and internally living in Christ. And dying “peacefully at home” among loved ones is truly a gift of God.

However, what was not addressed adequately is when death in all its messiness, ugliness, painfulness, and humanly uncontrolled complexity knocks unannounced: death in war, in unexpected fatalities, upon birth, in infancy, in cancer of the pancreas or the brain, after prolonged dementia, etc. Sometimes death takes us by surprise.



### TRINITY PSALTER HYMNAL DIGITAL EDITIONS

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The **Unlocked PDF** edition is designed for worship bulletins or handouts. This edition contains individual PDF and PNG files of each song in the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, delivered in a compressed .zip folder. The files are formatted for insertion directly into your document or printing software, or for direct printing from PDF. For the Unlocked PDF edition, some reproduction permissions are included; others must be obtained by the purchaser.

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