

NEW HORIZONS

— in the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

6 Report on the 88th
General Assembly
// by Danny E. Olinger

AUG-SEPT 2022

23 Review: Gibson's
Be Thou My Vision //
by Nicholas J. Thompson



GODLINESS, GOOD SENSE, AND
THE HEART OF A SERVANT

— DIACONAL SUMMIT IV —

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New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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At the joint Sunday evening worship service during the week of general assembly on the campus of Eastern University: David Nakhla, moderator of general assembly; Caleb Smith, pastor of Thousand Oaks Presbyterian in Thousand Oaks, CA; Rebecca and Ed Schnitzel and Dana Schnitzel, longtime members of Calvary OPC in Glenside, PA; and J. Zachary Siggins, pastor of Cornerstone OPC in Ambler, PA.



GODLINESS, GOOD SENSE, AND THE HEART OF A SERVANT: DIACONAL SUMMIT IV



CHERYL WADE // If you want to learn something about how deacons should serve, a longtime Long Island pastor suggests dining at his favorite Italian restaurant. “When the waiters are talking to you, it is as if there is nobody else in the world,” Bill Shishko explained. “And in most cases, they get to know your name.”

Not only do they bring the food, they bring anything else you might need. “And they check back to be sure everything is OK.”

Sort of like a deacon.

Shishko, who pastored The OPC of Franklin Square for more than thirty-four years and now pastors a daughter church called The Haven, keynoted June’s National Diaconal Summit in Wheaton, Illinois, near Chicago. The three-day summit, this year with five main sessions and nine workshops, takes place every five years. It aims to help deacons discover their niche in a type of ministry that can be hard to define and also to help deacons learn ways others are ministering to the needs of people in tough situations.

Shishko explained in his talk that the diaconate began in Acts 6, when the needs of the church grew beyond the ability of one group of officers. Stephen, a man full of the Holy Spirit, was given the task of serving food to widows—a

task some probably considered too menial for such a man. “A deacon is an official representative of Christ, the great servant,” Shishko said. When considering who ought to be a deacon, Shishko looks for godliness, good sense, and the heart of a servant.

A Call to Kindness

A call to kindness, and to its proper use as people guided by the Spirit, permeated the words of both speakers and

deacon attendees.

OP pastor Eric Watkins, speaking on “Mercy in a Social Justice World,” pointed to the Old Testament to explore the mercy that flows from God’s heart. The Psalms speak of God’s loving protection and his strict admonitions against thievery, greed, and taking advantage of the poor. God says he himself will execute justice for the oppressed, provide food for the hungry, and drive out evildoers who neglect and devour the weak.

“People in and out of the church are looking outside the church for different paradigms of kindness, mercy, and social justice,” Watkins said. “Our young people are sometimes tempted to drink the Kool-Aid of secular theories and paradigms when they do not feel that their churches are being faithful in these areas, and this can lead to what is known as covenantal drift.”

Watkins explained that what is needed to minister in these important



Speaker and OP pastor Bill Shishko

areas is found within the pages of Scripture: “Everything that we need to know about what race is, what justice is, what mercy is, what compassion is, what equity is, what not showing partiality is—all those things are already in the Bible. What we need to do is get out our Bibles and ask the same questions that people are asking but give gospel-driven, Bible-centered answers.”

Within Scripture, he developed, we find that mercy flows from the heart of God. “The Old Testament priests, who were to administer the mercy of God, had the job of caring for orphans, widows, and other disadvantaged people.” Similarly, mercy should flow from the local church. “The church should be the safest place in the world,” Watkins explained. “The church is our house! The church is the hospital, and it has the best Physician.”

Living Out Good Sense

Nathan Kent, a deacon from Trinity OPC in Newberg, Oregon, when reflecting on the conference, said he now understands that caring for people’s physical needs can help people deal with spiritual needs at the same time. That, he said, was nice to hear.

He hopes his church will work on policies and procedures for handling ministry to people who come in off the streets. Deacons at one workshop had a chance to grapple with touchy questions: When someone asks for money, how much do you give? When they ask for more, what happens then? Do you give cash? A check? A gift card? How do you know if you’re being taken? At the end of the day, the word was, “let kindness rule.”

Speaker Seth Long lives in a town where the main reason people visit is to be kind to others—on mission trips or relief efforts. Many people in Neon, Kentucky, lack jobs, and there are few available. People who once owned land still own it, but mining companies took everything but the gravel and turned it into “a mountain wasteland,” Long said. “Then came a brain drain, and many people who stayed behind flocked to offices where they could get government checks. Many see these as the best source of long-term income,” Long said.

Believing in their worth, however, Long tells people in the area that failing to work is a sin because it makes them unable to care for their families or to help others financially. Long is executive director of HOMES, a non-profit Christian organization that builds and rehabilitates houses all over eastern Kentucky, where he practices what he “preaches.” Two members of Neon Reformed OPC, where Long is a member, have successfully participated in an addiction recovery program and have been employed at HOMES for over a year. One has worked his way into a valued position.

Mercy to Strangers

On the other side of the world from Kentucky lived Pastor Al Tricarico, who



Deacons from ninety-four OP churches attended

worked with people he used to call strangers. He and his family served as missionaries in the Karamoja region of Uganda for eleven years. From American eyes, these people wore strange clothes, ate strange food, and had a culture much different than Tricarico’s. What did he learn? That “the stranger is not a nuisance but an opportunity for service,” he told his listeners. The steps of service include meeting others, learning about them, understanding “all people have something to contribute to your life,” and engaging with them, Tricarico said.

“Don’t think maybe you shouldn’t help,” he advised. “We can’t help eight million people, but we can help people on our street.” And we can start by learning their names.

“Do you believe that the Father has been merciful to you? Show that mercy,” Tricarico said.

The busyness of showing mercy brings us to Christ, said speaker Ron Pearce. “Being busy for the Lord is not the same thing as loving the Lord. And when we get overwhelmed with the needs and the demands, the Lord isn’t calling us to work harder in our own strength, but to draw upon him. The branch must abide in the vine (John 15).”

Part of One Body

In his talk “The Deacon and His Congregation,” Craig Troxel also pointed to John 15:5 as “a simple metaphor describing the union that we have

RESOURCES FOR DEACONS

For deacon resources, go to OPCCDM.org:

- Summit Videos
- Case Studies
- Denomination Aid Requests
- Meet Your Fellow Deacon
- Ministry of Mercy Training Course (Coming Soon)
- Deacon Check-In
- Private Facebook Group
- *The Reformed Deacon* Podcast
- *The Mercy Minute* Newsletter

Contact: diaconalministries@opc.org



Attendees at the National Diaconal Summit IV

with Christ.” That verse reads, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” The relationship between saints inside the local body, Troxel explained, is the “outworking of that deeper union and communion in which we partake of the powers of the world above, through our communion with Christ, by faith and by the power of the Spirit.” Drawing from Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *Life Together*, Troxel said that we belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ.

Not only do deacons belong to the local body, but they also belong to the denominational body. “The OPC is a wonderful place to be,” said John West, deacon at Mid Cities Presbyterian in

Bedford, Texas.

The OPC has over nine hundred deacons. The average number of registrants for the summits is 215, and this year’s total was 234. Some ministers and elders attended as well, either as speakers or to support their deacons.

“This was the best [summit] of the four,” said David Nakhla, administrator of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries. “In previous summits, we asked big-name [speakers] to talk about their recent books. . . . They were non-OPC speakers, and their topics didn’t entirely connect with the context of our typically smaller suburban churches,” he explained. But this time, all the speakers were from the OPC.

For many at the summit, singing the old hymns of the faith must have felt like a cool drink of water on a hot summer day. After pianist Kirstin Erickson, a Wheaton College student, played the pitches, the men instantly picked up the three-part harmony, and the music they made was strong and sounded as if they all had rehearsed together.

After the messages were completed and suitcases nearly packed, deacons talked about the future.

Geno Altiery, a deacon at Bayview OPC in Chula Vista, California, appreciated the workshop on ministering to and working with people who have disabilities. “We want to let the world around us know that there are no limitations in coming to Christ,” he said. Altiery works with an autistic man and provides him rides to men’s events and encouragement with his job. “The power of Christian community is that we’re brought into Christ,” he added. We have “the power to do whatever the Lord wills.”

Speaker Ron Pearce stressed the centrality of Christ: “we need to remember above all things that we do our ministry out of love for Christ, not just to be busy. Don’t allow the many needs of others, the many activities, the many duties to displace the Lord himself at the very center of our conscious hearts.”

Phillip Gettman, a deacon at Trinity OPC in Medford, Oregon, said he left the conference with the conviction of a servant’s heart. “As deacons, we’re not just helpers to the elders; we are peacemakers,” he said. “In times of trial and loss, we make peace.” □

The author is a member of Christ Covenant OPC in Midland, Michigan.



Question and answer time at the Summit

REPORT ON THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY



DANNY E. OLINGER // On June 8, the Eighty-Eighth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church convened on the campus of Eastern University in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. It marked the first time in thirty-six years for the assembly to meet in the Philadelphia area, the Fifty-Third (1986) General Assembly

having met on the same campus. The assembly elected Mr. David Nakhla, ruling elder at Calvary OPC, Glenside, Pennsylvania, as moderator. In leading up to the assembly, Mr. Nakhla had visited Eastern Europe as the OPC Disaster Response Coordinator (see July *New Horizons*) and participated in the Diaconal Summit in Chicago (see pages 3–5). His servant leadership was acknowledged by the assembly in the election, and with his steady hand and patient demeanor he proved to be a wise choice.

This was particularly evident when the assembly reconvened in the early afternoon of June 9 and Mr. Nakhla as moderator was called upon to make a sobering announcement. Earlier that morning, representatives of the Conferencing Office of Eastern University informed the Committee on General Assembly Arrangements that they had received reports from students and staff of four incidents of racially disparaging interactions with individuals associated with the OPC's general assembly.

After describing what had been reported, Mr. Nakhla informed the assembly that Eastern University had stated that any further reported incidents would bring about the immediate removal of the assembly from the campus. Mr. Nakhla then announced that the assembly would stay in recess for the rest of the afternoon, requested that the commissioners commit themselves to a season of prayer, and encouraged any with knowledge of the incidents to come forward.

The next day, during the morning session, the assembly passed the following statement of regret and sorrow without dissent.

The 88th (2022) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church hereby expresses to the faculty, staff, and students of Eastern University its grief, sorrow, and disgust regarding four recent incidents of racial disparagement reported being made by some present at our Assembly. There is no place in the church for such conduct.

The church seeks to magnify and honor Christ as the Creator of every human being, each one reflecting dignity and value as the image of God. Therefore, in accordance with God's Word and the two great laws of love, we repudiate and condemn all sins of racism, hatred, and prejudice, as transgressions against our Holy God, who calls us to love and honor all people. In keeping with the law of God and the right order of the church for Christ's honor, we resolve to deal directly and biblically with any such sins of hatred committed by members of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In keeping with the gospel, we resolve to offer our assistance to Eastern University to confront offender(s) and to seek reconciliation.

The Committee on Arrangements then met with the Eastern University conference staff during lunch, expressed the assembly's sorrow and regret for the incidents, and read the statement the assembly had adopted.



Commissioners of the Eighty-Eighth (2022) General Assembly

Eastern was thankful for the seriousness with which the assembly took this matter, along with the assembly's wholehearted and swift response. They considered the matter closed as long as no further incidents occurred.

Four days later, on the concluding day of the assembly, Mr. Nakhla updated the body about the incidents regarding reported racism on the campus. The first two incidents were confirmed to be an inappropriate attempt at humor by a commissioner.

Mr. Nakhla then reported that the person responsible for the reported third incident and most egregious statement was determined not to be an OPC commissioner, since, according to Eastern University, the one reported to have used the offensive language had not been seen on the campus since the incident. The final incident was due to a commissioner's confusion as to whether an area of the cafeteria was self-serve or not.

Said Hank Belfield, Stated Clerk, after the closing of the assembly, "We all have been humbled and dismayed by these incidents. But we give thanks to God for the resolution that was reached with members of the EU community before our assembly adjourned, as well

as the opportunity it gives us to reflect and learn from the experience." Belfield also asked for prayer for the "ongoing efforts being made to work toward personal reconciliation with those individuals who were hurt."

Mr. Nakhla expressed his thanksgiving for the faithful and diligent labor of the members of the Committee on Arrangements, who "striv[ed] tirelessly to seek to restore the trust that was lost in the midst of reports of hurtful conduct and speech. The Lord blessed those efforts with favor and appreciation from our hosts, who were encouraged to see the OPC take the allegations so seriously and strive for answers and reconciliation where possible."

Nakhla also praised God for his

grace to him personally—"I have never before in my life learned of so many people praying for me and felt buoyed by those prayers in a supernatural way." He rejoiced "to see the assembly rally together toward the cause of restoring the honor of Christ and the dignity of his image-bearers in the midst of such circumstances."

Report from the Statistician

When the assembly did take up its business, there was sobriety, but there was also the shared confidence that Jesus Christ was with his church and would lead his church. Among the first reports was that of the Statistician, Mr. Luke Brown. The report revealed that much had changed in the OPC during the thirty-six years between visits to Eastern University. In 1986, the OPC had 18,183 members on its rolls in 195 churches and chapels located in 10 presbyteries. In the providence of God, in 2022 the OPC has grown to 32,255 members on its rolls in 334 churches and mission works in 17 presbyteries.

The change was even more drastic in regard to the make-up of the assemblies. In 1986, commissioners Lawrence Eyres, Everett DeVelde, Edward Kellogg, Robert Graham, David Neilands,



Moderator David Nakhla



Mark Bube being recognized

Robert Vining, Henry Coray, Dwight Poundstone, and John Galbraith had either studied under J. Gresham Machen at Westminster Seminary or joined with him in 1936 as founding members of the Presbyterian Church of America (later renamed the Orthodox Presbyterian Church). Now, in 2022, approximately a third of the commissioners had been ordained during the past decade. Twenty-six commissioners were attending their first assembly.

Recognition of Service

But what had not changed was the presence of a particular servant-leader in the church, Mr. Mark Bube. In 1986, Mr. Bube, then a ruling elder at First OPC in Portland, Oregon, was a second-time commissioner to the assembly. Four years later, he would be called to serve as the General Secretary of the Committee on Foreign Missions, a position that he held with distinction until his retirement at this assembly. On Saturday, the assembly recognized Mr. Bube's service, and that of his wife of forty-nine years, Kathleen, with a video tribute from OPC missionaries past and present expressing their thanksgiving for the Bubes' service. Mr. Douglas Clawson, the new General Secretary, declared that no adequate words could express his thanksgiving and love for Mr. Bube: "On the one hand, we have stayed in some dismal places, eaten nearly inedible food, been sick with viruses, and had our freedom and lives

threatened together. On the other hand, we have witnessed together the power of Christ to raise the dead, transform lives, and use his church to reveal his glory." OPC missionary L. Anthony Curto said of his friend, "In April 1993, I sat down by Mark to eat a peanut butter sandwich in Tijuana, Mexico. In just a few short moments my ministry would take a turn I did not anticipate, and a relationship developed that I have thanked the Lord for continuously ever since." The "turn" was Mr. Curto heading to Uganda in 1995. Once there, he testified that the Lord used Mr. Bube to mentor, guide, counsel, push, and encourage him through his years of labor, even to the point that he would sit for hours under the phone tree in Karamoja, the only place that he could get a signal, so that he could talk to his beloved brother in the Lord.

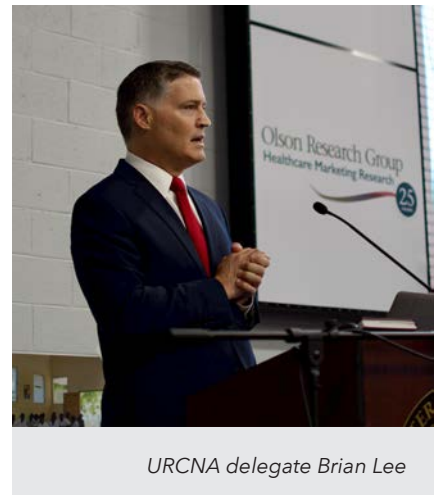
During the assembly, praise to the living God was also given for the service of Mr. Richard B. Gaffin Jr. Mr. Bube read an appreciation for Mr. Gaffin passed by the Committee on Foreign Missions in light of Mr. Gaffin's fifty-two years of consecutive service (1969–2021) on that committee. Mr. Danny Olinger, on behalf of the Committee for the Historian, then narrated a picture and home movie tribute to Mr. Gaffin's service. Mr. John Mahaffy, who served with Mr. Gaffin for thirty-nine years on the Committee on Foreign Missions, said, "Dr. Gaffin invariably moderated meetings of the Committee with an even hand. He was always careful to hear any minority while keeping the Committee on task through its agenda. He modeled servant leadership. But what was central in his leadership was the conviction that the church be faithful in serving the risen Lord."

Ecumenical Relationships

Ecumenically, the assembly invited the Sudanese Reformed Church and Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (GKN—Reformed Churches Netherlands) to enter into a relationship of Corresponding Relations. Presently, the Sudanese Reformed Church has about

6,000 members in 16 congregations and 18 preaching stations. The 14 congregations of the Reformed Churches Netherlands have around 1,400 members.

United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) fraternal delegate Mr. Brian Lee, pastor of Christ Reformed in Washington, DC, stated that the URCNA's affection for the OPC is wide, deep, and growing. Citing the joint production by the URCNA and OPC of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, he declared that singing together from the same songbook is a great benefit for the common mission of the two churches. Illustrating the point, he said that when his teenage daughter gets to the point of leaving home, "if there is no URC nearby I pray that she would seek next a faithful OPC congregation, and stay within the Reformed family of our churches. Should she do so, I think that singing out of the songbook she grew



URCNA delegate Brian Lee

up with will help keep her in this fold of confessionally Reformed Christianity." He also said that the URCNA Synod, which met concurrently with the General Assembly in 2018 in Wheaton, Illinois, would be delighted to do so again. He encouraged the ecumenical committees of the respective churches to work together to that end, perhaps as soon as 2024.

Considering Overtures and Other Business

On the Lord's Day morning of June 12, commissioners worshiped in

local OPC congregations. That evening, a worship service conducted by the session of Calvary OPC, Glenside, was held for the assembly. Calvary pastor J. Mark Sallade preached on Acts 8:26-40, “Jesus Gathers the Outcasts.”

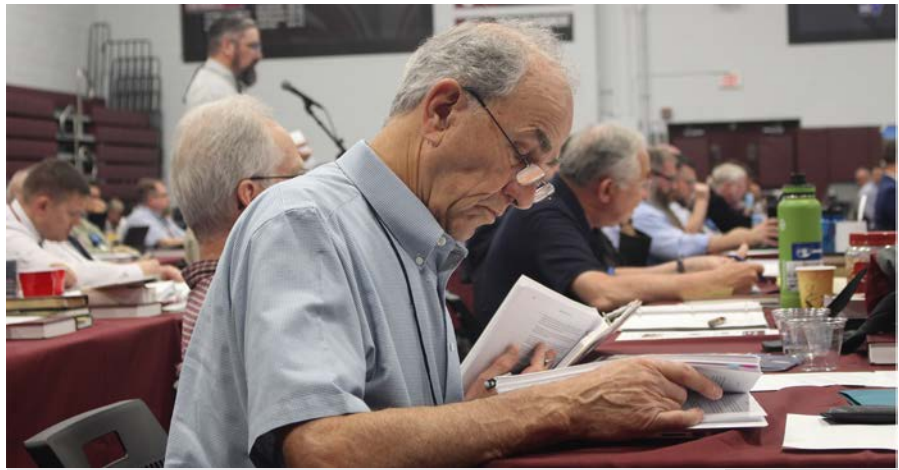
On Monday morning, the assembly entered into debate regarding Overture 1, which sought the amending of membership and baptismal vows. The assembly divided the question and passed the amending of the second membership vow and the adding of a new third vow. The new vow, if approved by a majority of the presbyteries, would read, “Do you believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son come in the flesh, who for us and for our salvation lived and died, rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will come again to judge the living and the dead?”

The assembly did not pass the amendment to the baptismal vow.

The assembly then moved to consideration of Overture 2. In response, the assembly formed a Special Committee to Help Equip Officers to Protect the Flock, which was tasked with the duty to collect, study, and develop resources to equip the officers of the church to protect members from sexual predators and domestic violence.

On Tuesday, the assembly hurried to complete its business in a timely manner. This included approval of standing committee records, the sustaining of an appeal of complaint, the presentation and consideration of another appeal, the approval of the general assembly operating budget for 2023, multiple elections, the continuing of the Special Committee on Updating the Language of the Doctrinal Standards, and a resolution of thanks. It was also announced in closing that the Eighty-Ninth (2023) General Assembly would be held at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois, starting on June 7 and ending no later than noon on June 13. □

The author is editor of New Horizons and General Secretary for the Committee on Christian Education.



Lendall Smith



Ashraf Guirgues and David Nakhla



Elizabeth Montgomery and Tin Ling Lee



Shane Bennett and James Berry



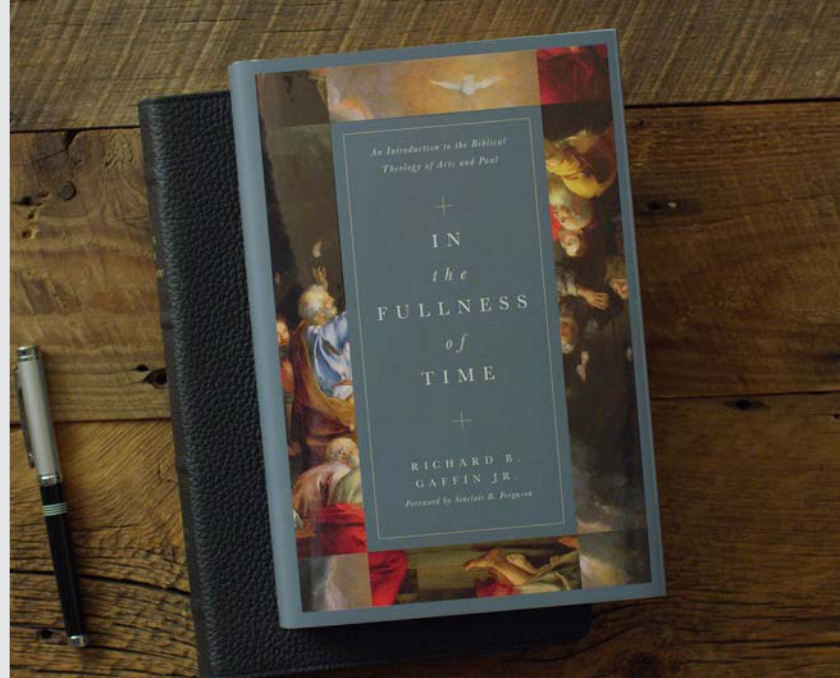
Donald Duff



D. G. Hart and Mark Williams

REVIEW OF GAFFIN'S *IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME*

// JOHN R. MUETHER



I was “Gaffinized” in 1979, when I took the four-semester-hour class New Testament Introduction: Acts and the Pauline Epistles under Dr. Richard Gaffin Jr. at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. As Sinclair Ferguson explains in the foreword to *In the Fullness of Time*, “To be ‘Gaffinized’ is to come under the influence of Dr. Gaffin’s gracious teaching in such a way that it—and he—left a lifelong impression on your understanding of the gospel and its deep structures” (17). Although it was an elective course for me, it was as formative as anything else I studied at seminary.

Reading *In the Fullness of Time* was a delightful return to that classroom. Still-familiar Gaffinisms leapt off almost every page for me. I can vividly remember many expressions from this book from classroom lectures. For example, Gaffin’s playful re-titling of the books of Acts—“Acts of the Exalted Christ by the Holy Spirit in the Church as Founded by Him through the Apostles”—was a mouthful, he acknowledged, but every word did justice to all that is involved in fully understanding the book (59).



Richard Gaffin Jr. (far right) in the 1960s with his parents, Pauline and Richard Gaffin, who served as OP missionaries to China and Taiwan

Understanding the Miracle of Pentecost

Like the course that Gaffin taught for thirty-three years to students numbering in the thousands, this book is roughly one-third on Acts and two-thirds on Paul. Much of the theology of Acts depends on understanding the miracle of Pentecost. Gaffin argues that Pentecost belongs to the accomplishment of redemption (*historia salutis*) not the order of salvation (*ordo salutis*): it is rightly understood as part of the “death-resurrection-ascension-Pentecost” complex of events (169–170), and therefore, Pentecost is “unrepeatable and irrevocable” (124). Moreover, this complex reveals the coming of the kingdom not in two but in three stages, the resurrection and Pentecost having launched the church age as stage-two of the kingdom (79). What emerges from this construction is a better cessationism, or perhaps, more positively stated, a more coherent understanding of how the Spirit is at work in the church today. Being filled with the Spirit is a controlling, continuing, and comprehensive reality for the whole church (146–151). It is not reserved for charismatic moments, but rather it bears on the everyday experience of all Christians.

Pentecost then shapes the “two-aeon” construction of Paul’s eschatology. In exegeting key Pauline passages, Gaffin notes the tendency of modern translations to miss the force of Paul’s argument. For example, in 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul is not simply describing Christians as “new creatures” but boldly proclaiming that the “new creation has come” (260).

New Created Order

Two features of this new created order draw Gaffin’s particular attention. First, the Christian life is the resurrected life, and Gaffin presses the reader not to reduce this to a

future hope but to grasp it as a present reality: the “resurrection of Christ is the same resurrection-harvest as the resurrection of believers” (307). Gaffin put this in a most provocative way that still rings in my memory from hearing it decades ago. “If you are a believer in Christ,” Gaffin insists, “united to him by faith, then at the core of your being (the heart), in the deepest recesses of who you are, you will never be more resurrected than you already are” (317; see also 367).

Secondly, the power of the resurrection in the life of the Christian is realized—not despite nor in addition to, but precisely—in our fellowship with Christ in his suffering. The church triumphs through its suffering just as its Savior did. This is a more theologically grounded definition of suffering, applying beyond the “persecuted church” to the whole church, even in the West, and once again, applies in the mundane and the ordinary (417).

In the Fullness of Time is skillfully edited to retain the stylistic feel of an introductory seminary class, which enhances its accessibility (footnotes, for example, are kept to a minimum). This book will kindle warm memories in Westminster alumni of the cinderblock walls of Van Til Hall. But it will also introduce future generations of readers to the depth of Gaffin’s exegetical insights and perhaps prompt many of them to read his further development of these themes in his *Perspectives on Pentecost and Resurrection and Redemption*.

The author is a ruling elder at Reformation OPC in Oviedo, FL.

In the Fullness of Time: An Introduction to the Biblical Theology of Acts and Paul, by Richard B. Gaffin Jr. Crossway, 2022. Hardcover, 448 pages, \$41.89 (Amazon).

☆ Congratulations

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

- **Annika VanDrunen**, *Bethel OPC, Wheaton, IL*

🗨️ Out of the Mouth . . .

My five-year-old daughter asked me when Jesus is coming back. I replied that we don’t know, but it could be anytime. “Jesus is coming back at night,” she said. I told her that we don’t know, but it could be anytime. “No, you’re wrong, Dad,” she said. “I heard in the Bible that Jesus will come like a thief, *in the night*.”

—John Paul Holloway
Manassas, VA

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

Favorite Psalms and Hymns *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* no. 216 “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”

Carol Blair

Joachim Neander (1650–1680), one of the greatest German hymnwriters, was a well-known scholar in music, literature, and theology, and was pastor of the Reformed Church of Dusseldorf, Germany. Rev. Neander wrote approximately sixty hymns in his short life, nearly all hymns of glorious praise.

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” is considered to be his greatest hymn, described by the Julian Dictionary of Hymnology as a “magnificent hymn of praise, perhaps the finest production of its author, and of the first rank in its class.” The hymn was translated into English in 1863 by Catherine Winkworth, who was not only a master translator of German hymns but also an excellent poet in her own right.

Translating a hymn is no easy task. It is one thing to write a good poem; it is quite another to take someone else’s poem, translate the concepts into another language, and then make those phrases rhyme. Note the rhyme scheme of this hymn: AABBA, where in each “A” line, the last two syllables rhyme—no small achievement!

The tune name is LOBE DEN HERREN—the first three words of the German text, meaning “Praise the Lord,” and the tune was first published in a German hymnal in 1665. The composer is unknown. Rev. Neander chose the tune specifically for his words, and they have never been sung to any other melody.

The hymn has seven original stanzas. Most hymnals today print four. The *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* prints five, and phrases in two of the stanzas refer to the refuge we find “under his wings,” which is a recurring theme in the Psalms and mentioned also in the book of Ruth. Here are the two stanzas rarely found in hymnals today:

Praise to the Lord, Who, when tempests their warfare are waging,
Who, when the elements madly around thee are raging,
Biddeth them cease,
Turneth their fury to peace,
Whirlwinds and waters assuaging.

Praise to the Lord, Who, when darkness of sin is abounding,
Who, when the godless do triumph, all virtue confounding,
Sheddeth his light,
Chaseth the horrors of night,
Saints with his mercy surrounding.

THREE ESSENTIALS FOR AN EVANGELISTIC CULTURE

// ADRIAN CRUM



A backyard Bible club that resembles VBS, part of Harvest OPC's outreach efforts to its neighborhood

A year ago, my wife and three daughters and I pulled up roots in Northern California and boarded a plane for Grand Rapids, Michigan. Harvest OPC had called me as a pastor to focus on two particular areas of ministry: discipling high-schoolers and developing a culture of evangelism.

This description, “culture of evangelism,” is drawn from Mack Stiles’s very helpful little book from the 9 Marks series called *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus*. Stiles explains that Christians can tend to view outreach as something that can be reduced to a program or event, such as an Easter service, a Christmas play, or volunteering at a local charity. He makes the case that, instead, churches should look beyond simply putting events on a calendar, inviting people to a gospel presentation, and then thinking that we have “checked the evangelistic box.” The goal is a whole congregation mutually supporting each other in developing personal relationships with non-Christians, which then opens the door for reading the Bible one-on-one or in small groups.

As I write about being a pastor called to develop an evangelistic culture, I’m sensitive to the fact that most OPC congregations don’t have the luxury of calling multiple pastors and devoting one pastor’s time specifically to evangelism. However, I pray the principles below will translate into any context.

So far, in my work at Harvest, I’ve seen three significant principles on the way to developing a culture of evangelism. You must (1) know your context, (2) know your people, and (3) know your Savior.

Know Your Context

Though the gospel message never changes, the context of

communicating that message changed greatly when we moved from Northern California to West Michigan. Before visiting the greater Grand Rapids area, I had never seen so many Christians calling themselves Reformed. Here there are CRC, RCA, URC, PRC, RPC—and the acronyms could go on and on! While convictions in each of these kinds of congregations are markedly different, throughout them all there is a family-oriented, tight-knit community and a sense that Christianity has permeated the lives of multiple generations.

In contrast, Reformed churches in California were made up of many broadly evangelical Christians who, in the last twenty years or so, had discovered the doctrines of grace and realized the riches of the gospel that is grounded in God’s sovereignty over salvation.

Also in contrast, I wrote a section of this article in Wildwood, New Jersey, while training Harvest’s youth in evangelism at Boardwalk Chapel. There, you might meet a self-proclaimed Buddhist or atheist, an Eastern Orthodox believer from Macedonia, or Catholics from Portugal and Ecuador. The summer on the boardwalk is particularly helpful for training youth in evangelism because those with whom we are sharing the gospel will clearly say, “Yeah, I don’t believe that. That’s wrong.”

At Harvest OPC, because of the Reformed culture in the area, it’s been essential to try to go deeper than the “Reformed Christian” label or identity. I decided to teach a class in adult Sunday school called “Let’s Get Personal,” making the case that we need to personally and in concrete ways confess the depth of our sin as we see the profound need for a Savior. Our nominally Christian neighbors and family members can share an extensive Christian and even Reformed vocabulary but not be personally trusting in Christ or experiencing the joy of genuine forgiveness and transformation in the gospel.

It took me about six months just to recalibrate my West Coast mindset after arriving in Michigan. And it’s still a work in progress!

Know Your People

When Harvest first called me to focus on evangelism, I began by asking some of our newest members, “What do you think will be important in growing a hunger at Harvest to share the gospel?” One woman said, “Don’t do it all yourself.” This has been a very hard lesson to learn. If I have to choose between going out by myself to share the gospel or planning an outing or class with others, I would almost always lean toward the former. Planning, promoting, and recruiting for evangelistic outings has had its own learning curve. Another factor at play is the strong work ethic that causes our members to be committed to working two or even three jobs at the same time—it is important for them to be with family during the little personal time they have on weekends.

So, in building an evangelistic culture, I began drawing together people at Harvest who already are sharing the gospel personally in different contexts. We have a member who street preaches, another who does abortion sidewalk advocacy, a young man who is in New York City doing food pantry outreach, and a retired elder who is passionate about Crossroads prison ministry (Crossroads pairs church members with prison inmates and sets up a letter-writing method of training them to grow in their faith). In an adult Sunday school class, we featured each of these ministries and encouraged our members to support these outreach efforts both in person and through prayer.

Instead of an immediate and widespread revival, as I originally desired, small gradual steps are needed to faithfully move us all in the same direction toward more and more members sharing the gospel personally with people where they already are. One of the members of our witness committee wisely recommended a class on “sharing Christ at work.” Rather than adding programs and events to busy schedules, it may be wiser to re-tool what we are already doing—where members are already spending their time.

God has been, and continues to be, at work at our church. My prayerful desire is for a gradual, steady, continued growth of evangelism. Our young people are also hungry to get out and share the gospel in a variety of contexts; our older members then can see and be encouraged by examples of junior high and high-schoolers boldly making connections with non-Christians and speaking to them about Jesus.

Know Your Savior

Busy-hearted evangelism can also distract us from sharing the gospel. Do, do, do is the common refrain of my heart;

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date news and prayer requests, receive our newsletter by subscribing at CHMCE.org or by scanning this QR code.



A canvassing training day to Harvest OPC’s neighborhood; Adrian Crum is center (in plaid)

I have to rehearse rest, rest, rest. My heart has to be reminded over and over again that “God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). The perfect love of Christ for us weak, distracted sinners, is the only fuel that can continue motivating evangelism. The effort of evangelism and the Person we are commending have to be deeply intertwined. “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). I’m very struck at Paul’s ability to write theologically precise and complex letters. Yet, when he needed to summarize and get to the heart of things, it came back to this: “[He] loved me and gave himself for me.”

It’s essential that in teaching others to share the riches of the message of Jesus’s death, burial, and resurrection for sinners, we don’t glaze over the fact that we are one of those sinners who need him. Zach Eswine, in his book *Kindled Fire*, tells the story of Spurgeon’s preaching being critiqued by the newspapers of his day. “Mr. Spurgeon will wear out the letter ‘I,’” they wrote, because in printing his sermons, they saw him referring to himself so many times. While there is a wrong way to be excessively self-referential in preaching, Spurgeon wanted to always preach the message to his people, while also testifying to the way that God had worked specifically and personally in his own life. In his sermons, he often followed a pattern: (1) explain, (2) illustrate, (3) apply, (4) testify!

Paul viewed as an essential reality that the gospel of Jesus was personal and for him. All his personal testifying served a purpose: “I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life” (1 Tim. 1:16).

We cannot feed the hungry with a Savior whose goodness and grace we’ve ceased tasting and seeing. The reality of our own need for grace is the strongest case for being able to say to others, “you have to know *my Savior!*”

The author is a pastor at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Michigan.

MEET THE PAYSONS, NEW MISSIONARIES TO URUGUAY



The Paysons, after years of ministry and raising a family in Pennsylvania, will relocate to Uruguay in late summer.

STEPHEN'S STORY

Stephen S. Payson

Within the context of my family life, two things captured my spiritual imagination as a child.

First, I had a pastor during the formative years of my adolescence who loved and genuinely cared about me and saw that I had an interest in spiritual things. He would often invite me to read the Scripture lessons in church, which I loved to do. (My parents attended the Episcopalian church where we lived near Portland, Maine, that had some connection to my father's family, and this is where my siblings and I were baptized as young children. Later, when I was about ten years old, we started attending the congregationalist church [United Church of Christ] within walking distance of our home.)

Second, in the lore of my family, my great-great-grandfather, Edward Payson, played a role in my imagination. He was a minister of significant reputation in Portland during the Second Great Awakening. During my teenage years, I often wondered if I might grow up to be a minister like him. But while my family attended church with some regularity, the Christian faith and life of our family was nominal. It would take many years subsequent to my rebellious and sinful college years (when I studied religion, of all things) for God to bring to my heart and mind and life a calling to be a pastor.

New England Meets Argentina

An unexpected and wonderful change was brought to me when I fell in love with Catalina. I met her when we both taught summer school in Massachusetts in 1986. We were married a year and a half later and moved to Argentina so that I could know her family, culture, and language more fully. Catalina grew up in a practicing Roman Catholic family. I

would disinterestedly and irregularly join Catalina and her family at Mass. As I was only learning Spanish, I did not much understand what was going on during the service and had little interest in its liturgy.

Strangely, though, my call to ministry began to assert itself again after two years of teaching the Gospel of Luke and religious studies at a private British school in Buenos Aires. But even then, I remained horribly confused about what I believed.

Life in Argentina was humbling in many ways as I was a stranger living in my wife's country and only gradually learned to speak Spanish over the course of those two years. However, I also loved living among her family, with the warmth of the culture that was so different from my own upbringing. I was introduced to a larger and different world that had its own inherent beauties, joys, sorrows, and, yes, expressions of sin and brokenness.

Coming to Faith and Becoming Reformed

After returning to the United States, I went to seminary and then took a call from St. John's United Church of Christ (UCC), which was originally a German Reformed congregation. However, even though I knew about the gospel of Christ, I did not embrace it. In fact, it was not until 1997, when I attended a Promise Keepers event, that I did so.

A few years later, I was seriously introduced to the Reformed faith when I began to study the Heidelberg Catechism with a small group of evangelically minded UCC pastors in central Pennsylvania who met monthly for discussion and fellowship. Over the next several years, I became convinced that the Reformed faith was simply biblical Christianity. During this time I was also introduced to J. Gresham Machen's *Christianity and Liberalism*, which clarified for me that what was masquerading as Christianity in the UCC was, in fact, another religion.

For the next several years, I attempted to shepherd my

congregation to embrace its German Reformed heritage, but to no avail. As I resigned from my pastorate in 2003, there were a handful of members who had come to embrace the evangelical and Reformed faith that I had been preaching and teaching. This core group eventually became Providence Reformed Church and then, Providence OPC in Mifflinburg, when the little flock became a mission work of the Presbytery of Philadelphia in November 2005, under the leadership of regional home missionary Rev. Tom Tyson.

After examination by the presbytery, I was also received into the OPC as a gospel minister in November 2006. The recently retired (but never tired!) Rev. Wendell Rockey and Christian Walmer III, an elder of Calvary OPC in Middletown, became members of the overseeing session. Through many growing pains and struggles, Providence became an organized congregation in 2010.

Over the years, God has used my marriage to Catalina and my experiences of living in Argentina to provide context for missionary labor in Uruguay. I served as an OP church planter and then pastor in central Pennsylvania from 2003–2015, and during that time I had the privilege of accompanying the OPC general secretaries to Uruguay to serve as an interpreter on several occasions.

In 2015, my life and ministerial calling took a decided turn when I felt led by God to train to become a hospital chaplain at Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Following this residency, I served as a chaplain to children afflicted with cancer and their families, accompanying them through their often long and arduous journey. My labors in chaplaincy have taught me firsthand the brokenness and grief of this world as experienced by these children and their families.

We are thankful that the Lord has equipped us to serve on the mission field in Uruguay with our cultural and family ties to South America, my seasoning over the last seventeen years as an OPC pastor, and my ministry to people in all walks of life in the hospital setting. Please pray that our service there will glorify him.

CATALINA'S STORY

Catalina A. Payson

I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was educated in a Roman Catholic home where going to Sunday Mass was an obligation. We never missed worship. I developed a relationship with Christ while attending a convent school in the fifth through seventh grades, even though there wasn't a "road to Damascus" moment.

At recess, I would go to the chapel to talk to Jesus, and I realized that I had to find a way to serve him. I thought that the best way to serve him was to become a nun, but I cried myself to sleep every night at the prospect of entering a convent. Fortunately, my mother told me that I was not called to



The Paysons (center) visiting missionaries to Uruguay Mark and Jeni Richline

be a nun if the idea made me cry that much.

I owe this convent school a lot for introducing me to the Bible. In seventh grade, I was asked to read through the Bible. Even though by the end of the school year we had not finished it, I continued reading it during my summer vacation—I have a hard time not finishing a book, and I am glad that this habit of mine spilled into reading through God's Word.

As a young adult, I fell in love with Stephen, who as an unbeliever proceeded to question my faith. I have grown as a Christian since then; however, my growth would not have been the same if God had not turned toward himself the heart of the man who became my husband. We were able to grow together, supporting and encouraging each other as we labored in ministry. I still have a long way to go in my Christian walk, and I am looking forward to my further sanctification.

My husband has been interested in missions ever since he started to travel to Uruguay to help establish the mission there. Now we both sense that the time has come to pursue God's call to the mission field in Uruguay and we are looking forward to this new opportunity to serve our Lord.

What's New

// Appointments

The **Rev. Douglas B. (Patricia) Clawson** was installed by the Presbytery of the Midwest as the general secretary of the Committee on Foreign Missions, effective July 1, 2022.

// Comings and Goings

Mr. and Mrs. Mark (Carla) Van Essendelft welcomed baby Selah Joanna Van Essendelft to the family on June 15 while on furlough in the United States.

MINISTERING IN THE PULPIT AND IN THE NATIONAL GUARD

// KEN KRUCKKOW



Ken and Mandy Kruckkow and family

I am a military chaplain with the National Guard and staff pastor at Oakland Hills Community Church in Farmington Hills, Michigan. Serving in the military and serving as a minister have been longtime desires of my heart.

As a teenager, I wanted to join the Marines. I appreciated the discipline and leadership skills they claimed to provide. However, two friends who were former Marines both encouraged me to go to Bible college instead. After graduating college in 2010, I started pursuing a master of divinity at Moody Theological Seminary in Plymouth, Michigan. There, a hospital chaplain came to present to the students the ministry of being a hospital chaplain. That sparked my interest in chaplaincy.

God eventually led me to study at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, where I was also hired as building maintenance staff. The gentleman I worked beside, Matthew Moynihan, was an Army National Guard chaplain with the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chap-

lains and Military Personnel (PRCC). Through him, I learned about a program of the PRCC called the Chaplain Candidate Program, which allows seminary students to work alongside military chaplains while continuing to work on their degrees. This seemed to be the opportunity to blend two desires: the military and ordained ministry.

The Chaplain Candidate Program

The Chaplain Candidate Program was amazing. It allowed me to engage in ministry as much as I was able to during my seminary years. This provided a great opportunity to put into practice what I was learning without putting too much pressure on me as I worked, studied, and cared for my wife, Mandy, and growing family. Under the authority of a supervising chaplain, I helped to minister to those dealing with suicidal ideations, shadowed the chaplain at a soldier's funeral, learned to integrate into a place that is sometimes friendly to chaplains and sometimes not, and had many, many counseling opportunities.

One day, when I was filling in for the chaplain, eight soldiers were sent to me for counseling over the course of one day. Some were physically shaking over their concerns.

Chaplain Candidate Program

The Army, Navy, and Air Force have programs for college graduates who desire to go to seminary to become an active duty or reserve component military chaplain: the Chaplain Candidate Program. The program often pays for about half of the student's seminary expenses. The PRCC currently has eighteen men participating. While in the Chaplain Candidate Program, these men serve in something similar to an internship with a Military Reserve Component unit (either a Reserve Unit or the National Guard for their state). They learn how to be a military chaplain while attending seminary.

Then, the military generally requires that every chaplain applicant have at least two years of post-seminary ministry experience

before being considered for a military chaplaincy. When men interested in chaplaincy graduate from seminary, they are put "on hold" with their military call until they can receive a call as a pastor for those required two years of ministry experience. That is sometimes challenging. Not all churches want to hire knowing that, at the end of two years, the pastor may leave the church to continue his call to active-duty chaplaincy or add reserve component responsibilities and time away from his employing church.

The PRCC would like to encourage any churches considering hiring a chaplain candidate to remember that they would be helping such a man prepare to be a missionary to military personnel around the world. (Since chaplain candidates are commissioned officers, they can elect to take advantage of Tricare Health Insurance at very reasonable rates.)

By God's grace, I was able to help these soldiers. Shortly after this, soldiers started to request to speak specifically with me, and my chaplain was happy to recommend me to provide ministry coverage in his absence or at separate locations. God used the Chaplain Candidate Program to help confirm my calling as a minister and my love for the military chaplain ministry.

A Chaplain and a Staff Pastor

I was ordained and selected as a chaplain in the Michigan National Guard in 2021. My first unit was the 146 MMB (multi-function medical battalion). God was gracious to give me a unit that had some amazing Christian leaders in it. Because it was a medical unit, there was more acceptance of religion and counseling. By the second drill, the chapel service had filled the room we were using, and the battalion commander even attended. One soldier let me know that they had never seen the room be filled like that before—and the former chaplain was speechless when I told him that the battalion commander had attended. I was excited and thankful as God was confirming my calling to this ministry and showing me that the field was ripe for harvest.

Chaplain Bieganeck, an active duty army chaplain of twenty-one years, visited me on my second drill at my new unit. Knowing I was a new chaplain, he helped me to navigate some important first steps with establishing my chaplain ministry. CH Bieganeck and his friend even hand made a communion serving tray overnight and presented it to me on our second day of drill. I am very grateful for CH Bieganeck's willingness to reach out and share with a new young chaplain like he did.

The chaplain I initially served under as a chaplain candidate had been a staff pastor as well as an Army National Guard chaplain. I was inspired by his example. I have also maintained being a staff pastor at a local church—Oakland Hills Community Church—while laboring as a chaplain candidate and now a chaplain in the Michigan Army National Guard. I'm thankful for the leadership in the Chaplain Corps that values chaplains who are also pastors. They work with you to make it possible because they recognize that pastors who are actively pastoring make better chaplains.

Ministry to Soldiers

Some people ask me if you can be open about the gospel in the military. To that I have found the answer is definitely yes! In fact, if you are respectful about it, you probably have more freedom to share the gospel as a military chaplain than you do in many civilian vocations. I enjoy talking to Christians of every stripe and nonbelievers who would never engage with a pastor otherwise. Because I'm their chaplain, I have a platform to speak into the lives of many people and to enter into their conversations. There are many soldiers who are still figuring out the basics of life and are struggling from not having a father in their life to mentor them. There are many



Handmade communion plate presented to Kruckow (left) by a fellow army chaplain

relationship issues that people need help with and are willing to talk to a chaplain about. These conversations give me an opportunity to show love to those who hold a different worldview while also being free to speak openly from a Christian perspective.

Deployment

In September, I will be deploying with a unit that is going to the Middle East. This is a wonderful opportunity from God! There are many chaplains who serve for years without being deployed, and for many that is their preference. However, I'm thankful for the deployment because I understand it to be a remarkable opportunity to minister to soldiers.

I'm also thankful for the Michigan Army National Guard Chaplain leadership who, when they selected me for a deployment, took care to select someone who was not only qualified but whose life would not be unreasonably disrupted. You will not find that level of care in most areas of the military, but you can find it in the Chaplain Corps.

I do not look forward to being away from my family for a year, but this is a part of sharing the sacrifice that our soldiers face to provide the freedom that we enjoy.

The author is an OP pastor and chaplain.

Prayer Requests

- For Mandy and Ken as they work to prepare for Ken's deployment
- For children Julia, Sage, Ivan, Veronica, and Nadia during Ken's deployment
- For Ken to establish quickly the relationships with leadership and soldiers needed for effective ministry
- For abundant opportunities to encourage soldiers in the Lord and that hearts would be softened toward the gospel
- For safety for the soldiers and for success as agents of peace-making

MONEY MATTERS

// D. PATRICK RAMSEY

The Scriptures teach us about money matters, and one aspect of its teaching is that money matters. Making money so that you might be able to give some of it to the church is a matter of some importance for at least three reasons, according to Philippians 4:14–20.

First, giving money is an important part of gospel ministry. Paul describes his relationship with the Philippians as a “partnership” because their financial gifts supported him and his ministry (v. 15; see also Phil. 1:5). Paul could not accomplish his apostolic mission to the Gentiles by himself. He needed coworkers or partners to share in the work with him. Some would need to be fellow teachers like Barnabas and Timothy, but others would need to be people with regular jobs that could provide financial support. That is the role the Philippians filled. Their gifts to Paul over the years freed him to travel the world preaching, teaching, praying, and writing. Instead of spending more time as a tentmaker, thanks to his financial partners, Paul could do what he was called to do. Likewise, when we give to the work of the local church, to the presbytery, or to Worldwide Outreach, we are fulfilling a particular and necessary role in the work of gospel ministry.

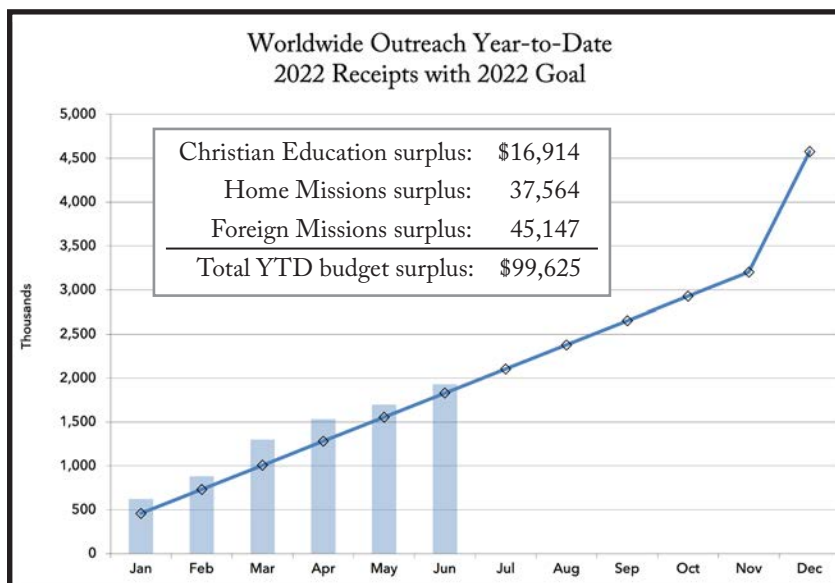
Second, giving money to the church pleases God. Paul describes the Philippians’ gift as “a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God” (4:18). Unfortunately, the impression is sometimes given that our works aren’t good and don’t please God. Although our best works are imperfect and thus cannot “merit pardon of sin, or eternal life,” they are good as “they proceed from his Spirit,” and God is “pleased to accept” them (WCF 16.5–16.6). Indeed, God takes great delight in his children when they sincerely love him and one another. That is why the New Testament uses sacrificial language to depict God’s response to the good

we do, whether that is helping those in need (Heb. 13:16) or underwriting the work of the church (Phil. 4:18). Like the sacrifices of the Old Testament, and even like Christ’s sacrifice (Eph. 5:2), our good deeds ascend as “a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God” (Phil. 4:18).

Third, giving money to the church is for our good. Paul had learned to be content in any and every circumstance, including being a Roman prisoner, when he was dependent upon outside help for his survival. If he hadn’t learned that lesson, I doubt he would have been able to say, “Not that I seek the gift” (Phil. 4:17). Discontentment and anxiety would have driven Paul to go after the Philippians’ money, perhaps even shaming them into giving him more of it. Yet, Paul didn’t selfishly or greedily seek their money. He knew that God would supply his every need one way or another. Paul needed money, but he didn’t need *their* money, which is why he didn’t feel compelled to go after it. This is not to say that he wasn’t thankful for them and for their kindness. He was glad they gave, but the main reason he was glad was not because their gift helped *him* but because it helped *them*. Although he didn’t seek their money, he did seek “the fruit that increases to [their] credit.” By means of a banking term, Paul expressed the truth that God would reward them for their partnership in the gospel. God is not only pleased with our giving; he graciously blesses us for it (see also Heb. 6:10; 2 Cor. 9:1–15).

The next time you financially support the work of the church, remember that you are sharing in the work. Remember that God takes delight in you. Indeed, God loves a cheerful giver.

The author is pastor of Nashua OPC in Pulaski, PA.



AUG-SEPT



The Scherschligts (day 1)

1 **HEERO & ANYA HACQUEBORD**, L'viv, Ukraine. Give thanks for the church's 10-year anniversary and pray that God's love would shine in their VBS. / Summer intern **JOE (MYRANDA) SCHERSCHLIGT** at Christ OPC in Marietta, GA.

2 Associate missionaries **JAMES & ESTHER FOLKERTS**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the young men doing outreach to the villages. / Pray for Christian Education general secretary **DANNY OLINGER** as he directs the intern program.

3 Summer intern **ANDREW (NOEL) DAVIS** at Trinity in Newberg, OR. / **BEN & MELANIE WESTERVELD**, Quebec, Canada. Pray that the children at English for Kids camp may come to know and embrace God's faithful promises.

4 **PAUL & SARAH MOURREALE**, West Plains, MO. Pray Covenant Reformed would find a permanent location. / **CHARLES & CONNIE JACKSON**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Knox School of Theology as classes begin.

5 **LACY (DEBBIE) ANDREWS**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southeast. / Summer intern **ALEX (JENNIFER) SUTHERLAND** at Emmanuel OPC in Wilmington, DE.

6 **KEVIN & RACHEL MEDCALF**, Cumming, GA. Pray for the new Sunday school program. / Active duty military chaplain **JOSHUA (STEPHANIE) JACKSON**, US Army. / **PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COMMISSION ON CHAPLAINS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL**.

7 Associate missionaries **CHRISTOPHER & CHLOE VERDICK**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the clinic staff housing construction. / **CHRISTOPHER & SARA DREW**, Grand Forks, ND. Pray Faith OPC would see more families and university students at worship.

8 **CARL & STACEY MILLER**, New Braunfels, TX. Praise God for Heritage's particularization. / Summer interns **FILIFE (MARIANNA) SCHULZ DOS SANTOS** at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, PA, and **CALEB MALTBY** at Covenant Presbyterian in Abilene, TX.

9 Tentmaking missionary **JOANNA GROVE**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the Mission's Christian families conference in the mountain villages. / Pray for stated clerk **HANK BELFIELD** as he works on the minutes and yearbook of the general assembly.

10 **MARKUS & SHARON JEROMIN**, gathering-minister in Battle Creek, MI. Pray for growth at the weekly Bible study. / Pray for **MARK & CARLA VAN ESSENDELFT** (on furlough) and missionary associates **DR. JIM & JENNY KNOX**, Nakaale, Uganda. / Affiliated missionaries **JERRY AND MARILYN FARNIK**, Czech Republic. Pray for fruit from their VBS work.



The Peppos (day 14)

11 **JEREMY & GWEN BAKER**, Yuma, AZ. Pray for year-round residents to visit Yuma OPC. / Summer interns **BRENNEN (TIFFANY) WINTER** at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, MI, and **NATE (ELISABETH) BLOECHL** at Bethel OPC in Oostburg, WI.

12 Associate missionary **ANGELA VOSKUIL**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the resumption of the Karamoja Education Outreach in local schools. / Summer intern **ZACHARY (JULIA) HERBSTER** at Cornerstone in Ambler, PA.

13 Pray for tentmaking missionary **TINA DEJONG**, Nakaale, Uganda, and the missionary kids as they begin the new school year. / Pray for **CHARLES (MARGARET) BIGGS**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic.

14 **BRAD (CINNAMON) PEPPO**, regional home missionary of the Miami Valley for the Presbytery of Ohio. / **COMMITTEE ON DIACONAL MINISTRIES** and the OP deacons connected in the "Deacon Check-In" program during August.

15 Associate missionary **LEAH HOPP**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for her return to the field in October after her travels in North America. / Loan Fund manager **MARK STUMPF**. / Database administrator **CHARLENE TIPTON**.

AUG-SEPT

Item pertaining to September is in italics.



The Hopps (day 19)

21 **MARK & JENI RICHLINE**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Give thanks for new missionary evangelist Stephen Payson, and pray for their labor together. / **JOEL PEARCE**, executive director for the digital *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.

22 **JOHN & KATIE TERRELL**, Moline, MI. Pray for the ministry of discipleship at Living Hope OPC. / Pray for **STEPHEN & CATALINA PAYSON**, Montevideo, Uruguay, as they travel and settle into a new environment in Uruguay.

23 **JOHN PAUL & CORINNE HOLLOWAY**, Manassas, VA. Pray that unbelievers would be led to Acacia Reformed. / Disaster Response coordinator **DAVID NAKHLA** asks prayer for ministries to those suffering from the war in Ukraine.

24 Pray for **MR. AND MRS. F.**, Asia, as they plan their move to a new city to begin labors in the previous general region of their service. / Yearlong intern **RICHY (NEVA) BRASHER** at Escondido OPC in Escondido, CA.

25 **MR. AND MRS. M.**, Asia. Pray that the Lord would increase Mr. M.'s contacts with students at the local US university this fall. / **CHRIS BYRD**, Westfield, NJ. Pray for Grace OPC's growth in hospitality and outreach.

26 **ANDREW & REBEKAH CANAVAN**, Corona, CA. Pray the lost would hear the gospel at Corona Presbyterian. / Summer interns **PAUL YU** at Grace OPC in Middletown, DE, and **ARIE VAN WEELDEN** at Bonita OPC in Bonita, CA.



The Terrells (day 22)

27 Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **DOUGLAS CLAWSON** as he reports to the Committee on September 27-28. / **MELISA MCGINNIS**, financial controller, and **ANNELISA STUDLEY**, office manager.

28 **CHRIS (MEGAN) HARTSHORN**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California. / Yearlong intern **BEN (JOELLE) CAMPBELL** at Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod in West Barnstable, MA.

29 **TYLER & NATALIE DETRICK**, Dayton, OH. Pray for effective outreach at Light of the Nations this summer. / Christian Education office secretary **ABBY HARTING** and Short-Term Missions administrative assistant **ALLISON HILL**.

30 Affil. missionaries **DR. MARK & LAURA AMBROSE**, Cambodia. Pray for the clinic's efforts to resume medical outreach to the village. / Summer intern **JOHNATHAN (MONICA) ALLEN** at Westminster OPC in Indian Head Park, IL.

31 Affil. missionaries **CRAIG AND REE COULBOURNE** and **LINDA KARNER**, Japan. / **A. J. & CHELSEA MILLSAPS**, Maryville, TN, area evangelist. Pray for God's blessing on the Athens Reformed Bible Study.

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

17 **MILLER & STEPHANIE ANSELL**, Waco, TX. Pray for unity and love at Trinity Presbyterian. / Summer interns **JOHN (RACHEL) CLIFFORD** at New Hope OPC in Frederick, MD, and **MITCHELL GASKINS** at Covenant in Vandalia, OH.

18 Associate missionaries **OCTAVIUS & MARIE DELFILS**, Haiti. Give thanks that the Haiti churches continue to worship despite kidnapping and gang activity. / **JOHN FIKKERT**, director for the Committee on Ministerial Care.

19 Pray for **BEN & HEATHER HOPP**, Haiti, as Ben plans to go to Haiti to teach, preach, and supervise repairs on mission equipment. / **MICAH & EILEEN BICKFORD**, Farmington, ME. Pray for new families to visit Grace Reformed.

20 **MARK & LORIE WHEAT**, Houston, TX. Pray God would raise up officers for Good Shepherd OPC. / Pray that **OPC.ORG** will edify the church. / Summer intern **DAVID (HOPE) GARRETT** at Calvary in Glenside, PA.

NEWS, VIEWS & REVIEWS

CLAWSON INSTALLED IN ST DAVIDS, PA

Douglas B. Clawson was installed as an evangelist to serve as the general secretary of the Committee on Foreign Missions (CFM) following the adjournment of the Eighty-Eighth General Assembly on June 14, 2022. The Rev. Dr. Alan D. Strange, moderator of the Presbytery of the Midwest, conducted the service of installation. The Rev. Lendall H. Smith, former missionary to Taiwan, preached on Psalm 96, "Declare His Glory Among the Nations." The Rev. Jonathan B. Falk, former missionary to Uganda, Eritrea, and Uruguay, gave the charge to the evangelist (Mr. Falk had also participated in Mr. Clawson's licensure exam thirty-nine years ago). Mr. Mark T. Bube, general secretary of the CFM for the last thirty-one years, led in prayer. Members of eight different presbyteries attended.

Mr. Clawson was ordained as an evangelist of Grace OPC in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, in 1984. He then served as pastor at Grace OPC in Hanover Park, Illinois, from 1987–2002. Since 2002, he has served alongside Mr. Bube as the associate general secretary of the CFM. He was a member and then president of the OPC's Committee on Christian Education from 1998–2002 and moderator of the Sixty-Ninth (2002) General Assembly. He and Pat, his wife of forty-five years, live in Horsham, Pennsylvania.



At Clawson's installation: Mark Bube, Douglas Clawson, Jonathan Falk, Lendall Smith, and Alan Strange

HERITAGE ORGANIZED IN NEW BRAUNFELS, TX

Carl W. Miller

New Braunfels OPC, a mission work of South Austin Presbyterian Church (Presbytery of the Southwest), was organized as a new and separate congregation to be known as Heritage Presbyterian at a service of recognition, ordination, and installation on Friday, May 20, with Rev. Dr. Jim Cassidy moderating. Heritage Presbyterian was established and built up by the grace of God through believers desiring to see a solidly Reformed, confessional church in New Braunfels. It began with two families starting a Bible study in 2017 and grew in a short time. The group began

worshiping together on the Lord's Day in March 2018. Rev. Carl Miller, who has led the group from October 2019 as organizing pastor, was installed as the founding pastor of Heritage Presbyterian. Mr. Phil Lovelady was ordained and installed as ruling elder.

IN MEMORIAM: KATHLEEN CURTO

Mark T. Bube

On April 24, Kathleen Curto joined the church triumphant, having succumbed to cancer at age sixty-nine. High school sweethearts, Kathleen and Tony Curto were married on October 2, 1970. By God's grace they both were converted in 1971. While Tony pastored in Newport Beach, California, Kathleen completed her college degree in elementary education in 1987. She served as a teacher and principal at two Christian schools in



At Heritage's organization service: Bill Jones, Mark Moody, Francesco Spadini, Andrew Moody, Carl Miller, Phil Lovelady, James Cassidy, Terry Reiningger, Nathan Hornfield, John Terpstra, Paul van Oudenaren, James Schwocafer



Kathleen and Tony Curto

Orange County while they raised three children, Matthew, Toby, and Christy. In 1995, Tony accepted a call to serve as an OPC missionary to Uganda. There, Kathleen helped to establish a Christian school in Mbale. When a Ugandan friend died, leaving behind three orphaned boys, Douglas, Isaac, and Ivan, Kathleen and Tony took them into their home as their own. In 2004, Tony accepted a call to Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, where Kathleen would serve as registrar and director of student services.

In Genesis 2:18, God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helper fit for him." Kathleen came about as close to being that fit helper as anyone we have ever met. Blessed with a hospitable heart and humility, she gave generously and lovingly of herself to her family and others. She is survived by her husband, six children, and twelve grandchildren.

YAMAGATA REFORMED CHURCH PARTICULARIZED IN YAMAGATA, JAPAN

Stewart E. Lauer

On May 22, the Yamagata Reformed Church, a fruit of fifty years of OPC Japan Mission (OPCJM) work, became a particular congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Japan, a church with whom the OPC has a corresponding relationship.

In 1906, James Erskine Moore was born to missionary parents in Osaka, Japan (southwest Honshu). He pastored southern California churches as an OPC minister from 1951 to 1961. His oldest child, David McIlwaine Moore, served as a missionary-evangelist of the OPC. Moore's second daughter, Katie Moore Yaegashi, also returned as an adult to her father's childhood home. Katie and Ruthann Graybill were two of the first missionary associates to teach English and help in the church plant.

Like his father, David was ordained in the PCUS, but, upon call to missionary service in Japan by the OPC's Committee on Foreign Missions, he transferred to the OPC and left for the field in 1968. After two years in language school, David and Arnold Kress, who had been sent by the OPC two years earlier, began a new mis-



Members of the presbytery and of the congregation of the newly formed Yamagata Reformed Church

sion work in the city of Yamagata.

In 1977, Katie married Kaz Yaegashi, who was called by the OPCJM to serve as an associate missionary-evangelist from the PCA's Mississippi Valley Presbytery. Over the years, David, who served in Japan until 2000, and Kaz disciplined and baptized forty-two people into the Yamagata congregation. Of those, thirty-three were adults. Consonant with the general population decline of the city, many one-time members have left Yamagata and enriched churches elsewhere, leaving a total of nineteen resident members comprising the newly particularized congregation.

During the service of reception of the Yamagata Church into the Presbyterian Church in Japan, Messrs. Shinichi Inoue and Shinji Sasaki were ordained as ruling elders and Rev. Yaegashi was installed as a cooperating pastor by the Musashi Presbytery of the PCJ. OPCJM missionaries, Murray Uomoto from the Presbytery of the Dakotas (Sendai Megumi Chapel) and Stewart Lauer from the Presbytery of Ohio (Yamamoto Nozomi Chapel) represented the mission, praising God and encouraging the congregation. We thank God for the OPC's participation in this ministry through the prayers and generous offerings of

its churches, and for sending faithful servants to build his kingdom in Yamagata. We pray he will continue to build faithful churches through OPCJM.

Yamagata PCJ joins East Sendai RCJ as the second particular church begun by the post-war OPCJM, along with six mission works. Read more at <https://opcjapan.com/blog/2022/7/9/yamagata-church-history-and-organization>.

UPDATE

MINISTERS

- On March 11, **Matthew A. Judd** was installed as pastor of First Church of Merrimack in Merrimack, NH.
- On June 2, **Nathan P. Strom**, who has served as an associate pastor of Bethel OPC in Oostburg, WI, was installed as an evangelist for Breakwater Church, a mission work in Sheboygan, WI.
- On June 3, **Stephen S. Payson** of the

◆ Grace Reformed Fellowship

SINGLES RETREAT

August 28 - September 1, 2023 LANDER, WYOMING

Providing an opportunity for Christian singles to fellowship in the Wind River Mountains: encouraging trust in the Lord and contentment in life's different seasons.

Application deadline: January 9, 2023
Cost \$500 (All retreat expenses)
Ages: 18 - 30

For more information:
gracereformedfellowship.com
Al Egli - al@egglibros.com
Elder, Grace Reformed Fellowship

Join other reforming singles in the Wind River Mountains for worship, fellowship, and discipleship. Enjoy the Lord's creation through outdoor activities with the amenities of a cabin.



Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania was installed as an evangelist for the OPC mission to Uruguay. Payson previously served as a hospital chaplain.

- On June 14, **Douglas B. Clawson** of the Presbytery of the Midwest was installed as an evangelist to serve as general secretary of the OPC's Committee on Foreign Missions.

- On June 17, **Daniel J. Halley**, previously an active duty chaplain in the US Air Force, was installed as an evangelist for the mission work Bay Haven Presbyterian in Tampa Bay, FL, in the Presbytery of the South.

- On June 19, the Presbytery of Ohio dissolved the pastoral relationship between **Clayton P. Hutchins** and Immanuel OPC in Coraopolis, PA, at his request and with the concurrence of the congregation.

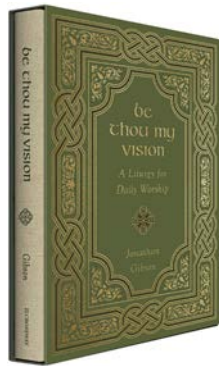
MILESTONES

- **Henry Brinks**, 97, a founding member and elder of Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, IL, died June 22. He was a member of session from 1960 to 2016.

REVIEWS

Be Thou My Vision: A Liturgy for Daily Worship, by **Jonathan Gibson**. Crossway, 2021. Hardcover, 352 pages, \$23.00 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor **Nicholas J. Thompson**.

God has a way of bringing books across our paths at just the right time. Gibson's *Be Thou My Vision* was a providential gift that arrived in the mail right when I needed it. You see, I don't struggle with consistency in personal devotions. I struggle with monotonous, box-checking, sleepy-hearted Bible reading and prayer. To put it simply, my personal devotions often fall short of true God-exalting worship. And this book was like a bullhorn, waking me up to the great object and end of these times—encounter-



ing and magnifying the triune God with all my heart.

In our denomination, we prize liturgy in public worship, often called the order of worship. God calls us to worship and greets us, and we respond in prayer and praise. God speaks his holy law, and we respond in confession of sin. God declares his gracious pardon in Christ, and we respond in adoring, wonder-filled song.

What Gibson has given to us in *Be Thou My Vision* is such a liturgy, not for public worship, but for private and family worship. The book's thirty-one liturgies can be used on a monthly basis. Each day's liturgy combines a blend of Scripture readings, creedal and catechetical readings, and historic prayers and hymns of praise. Gibson has taken the best of our Reformed liturgical heritage and compiled it into a very useful volume for individuals and families. Perhaps it will serve us the most by its simple reminder that private and family worship is just that—worship.

The question may be asked: Is daily worship really required by God? Isn't it enough to worship him with his gathered people on the Lord's Day? In his part 1, Gibson provides a concise and compelling argument for daily worship from the Scriptures. Looking at relevant passages in both Testaments, he concludes that "while there is no explicit command to have a time of daily worship as an individual or a family, consisting in reading the Scriptures and praying to God, the habit is certainly assumed or

CA Women's Retreat

October 15 • Pleasanton, CA

- Theme: Growing in Grace
- Speaker: Dr. Jonathan Master
- Location: DoubleTree Hotel
- For registration information, visit pncopc.org.

NJ Women's Retreat

Nov. 4-5 • Ocean City, NJ

- Theme: The Mystery of Godliness: How We Become More Like Christ
- Speaker: Tracey Taylor
- Location: Port-O-Call Hotel
- For details and registration information, email Dawn Hitchner at faithopcsecretary@gmail.com.

implied in a number of places" (28). The book also contains a number of useful appendixes, including M'Cheyne's Bible reading plan.

Whether your private or family worship is in need of complete overhaul or minor revision, I encourage you to get your hands on *Be Thou My Vision* and to put these liturgies to use. This prayer of John Calvin, included in the volume, summarizes how God used Gibson's work in my own soul. Calvin prays, "May we be roused daily by your words, and may we stir up ourselves more and more to fear your name and thus present ourselves and all our pursuits as a sacrifice to you, that you may peaceably rule, and perpetually dwell in us, until you gather us to your celestial habitation, where there is reserved

Outreach in California

In August and September, New Hope OPC in Hanford, California, will be conducting weekly community outreach at a local marketplace. Pastor Arthur Fox requests prayer for the endeavor.

NEWS, VIEWS & REVIEWS *Continued*

for us eternal rest and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

May God see fit to use these liturgies to daily rouse the hearts of many to the reality of his holy glory in Christ, so that they might grow in humble, happy, fear-filled worship of and submission to him!

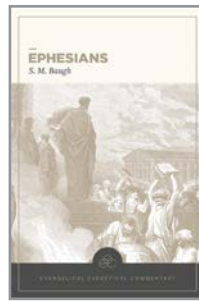
***Ephesians, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary Series*, by S. M. Baugh. Lexham, 2016. Hardcover, 672 pages, \$45.99 (Amazon). Reviewed by the editor.**

At *New Horizons* we attempt to review publications within a year or two of publication, but there are times when we miss reviewing books that we should have reviewed, particularly from Orthodox Presbyterian authors. S. M. Baugh’s *Ephesians*, dedicated to his fathers and brothers in the Presbytery of Southern California, is one such book.

Baugh states his purpose in writing is to apply his particular areas of study—ancient history, biblical theology, and Greek grammar—to the interpretative task of *Ephesians*. Regarding antiquity, Baugh defends the Pauline authorship of *Ephesians* by exposing the fallacy that *Ephesians* was the work of a forger who was a student of Paul. With biblical-theological exegesis, Baugh shows convincingly that the main theme of *Ephesians* is unity in the inaugurated new creation. Particularly, Paul puts forth in the epistle the sovereignty of the ascended Christ over the old powers that previously kept the *Ephesians* captive in pagan belief.

It is the third element, Baugh’s handling of the Greek text, that separates this work from other commentaries. His parsing and explanations are an education in

every chapter and verse. For example, in *Ephesians* 6:10–29, Baugh first lists the verbs from the passage with their English translation, then the subordinate clauses from the passage that explain purpose and result, then the suggested division of the text into cola (poetic lines or stichs). From this foundation, he explains the crescendo effect in *Ephesians* 6:12 where each phrase starting with the preposition *pros* (against) increases by exactly six syllables, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers (Greek, six syllables), against the cosmic powers over the present darkness (Greek, twelve syllables), against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Greek, eighteen syllables). The danger of this wrestling match facing Christians, says Baugh, is exacerbated by this enu-



meration of unseen forces that formerly held the *Ephesians* in thrall to sin and death (*Eph.* 2:1–3). The text itself, however, shows that the victory of Christ was a decisive victory, that he rules in the midst of his enemies. Baugh writes, “All previous uses of *πνευματικός* [spiritual] and *ἐπουράνιος* [heavenly places] in *Ephesians* relate to the Holy Spirit and to the exalted heavens, to where Christ (and his people) ascended and from where Christ dispenses the fruits of his victory on the cross” (546). The use of these terms by Paul is ironic. The world powers of darkness might have some hold in this present evil age, but the kingdom of Christ and of God (*Eph.* 5:5) has been inaugurated. It only waits consummation at the end of this age (*Eph.* 1:21). Baugh concludes, “Until then, those who put their faith in Christ experience true and lasting peace (*Eph.* 2:14–16; 4:3; 6:15)—and war” (546).

Theologically rich and exegetically stimulating, Baugh’s *Ephesians* deserves a wider audience.



A new OP mission work, Breakwater Church in Sheboygan, WI, at its first worship service, when Nathan Strom (center, in blue) was installed as evangelist