

# Orthodox Presbyterian Shiloh Institute

## June 23–25, 2015

### Report of the Director

#### **Purpose**

OPSI is designed to introduce prospective ministers to the work of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a means of recruiting able young men for OPC ministry and future participation in MTIOPC. This is similar to the Timothy Conference, but with an older age group in view (last year college; first two years seminary).

To fulfill this purpose the following themes were taught and discussed at length:

- The OPC: continuity with Reformed tradition and distinguishing characteristics.
- The centrality, nature, and benefits of being a confessional church.
- The importance of the means of grace in the church's mission.
- The meaning of a culturally-aware pilgrim church.
- The work of a minister of the Word in an organized church and a mission work.

#### **Opc.org**

The Shiloh Institute has a page on [opc.org](http://opc.org) under "Christian Education/Camps and Conferences" [http://opc.org/cce/Shiloh\\_Institute.html](http://opc.org/cce/Shiloh_Institute.html)

#### **Participants and Location**

Seven students applied, were accepted, and attended. Of the seven students we had seven seminarians: two from Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, one from Westminster Seminary in California, one from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, one from Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, one from North American Reformed Seminary; and one Bethlehem Seminary.

Instructors arrived on Tuesday, June 23, to make preparations for the arrival of the students later that day. Our location in the White Mountains makes travel arrangements a lot simpler, due to the proximity of Manchester Boston Regional and Logan airports.

This was our sixth year at Shiloh Retreat in Jefferson, New Hampshire, overlooking the White Mountains. The main lodge is very suitable for lectures and discussions, and at a very reasonable cost. This venue would easily accommodate a dozen or more students. Retreat director Greg Gordon is a delightful and accommodating host who shares our mission as a committed Presbyterian (PCA).

#### **Instruction**

Each of the four instructors gave a two hour talk interspersed with discussion and then two separate two hour periods to discuss pre-assigned readings.

Darryl Hart taught “The OPC and Global Calvinism”  
John Muether taught “A True Presbyterian Church at Last”  
Stephen Tracey taught “The View of an OPC Immigrant”  
Greg Reynolds taught “The Shape of OPC Ministry”

A fair amount of free time, as well as leisurely meals, allowed plenty of opportunity for informal discussion among participants and instructors.

For the first time we allotted time before departure to help Greg Gordon with wood splitting. This will become a part of the daily routine in the future.

## **2015 Assessment**

Having completed its sixth year, the positive feedback from students continues to indicate that the Institute is achieving its stated purpose. The Shiloh institute continues to feed students into the OPC internship program (8 of 16 in 2013; 3 of 9 in 2014). Survey respondents all strongly agreed that the institute is beneficial in preparation for ordained ministry and all indicated that they would recommend the Institute to other ministerial candidates.

In response to our survey, all of the instructors were rated highly, and all respondents thought the reading was very appropriate. Although the facilities were modest, food, accommodations, and meeting space continued to score well in student evaluations. Students continue to appreciate the balance of free time and fellowship time. The institute was “definitely a very helpful supplement” to seminary, according to one student. Wrote another, “I wish I could go again.”

Another wrote more at length: “I am incredibly thankful for each instructor's contribution—the lectures and fellowship were both encouraging and helpful. Many questions were answered, and I feel much more comfortable with the OPC—many false initial impressions were given clarity and perspective. Thank you all for your hard work and faithfulness to God’s work in raising the next generation of ministers and church leaders. I pray that we will stay in contact in the years to come!”

The variety of seminaries and colleges represented continued to enhance the atmosphere of the Institute and the interaction among students. For the second year in a row we had two college students.

## **Next Year**

The 2016 Shiloh Institute is scheduled at Shiloh on June 28–30.

## **Newsletter**

We plan to continue providing a newsletter to all students who attended the institute.



Shiloh Retreat, Jefferson, NH



2015 Summer Institute



The Presidential Range in the White Mountains from the Shiloh porch, Jefferson, NH

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory E. Reynolds