

New Horizons

IN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

AUG - SEPT 2012



THE OPC GATHERS AT WHEATON

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NEW HORIZONS

IN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Participating in the installation of Andrew Moody as an evangelist of the Presbytery of the Southwest on May 25 to serve as organizing pastor of San Antonio Reformed Church (OPC) in San Antonio, Tex., were (from left to right): Keith Howard (PCA minister), Phil Hodson (OPC pastor, Longview, Tex.), Joe Troutman (OPC pastor, Bedford, Tex.), Andrew Moody, Fred Klatt (elder, San Antonio), Allan Story (OPC Pastor, Austin, Tex.), Nathan Hornfeld (OPC Pastor, San Antonio), Mark Moody (elder, San Antonio).



DANIEL F. PATTERSON

Appreciating the Work of the Whole Church: The 79th General Assembly

As ministers and elders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church can attest, it is all too easy to become so engaged in ministry to our local congregations that we fail to appreciate the work our denomination, as a whole, does in its service to Christ and his kingdom. We miss the proverbial forest for the trees.

However, as commissioners gathered on the campus of Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, from June 6 to June 12, ably led by our moderator, the Rev. Anthony Curto, we were given the opportunity not only to discharge our duties as officers in the church, but also to grow in our appreciation of the work that Christ is doing through the OPC as a whole.

APPRECIATING THE PREACHING OF THE OPC

Although it was not technically part of the business before the General Assembly, it was a delight to hear the Scriptures opened up by various men in our denomination. The moderator of the 78th General Assembly, the Rev. Danny Olinger, called the Assembly to order at 7:00 p.m. on June 6 and preached a sermon from Genesis 1:1–2. He reminded the Assembly that the Bible teaches us to start with God in this life. The self-existent God has revealed himself to his dependent creation. In God's revelation of himself in his Word, we learn that, though the Fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery, the kingdom of God is redeemed and perfected through the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In addition to the opening sermon, the Assembly heard devotional messages from the Revs. Glenn Ferrell, Randall Bergquist, David Robbins, and John Currie.

After worshipping at area churches on Sunday morning, the commissioners gathered with local Orthodox Presbyterians

for a joint worship service. The Rev. John Van Meerbeke preached an edifying sermon entitled "Heaven Is My Home" from Psalm 84.

The Lord used each of these men, varying in their personalities and preaching styles, to bring the truth of his Word to bear upon our ministries in the church and to glorify the person and work of Christ Jesus.

APPRECIATING THE MISSIONS AND OUTREACH OF THE OPC

In response to Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations, the OPC has established committees on Foreign Mission, Home Missions and Church Extension, and Christian Education to encourage the church in her ministry to one another and to those lost in sin.

The foreign missions work of the General Assembly is carried out through its Committee on Foreign Missions. The Committee currently sends missionaries to eight fields: Asia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Japan, Quebec, Uganda, Ukraine, and Uruguay. If the Lord opens the door, the Committee also plans to resume working with a church in the Horn of Africa, where we have been permitted by the government to labor on and off over the years. The goal, in each of these fields, is to build healthy, indigenous Reformed churches.

So that the Assembly could gain a clearer picture of the work being done on the field, it heard reports from two mis-

sionaries from Uganda: the Rev. Al Tricarico and deacon missionary Jim Knox, M.D. Dr. Knox works as the medical director at the Akisyon a Yesu Presbyterian Clinic along with his wife, Jenny (a registered nurse), and a number of staff members. Mr. Tricarico shares the pastoral ministry of the Nakaale church plant with the Rev. David Okken.

The Committee thanked the Lord not only for our missionaries who labor diligently on the field, but also for the almost two hundred short-term mission volunteers who gave of their time and energy to assist our missionaries in 2011. If members of your church are interested in short-term missions here in the United States or abroad, visit the OPC website (opc.org) and click on "Short-term Missions" on the left-hand portion of the page under the heading "Ministries" (or go directly to opcstm.org).

The home missions work of the General Assembly is carried out through its Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension. The Committee helps presbyteries and congregations in the OPC start new Presbyterian and Reformed congregations in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. By the end of 2011, twelve new missions works were fitted with church-planting pastors. God also richly provided for the Committee in 2011 by supplying, through the generous giving to Worldwide Outreach, the entire funding needed for church-planting efforts. Now six months into 2012, the Committee already has four organizing pastors preparing to move to the field, with nine additional mission works preparing to call church planters and begin receiving financial support from the Committee.

Moderator Tony Curto can't believe what he just heard from the floor.



At the end of the Committee's report, a resolution of recognition for outgoing general secretary Ross Graham was read to the General Assembly and printed in the Minutes. A glance at his labors helps us to appreciate the work of the broader church. Rev. Graham has served as general secretary of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension since 1990 and has worked tirelessly to strengthen the relationship between the Committee and the presbyteries. The church-planting efforts of the OPC grew from twenty home mission fields in 1990 to forty-six in 2011. During this time, the total number of churches and mission works grew from 195 to 326, the total

membership from 18,137 to 30,274, the number of ministers from 325 to 509, and the number of presbyteries from 12 to 17.

Please be in prayer for the Committee as it searches for a new general secretary to replace Mr. Graham when he retires early next year, and for the Lord's continued blessing as the Committee seeks to be faithful to Christ's commission.

The Committee on Christian Education (CCE) was established at the First General Assembly in 1936 to assist in the teaching ministry of the church. As you hold this current issue of *New Horizons* in your hand, its publication has been overseen by the Committee on Christian Education. Members of the Committee sit on the board of Great Commission Publications, the publishing body that produces the Sunday school material many of us use in our churches. Those who enjoy the privilege of having a summer or yearlong intern do so largely because of the work of this Committee. Even our denominational website, opc.org, is overseen by this Committee.

The Committee is currently engaged in an effort to publish a Psalter-hymnal for use in our churches. This is a multiyear effort, yet the Committee has made significant progress toward the completion of the Psalter portion of the Psalter-hymnal and plans to have this work before the churches for feedback by the end of 2012. Encouraging news has also come out of the Synod of the United Reformed Churches of North America, which met shortly after our Assembly. The URCNA has agreed to partner with the OPC in the production of this Psalter-hymnal for use in both of our denominations.

Stated clerk George Cottenden relaxing while assistant John Mahaffy toils away



APPRECIATING THE POLITY OF THE OPC

One of the great benefits of being part of a Presbyterian denomination is that our form of government allows decisions of lower governing bodies to be appealed. Such a process provides good accountability to these bodies and assures aggrieved parties that their cases will be heard at the highest court of the church if they desire.

Four complaints on appeal were brought to the Assembly. One of the complaints was ruled out of order and not properly before the Assembly because it was essentially a charge of doctrinal error or offense, which should have been brought by the offended party as a judicial charge against an individual or individuals.

The three remaining complaints pertained to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Franklin Square, New York. They questioned the manner in which the session set up commissions to perform the work of oversight in its three mission works. The complainant granted that our Form of Government allows for the use of commissions, but argued that the powers granted to the commissions at Franklin Square exceeded the powers of a commission permitted by Form of Government XXII.3. After extensive debate, all three complaints were denied.

In addition to the work of the Committee on Appeals and Complaints, it was a joy to see the broader church working to assist presbyteries in resolving conflict within their boundaries. Currently there are two temporary committees working to help presbyteries in our denomination: one for the Presbytery of New Jersey and the other for the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada.

Brazilian fraternal delegate Solano Portela



The Temporary Visitation Committee for the Presbytery of New Jersey was erected by the 77th General Assembly (2010) to address various issues surrounding appeals that had come to the GA through the Presbytery in 2009 and 2010, and to foster reconciliation among various parties. The Committee reported to the Assembly that it had made significant progress toward this goal. In particular, the Presbytery of New Jersey had confessed that it had, by its actions, denied justice to certain members

of the OPC as they brought appeals before it. The Presbytery's repentance was communicated directly to the offended parties, and a letter was sent to all the churches in the Presbytery so as to preserve the good names of those individuals.

The Special Committee to Visit the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada was erected by the 78th General Assembly (2011) to assess the causes of serious division that exists within the Presbytery regarding the length of the days of creation and confessional subscription. The Committee will continue its work of fostering reconciliation in the Presbytery and report back to the 80th General Assembly next year.

Commissioners listening intently



Wheaton president and PCA fraternal delegate Philip Ryken



It was encouraging to this writer to see that, through the work of the Committee on Appeals and Complaints and these special committees, the peace, purity, and unity of the church is being vigorously promoted in the broadest assembly of the OPC.

APPRECIATING THE ECUMENICITY OF THE OPC

One of the great joys of attending the General Assembly is to hear about the work of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations. This Committee seeks to maintain various levels of relationship with other Reformed and Presbyterian churches and strives for the unity of Christ's church. Members of this Committee travel regularly to various parts of the world to bring a report of what the Lord is doing through our denomination.

As part of this Committee's work, the Assembly had the privilege of hearing fraternal addresses from many churches of like faith. Particularly moving this year were the addresses by the fraternal delegates from the Reformed Church in Japan (RCJ) and the Presbyterian Church of Brazil (PCB). Mr. Yoshida, from the RCJ, praised God for the OPC's ministerial and diaconal support in the weeks and months following the devastating tsunami that struck Japan in 2011. The work of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, headed by David Nakhla, has been a blessing to our brothers and sisters there.

Ruling elder Solano Portela brought fraternal greetings from the PCB and praised God for the growing relationship that the Lord seems to be fostering between our denominations. A few years ago, members of the PCB arrived at our denominational offices in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, looking for, as they described it, "our mother." Speaking of the OPC, Mr. Portela reported, "Who is our spiritual mother, but the one who continues faithfully carrying the torch of the gospel, standing for the faith, defending and proclaiming the doctrine of the Reformation?" Continue to pray for our growing relationship with the PCB, a church numbering around one

million members.

The above committees are not the only ones that labor hard for our denomination. We should not forget the work of the Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel and the support they give to our chaplains and members of the military. Likewise, the Committee on Arrangements works tirelessly to help the General Assembly run smoothly, and the Committee on Coordination has the often thankless job of crunching numbers to help our program committees present a unified budget to the Assembly.

In closing, though commissioners often come back from the Assembly tired from long days of debate and deliberation, it is the prayer of this writer that we come back with a greater appreciation for the work of our church and seek to instill that appreciation in our churches. □

The author is pastor of Second Parish OPC in Portland, Maine. Photos by David Porter.

GA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Class of 2015 (unless otherwise noted):

Appeals and Complaints: Alan D. Strange; S. Scott Willet (alternate)

Chaplains and Military Personnel: Cornelius Johnson; Gordon E. Kauffman (alternate)

Christian Education: Archibald A. Allison, Sidney D. Dyer, Thomas E. Tyson (ministers); Darryl G. Hart, David Winslow, Jr. (ruling elders)

Coordination: Anthony A. Monaghan (minister); William A. Muether (ruling elder)

Diaconal Ministries: Lendall H. Smith (minister); Robert O. Keys, Robert J. Wright, Jr. (deacons)

Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations: Mark T. Bube, John R. Hilbelink, George W. Knight III

Foreign Missions: Paul N. Browne, Glenn D. Jerrell, M. Scott Johnson (ministers); Mark A. Green, Billie J. Papke (ruling elders)

General Assembly Arrangements: Robert M. Meeker

Historian: Chad E. Bond

Home Missions and Church Extension: Mark R. Brown, John R. Hilbelink, Dale A. Van Dyke (ministers); Jerold Barnett, John M. Mauldin (ruling elders); Garret A. Hoogerhyde (ruling elder, class of 2013)

Pensions: John D. McGowan (minister); Roger W. Huibregtse, David Vander Ploeg (ruling elders)

Trustees of the OPC: Samuel H. Bacon (minister); David E. Haney (ruling elder)



JAMIE DEAN

Deacons Connect at Wheaton Summit

When members of Omega OPC in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, go door-to-door to meet neighbors in the surrounding community, they often discover overwhelming needs. “Nearly everyone we come into contact with is poor,” says deacon Michael Harer.

Poverty isn’t the only problem. Harer says the neighborhood suffers from violence, drug use, and kids without parents to guide them. That dynamic poses a significant challenge for Omega’s deacons. How can the young church plant offer the hope of lasting transformation instead of just meeting temporary needs?

Harer says the deacons start by asking a simple question: “What is the greatest need here?” They always arrive at the same answer: “The greatest need is for a relationship with Jesus Christ.”

The same principle that drives Omega’s diaconal work undergirded the teaching at the OPC’s nationwide diaconal summit at Wheaton College June 7–9. Nearly 190 deacons, elders, and ministers from around the country gathered at Wheaton (during the General Assembly) to hear good teaching, enjoy rich fellowship, and consider the best ways to cultivate diaconal ministry that encourages deep relationships with Christ and the church.

The summit marked the second time that OPC deacons have gathered together. The Committee on Diaconal Ministries (CDM) conducted their inaugural summit at Wheaton two years ago, aiming to provide deacons with solid teaching and meaningful fellowship across the broader church.

This year’s conference had a similar goal, but added a new feature. In addition to large-group meetings, the CDM also planned breakout sessions with training and discussion about the nuts-and-bolts issues that deacons face in their work of serving those in need.

As a new deacon, Harer was attending the summit for the first time, but other deacons from his church attended the first conference two years ago. That’s where they heard Brian Fikkert discuss mercy ministries using material from his book *When Helping Hurts*.

“That brought a fundamental shift in the way our deacons were working,” says Harer. The diaconate maintained its commitment to meeting material

Speaker Steve Corbett (left) talking with deacons Kenley Leslie and Chris Sudlow





THE COMMISSIONERS TO
AND THE DEACONS AT T
MEETING CONCURRENTLY



THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THE DIACONAL SUMMIT
AT WHEATON COLLEGE

needs, but intensified its focus on addressing spiritual needs, with the goal of fostering long-term change by God's grace.

Now when the deacons encounter poverty, troubled youth, and other material needs, Harer says they ask: "Are we simply alleviating those things, or are we bringing Christ into every single one of those lives?"

In the large-group meetings, speaker Steve Corbett—coauthor of *When Helping Hurts*—addressed that question by expanding on the teaching that Fikkert offered during the conference two years ago.

Even though most Americans are rich by the developing world's standards, needs still run deep in our own communities. Corbett reported that the U.S. is experiencing its highest poverty rate in fifty years, but he noted that poverty isn't measured just by a person's bank balance.

As a broken sinner, every person is poor and needs the restoration that Christ alone can give. Corbett reminded the deacons that their work hinges on helping those in need pursue right relationships with God, themselves, and others.

The speaker also offered practical steps for improving diaconal ministry. He emphasized that much of good diaconal work involves saying no when helping in the short term could hurt in the long term by enabling poor decisions.

A series of small-group sessions offered workshops on how to put the principles into practice. A handful of deacons and ministers led seminars on three topics: how to handle short-term needs, how to manage long-term needs, and the importance of deacons and elders working together to provide ministry that addresses both material and spiritual needs.

Each workshop ended with the men meeting in groups of two or three to discuss case studies that presented a diaconal challenge and then reporting how they would handle it.

Doug Vos, who has served as a deacon for twenty years at

Workshop led by deacon Jim Guido from Matthews (N.C.) OPC



Oakland Hills Community Church in Farmington Hills, Michigan, said the workshops were particularly helpful for thinking through complicated problems and hearing how deacons from other churches have handled similar situations. "Deacons really get discouraged when they don't know what to do next," he said. "That's where this education is really vital."

That education has already played a role in Vos's own church. He said that after the summit two years ago, their deacons developed written policies for the first time. Those policies have helped them navigate their work more effectively.

Reformational Ministry

Wheaton College president Philip Ryken (formerly a member of the OPC) reminded participants at the Diaconal Summit and GA commissioners at a joint session how Reformed theology inspires and informs mercy ministry. Here are a few highlights of his address:

- *Total depravity*: why man needs mercy
- *Election*: why we must remain humble and love people who seem undeserving
- *Redemption*: how mercy is possible through Christ
- *Justification*: extending unearned mercy in Christ
- *Adoption*: living up to our family likeness by showing the mercy God has shown us
- *Glorification*: a vision of how beautiful people become when God's work of mercy is finished

"Everything in the whole system of Reformed doctrine compels us to show mercy to lost sinners," said Ryken. "It is because of this professed theology that the people of God have always been called to mercy ministry."

CDM president Lendall Smith with fraternal delegates from Japan



Covenant College professor Steve Corbett addressing the deacons



Carl Foley, a deacon at Amoskeag Presbyterian Church in Manchester, N.H., said his diaconate wrote policies after the first summit as well. He said the inaugural summit helped him rethink his own ministry. “I had never really considered when helping hurts,” he said. “But it really can.”

Foley said he valued this year’s workshops and the practical counsel, adding that the interaction with other deacons was enormously helpful in improving his own work. Like many others at the conference, Foley also found the worship to be a rich experience: “The singing in the auditorium with all those men—it’s really something special.”

The deacons had opportunities to fellowship with the commissioners to the General Assembly during shared meals and during the CDM’s report to the assembly on Friday evening. On Saturday morning, the fellowship continued at a joint meeting of the commissioners and deacons. The men prayed, sang, and listened to a stirring message about mercy ministry from Wheaton College president Philip Ryken.

Ryken underscored how each piece of Reformed theology informs mercy ministry. He encouraged the men to perform greater acts of service, following the example of the

CDM secretary Ron Pearce



robust mercy ministries of John Calvin and Thomas Chalmers.

By the end of the summit, Chris Sudlow, a CDM member and deacon at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, said the response had been overwhelmingly encouraging. “You begin to create a vision of the wider church and an awareness that it’s not just our congregation,” he said. “You realize that you’re connected to something broad and deep. I think that’s very, very rich.” □

The author is a member of Matthews OPC in Matthews, N.C., and news editor of World magazine. Photos by Doug Johnson and David Porter.

Serving the Servants

For the average member of an OP congregation, it might be easy to overlook a basic reality of life in our churches: the deacons who serve us need our service.

We often admire our deacons’ hard work, and we’re grateful for all the practical details they manage, but we sometimes can neglect a key question: how can we help our deacons in their ministry of helping others?

If any of the deacons in your church attended the OPC’s nationwide diaconal summit in Wheaton, they may return to your congregation seeking to impress that question on the membership of your church.

Steve Corbett challenged the deacons in their Friday morning session by reminding them: “Deacons have to be the best mobilizers of volunteers in the church.” Philip Ryken struck the same chord when he exhorted them to “prepare the people of God for acts of service.”

Deacons attending the conference echoed those sentiments and agreed that their ability to grow their ministry hinges on their fellow church members helping them serve their congregations and communities.

Doug Vos, a deacon at Oakland Hills Community Church in Farmington Hills, Michigan, said his congregation’s service had been crucial to the diaconate after the economic downturn struck hard in the Detroit area. Church members have helped the small group of deacons meet big needs by volunteering a wide variety of skills. “We couldn’t have done it alone,” said Vos. “We became the channel for communicating the need.”

That means that sign-up sheets for workdays and other opportunities for service can become more than another item to fit into our calendars. Instead, we can see them as opportunities to follow our deacons in becoming what Ryken commended in his address about mercy ministry: “ordinary sinners saved by grace, willing to help others pursue the glory of God.” — *Jamie Dean*

Our Return to Haiti

BENJAMIN K. HOPP

“**A**nd now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

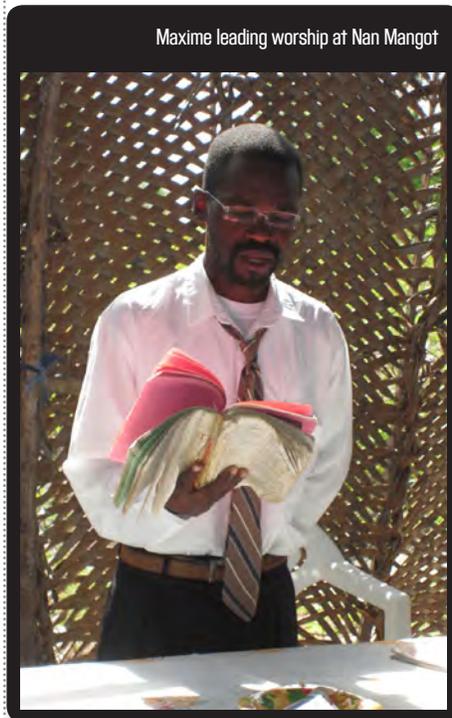
The apostle Paul spoke these words to the elders of the church at Ephesus as he was about to leave for Jerusalem. He knew he would not see them again. He had poured his heart and soul into the church. As he left them for the final time, he did not leave them alone. He knew that the church of Christ was always in the hand of God, who would give her grace and strength.

On my last trip to the island of Lagonav before we went on furlough, I saw Maxime, one of the church leaders, in town. I stopped and spoke to him, intending to say good-bye and to remind him of our prayers for him. He told me he was in town because his brother, Oly, was in the hospital and was dying. We immediately went over to the Wesleyan Hospital together to visit Oly.

It was a scene of both life and death. Oly was clearly in the late stages of an illness that would claim his life. He was frail and weak and could only speak in a whisper. As I talked with him about our hope in Christ, he perked up. In this place where death so often comes, Oly testified to the spiritual life he had been given in Christ. Although the Lord had given eternal life to Oly, his physical body was failing. I knew it would not be long before he went to be with his Savior. I knew, too, that I could not be with Maxime in his coming grief.

Leaving the church behind in Haiti for nine months was difficult. We knew

that changes would occur during our absence. Some of those changes would be positive, and others negative. Nevertheless, like Paul, we commended our Haitian brothers and sisters to our loving Father’s care.



Maxime leading worship at Nan Mangot

We anxiously returned to Haiti in March. On my return flight, I caught my first glimpse of the island. We were about thirty minutes from landing in Cap Haitian, a large city on the northern coast of Haiti. Missionary Flight International’s slow-moving cargo plane provided me with an impressive view of the landscape. I noticed the brown hillsides. The sparse trees seemed bare of leaves, and the fields were a dry, brown patchwork dotting the countryside. It was the dry season, and there had been no rain for over five months.

This was in great contrast to the green hills we had left behind the June before. The rains had been falling for several months, and the grass was vibrant and trees were bursting forth with color and fruit. The fields planted with corn, sorghum, and beans were sprouting with the hope of a good harvest later in the summer. Changes in the landscape can be striking: Haiti can go from looking like a tropical island to looking like a brown, dusty desert.

The landscape of the churches in Haiti has changed as well. Since returning, we have seen several new faces in the churches. Babies have been born. Faces are missing, too. Saints have gone to be with their Savior. Children have grown, ours included. The reunion is sweet. Our faithful, heavenly Father has kept his promises and upheld his church. Our time away has proved encouraging in this respect.

As the Orthodox Presbyterian Church looks to plant churches in foreign lands, we are always looking to the future. How will our current decisions affect the church in the future? How can we as missionaries make ourselves dispensable? How can the church become more self-sufficient? We always want to push the indigenous church to become more God-reliant, so that the glory might go to him and not to his servants.

Each local church on Lagonav has leaders who lead the congregation in worship each Lord’s Day. They have been training for several years, and they teach and exhort the congregations from week to week. Part of their growing as leaders in the church involves taking the spiritual skills we teach them and applying them

in their own context. They learn to come alongside the sick and encourage those who are disheartened. They admonish those who are straying from the path and gently bring them back into the fold. They have been doing these things in my absence. By God's grace, they have learned to rely on the One who is always with them. Even after nine months apart, the churches continue to function and the Word of God is being faithfully taught.

Being out of regular contact with the churches moved us to greater prayer for them. In Haiti, cell phones are the preferred method of contact. Both the leaders and many in the congregations have phones, despite the fact that they are living in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Requests for monetary help or prayer are regular parts of my day. But when people in the churches cannot come straight to the Mission for help, they are forced to pray even more and wait on the Lord to work. Knowing the difficult lives people live in Haiti, we prayed fervently to the Lord, who hears and answers.

Two people we were excited to see on our return were Wideline and her infant son, Woodley. They had lived with our family for three months before we returned to the United States. Only two days before we left, the Lord graciously provided a safe apartment for them to live in. Wideline lost her phone, and we had no way of contacting her. Tears of joy streamed down our faces as we reconnected at church in Port-au-Prince. She faithfully attended the OP church plant there while we were gone. The Lord cared for this young mother and provided for her. She has decided to become a member of the church and is looking to have Woodley baptized. What a delightful change to come home to!

Another joy was hosting our first vacation Bible school team in May. It had been almost a year since the Lagonav churches had had a VBS program. Would the kids remember the Children's Catechism questions they had been taught last year? How about the answers from two or three years ago? As the team reviewed previous questions with the children at

three churches, our hearts rejoiced to hear the children shout out the answers with great conviction! The Lord is doing his work in the hearts of these dear little ones. It was so encouraging to see the Spirit's work in their hearts. The seeds that have been planted by teams during our first term on the field are taking root. We pray for long-term growth in grace for these children on Lagonav.

However, not all change is profitable. Over the years, the churches have struggled with issues related to worship. These struggles continue to crop up from time to time. Everyone praying out loud at the same time, overly repetitious songs, and women leading some parts of the service are common in most Haitian churches. The pressures of conforming to general Haitian church culture or the desires of the congregation weigh heavily on the leaders. Sometimes it is too much, and they give in. We continue to put before them the importance of worshipping only according to what the Lord wants. The churches do desire to be Reformed and Presbyterian, but they continue to struggle as they grow. Gentle reminders and an ongoing presence during worship services help to combat these struggles and guide the congregations in Christ-centered, God-honoring worship.

Given that the church is made up of sinners saved by grace, interpersonal conflict is bound to arise. Without someone on the ground who can help the brothers address their personal issues biblically, small matters can develop into a firestorm of conflict. While this did happen in our absence, all those involved have been challenged to rely on the Lord, humble themselves, repent, and seek restoration. We are relying on the Lord to resolve these differences and bring greater reliance on him through these struggles. The Lord continues to build his church.

When I recently visited the church in Nan Mangot, I was delighted to have some time to chat with Maxime. His brother had indeed died while we were gone. Maxime had been through another period of grief (his teenage daughter died in the earthquake). Yet he had not given

in to hopelessness in the midst of his loss. He continues to praise the Lord and thank him for his goodness. He continues to lead the congregation there into a greater knowledge of their Lord and Savior. He has experienced much change over the last nine months. Change is hard and at times overwhelming. But the Lord who began a good work in Maxime and his church has shown himself faithful in working to complete it.

WHAT'S NEW

APPOINTMENTS

- The following missionary associate appointments to Asia have been extended, beginning in August: **Mr. and Mrs. Michael W. Caldwell** (Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church, PCA, Greenville, S.C.), **Mr. Eric J. Hendrickson** (Escondido OPC, Calif.), and **Ms. Tin Ling Lee** (Lynnwood OPC, Wash.).
- These missionary associates have been appointed: **Miss Jana M. Crum** (Providence OPC, Temecula, Calif.) to Uruguay for five months beginning in August; **Dr. Mark W. Graham** (Covenant OPC, Grove City, Pa.) to Asia for July; **Mr. and Mrs. Adam J. Thompson** (Providence OPC, Bradenton, Fla.) to Japan for one year beginning in September; **Mr. and Mrs. Christopher J. Verdick** (New Life Presbyterian Church, PCA, San Diego, Calif.) to Uganda for one year beginning in September.
- **Mr. David W. Landow** (Emmanuel OPC, Wilmington, Del.) has been appointed by the Committees on Christian Education and Foreign Missions to serve a three-month missionary internship this summer with the Rev. David A. Okken in Karamoja, Uganda.

COMINGS/GOINGS

- **Rev. and Mrs. Eric W. Tuininga** (missionary evangelist) and their children arrived in Mbale, Uganda, on July 19.
- **Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Wright, Jr.**, after a two-and-a-half-month furlough, returned to Uganda on June 28.

New Features on OPC.org

STEPHEN A. PRIBBLE

Most readers of *New Horizons* probably know about our denominational website, OPC.org. Originally a ministry of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, it was transferred to the Committee on Christian Education in 1998, and I became part-time website manager that year.

At that time, every page was created, linked, and updated by hand—a tedious and time-consuming process. The website became database driven when it underwent a major redesign in 2004. Now a change to the database can correct hundreds of pages at once.

The Subcommittee on Internet Ministries, under the capable leadership of the Rev. Rodney King, now manages the website, and I have transitioned to “senior technical associate.” Several other capable staff members bring their talents to the work.

The year 2012 has been an exciting time for OPC.org, with the addition of several new features. I will highlight three.

MOBILE FUNCTIONALITY

Mobile functionality is the ability of a website to display its content meaningfully on a small screen. When the website staff first began to talk about adding mobile functionality to OPC.org, one elder wasn't too enthused—it was not really a need, as far as he was concerned. But recently his pastor related how this elder came up to him before a service and said, “Have you seen the new OPC website for my smart phone? Man, that is awesome!”

He wanted to whip out his phone and show it off right then and there!

Upwards of 40 percent of mobile phones now are “smart” phones, with the capability to surf the Internet. The Internet is also accessible on many other devices, such as portable music players, e-book readers, and tablet computers. The number of people who surf the Net on a mobile device grows daily. Most websites were designed to display their content on large screens. Access them on

be easily read without scrolling side-to-side—blessed relief for those who like to read in bed! Turn the device sideways, and the content is magnified. The OPC is the first NAPARC church whose website has mobile functionality.

COMPLETE ISSUES OF MAGAZINES

Over the years, there have been many requests to publish complete issues of our denominational magazines on our website. This would be a benefit particularly to foreign missionaries, who would no longer have to wait for delivery of print issues by overseas mail. It would also save a bundle on postage. This is now a reality. *New Horizons* and *Ordained Servant Online* are available each month in three formats: PDF, Mobi, and ePub. (The feature articles are also available in HTML, as they have been for years.)

The PDF edition is easily read on-screen or can be downloaded to your computer. The Mobi edition is for the Kindle reader or app; the ePub edition is for just about any other handheld device or app. Both have a handy table of contents with clickable links. The *Ordained Servant* annual printed editions are archived on OPC.org for easy reference. It should be noted that sensitive information regarding OP workers in closed countries may be modified or omitted for publication on the Web for security reasons.

E-BOOKS

“Of making many books there is no end” (Eccl. 12:12)! In 2012, this shows no sign of letting up, though the format



a small screen, and the miniscule font and crowded elements can cause eyestrain. Hypertext links that are easily selected with a cursor may not be so easy to pick out in close proximity, particularly with a large fingertip. With this in mind, the website staff began last year to plan to make OPC.org small-screen friendly. This is now in place.

How do you get there from your mobile device? It's easy! Open your web browser, type “opc.org” in the address field, and tap “Go.” OPC.org will recognize that you are accessing it from a mobile device and take you to the mobile-optimized template. All the content is available right at your fingertip. Text can

is changing. Since the introduction of the first Kindle e-book reader in 2007, more and more titles have become available in e-book (electronic book) formats. Sales of e-books are growing at a phenomenal rate, while sales of printed books shrink each year. *The Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the OPC* is available as a free e-book, as well as *The Book of Church Order*.

Other titles recently released as free e-book downloads include *What Is the Reformed Faith? Helps for Worship, Are You a Christian? Why Join a Church?* and *Why Does the OPC Baptize Infants?* New titles are being added weekly until all our printed booklets are available online. Links to these e-books may be found on opc.org/news.html?news_id=162.

A new Publications page is in development and is expected to be ready shortly. It will facilitate the easy ordering of printed books and booklets, as well as the downloading of e-books.

A lot has changed on OPC.org since the early days. But one thing has not changed: the overarching purpose to assist the church in glorifying God through promoting the Great Commission. Nothing brings the website staff greater joy than to hear the testimonies of people who come to Christ or find one of our local congregations through OPC.org. Please pray for us as we disseminate the Word electronically.

The author is pastor of Grace OPC in Lansing, Mich., and senior technical associate for OPC.org.

Congratulations

The Shorter Catechism has been recited by:

- River La Belle (Presb. Church of Cape Cod in West Barnstable, Mass.)
- Anna Brink (Oakland Hills Community Church in Farmington Hills, Mich.)
- Hannah Dugan (Farmington Hills, Mich.)
- Jillian Heersink (Farmington Hills, Mich.)
- Madison Whitney (Farmington Hills, Mich.)

Four Favorites

Books on the Doctrine of the Church

1. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Edited by John T. McNeil; translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Westminster Press, 1960. Book Four.

With his typical lucidity, Calvin discusses the principles that shape our understanding of the church's government and worship in this last section of the *Institutes*. At the heart of these principles lies the idea of the headship of Christ. The importance of this doctrine for Calvin was not so much to polemicize against Roman Catholicism as to define the nature and mission of the church.

2. J. Gresham Machen, "The Responsibility of the Church in Our New Age." 1933; reprint, *The Presbyterian Guardian*, January 1967, pp. 3–5, 10–11. Available at www.opc.org/guardian.html.

What needs to be said about this beloved author, whom we esteem for wisdom, clarity of thought, courage, and love for the church? Yet some may not be aware of this important little article and its timeless message.

3. Stuart Robinson, *The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel*. 1858; reprint, Committee on Christian Education of the

OPC, 2009.

On the one hand, Robinson articulates the long-established Reformed vision of the church and unabashedly toes the Presbyterian line. On the other hand, he anticipates trends of our time and foreshadows Geerhardus Vos's biblical theology. Robinson paints the "big picture" of the church and yet does so in relatively few pages.

4. Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck, *Why We Love the Church: In Praise of Institutions and Organized Religion*. Moody Press, 2009.

These authors allow Scripture to fill the content of the doctrine of the church, and they honor thinkers from the past. And yet these insights are applied and discussed in relevant ways that address current issues. Older readers will appreciate the authors' pull-no-punches tone. Younger readers will like their breezy and accessible style. In a day when some brazenly endorse leaving the church (in the name of spirituality!), it is refreshing to read someone defending the noble place of the church and the necessity of our healthy relationships with and within it.

A. Craig Troxel

Out of the Mouth ...

When the pastor was distributing the bread during the Lord's Supper, our three-year-old daughter asked, "Jesus' body was broken? Well, then, is it fixed now?"

—James and Charlotte Gochnauer
Folsom, Calif.

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

Ross Graham Honored at Assembly

At the 79th General Assembly, the Rev. Ross W. Graham, general secretary of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, was honored for his twenty-two years as general secretary. CHMCE president John Hilbelink read a resolution reviewing Ross's service. The resolution was entered into the Minutes of the Assembly. A framed copy of the resolution was presented to Ross. A reception in his honor was held following the Assembly's recess on Friday evening.

Ross was accompanied by his wife, Nikki, their children (Jennifer and Joseph Troutman, and David and Meadow Graham), and their grandchildren (Elizabeth, Anna, and Fisher).

Ross will be retiring from his service as general secretary on February 28, 2013. Here is the resolution:

To Ross W. Graham

In recognition of his faithful ministry
as General Secretary
of the Committee on Home
Missions and Church Extension
of the Orthodox Presbyterian
Church
1990 – 2013

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's faithful ministry beginning in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, serving Westminster RPCES, Vincennes, Indiana 1972–1979, Faith RPCES, Charlotte, North Carolina 1979–1984, and continuing in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, serving as Regional Home Missionary in the Presbytery of New Jersey 1984–1990, the Intern Director for the Committee on Christian

Ross Graham and family listening as John Hilbelink reads resolution of thanks



Education of the OPC 1987–1991, and as General Secretary of the Committee of Home Missions and Church Extension 1990–present, during which he served as Moderator of the 65th General Assembly in 1998, in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's administrative skills in forging a strong working relationship between the Committee and the presbyteries, encouraging the presbyteries to take a more central role working in partnership with the Committee to reach out and establish new churches, and building a relationship of trust with the presbyteries for the purpose of establishing solidly Reformed and Presbyterian churches, through the ministry of the gospel.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's ministry to the churches through articles in *New Horizons* magazine on biblical principles of missions, which he later, with the encouragement of the Regional Home Missionaries and the Committee, published in the book, *Planting an Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, now in

its second expanded edition and widely used both inside and outside the OPC as a helpful tool in starting new churches.

With gratitude to our Lord for the faithful support of Mr. Graham's loving wife and helpmeet, Nicole, for her encouragement to him in his overall ministry, including many days and weekends during which he is away from home, for her care for him during his recovery from knee surgery, for the countless hours she spent helping in the production of *Planting an Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, and for her love and care with Mr. Graham in raising godly children.

With gratitude to our Lord for his blessing of growth in the ministry of OPC home missions under the oversight of Mr. Graham and the Committee from 20 home mission fields in 1990 to 46 in 2011. It was during this time that the total number of churches and mission works in the OPC grew from 195 to 326, the total membership from 18,137 to 30,274, the number of ministers from 325 to 509, and the number of

presbyteries from 12 to 17.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's establishing Readiness for Ministry in the OPC seminars on the campuses of Reformed and Presbyterian seminaries, and for arranging for three such conferences each year.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's personal and pastoral leadership with the members and staff of the Committee, and with other Worldwide Outreach staff members and workers in the OPC administrative offices. Mr. Graham worked with five Administrative Assistants, Jeanne Ridgway, Lisl Gaffin Tyson, Beverly Mariani, Vickie Swann, and Sean Gregg. During his first eight years he worked with Mr. William Vermeulen, Director of Evangelism and Church Development, and since 1999 Mr. Graham has worked with the Rev. Richard Gerber, the first Associate General Secretary for the Committee, which, while sharing many responsibilities with one another, has been an exemplary working relationship demonstrating mutual trust and confidence and benefiting the Committee and the whole church.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's pastoral care for those serving as church planters on the field along with their wives and children.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's ability to think strategically and long-term, keeping abreast of the changes and developments in the life of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, in overseeing the hiring of our first Associate General Secretary to help with the growing workload as the number of churches and presbyteries increased, in regularly



General Assembly expressing appreciation for Ross Graham's work

taking time in meetings to encourage and lead the Committee to consider new avenues of ministry, such as, tracking the need for pastors in our churches and mission works, arranging a conference for ministers from both inside and outside the OPC to consider seeking a pastoral ministry in the OPC at a time when a significant number of churches were vacant, seeking ways for retiring ministers to continue in productive ministry, considering the ramifications of intentional church planting in urban areas, arranging conferences on ethnic church planting as such ministries were becoming a reality, and for his wisdom and leadership in organizing the Committee and the churches of the OPC to respond with mercy and love to the many people of God whose homes and lives were devastated by Hurricane Katrina, and for the subsequent hiring of David Nakhla, who, with the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, will direct OPC disaster relief in the future.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's leadership in the yearly consultation with home mission leaders from the churches in the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council.

With gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham's leadership in the program committees of Worldwide Outreach, for his steady encouragement of the production of promotional materials for WWO, and for taking his turn in promoting the yearly Thank Offering.

Therefore, we, the grateful members of the Committee on Home Missions and

Church Extension, resolve on this 8th day of June, 2012, to give thanks to the Lord for Ross W. Graham, his wife Nicole, and their family, and for our brother's beloved influence in our own lives, and for his faithful service to the church of Jesus Christ.

We also resolve to encourage and support our brother and his family in every way possible, pledging ourselves and the resources God has graciously entrusted to us to minister to his support.

And we resolve with gratitude to treasure in our hearts and minds and in our Committee's history the rich blessing the Lord has given to our denomination through our brother's ministry, which has resulted in its significant growth spiritually, numerically, and organizationally, especially through the planting of a large number of new Orthodox Presbyterian churches.

This we resolve with gratitude to our Lord for Mr. Graham, whose humble service and faithful stewardship as General Secretary reflect well the scriptural exhortation, "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2), and the words of the beloved hymn,

Father, I know that all my life
is portioned out for me;
The changes that are sure to come,
I do not fear to see:
I ask thee for a present mind,
intent on pleasing thee.

(Anna L. Waring, 1850)

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org.
New editions: **Aug. 1, 15, 29;**
Sept. 12, 26.

An Open Eschatological Door

R. SCOTT MacLAREN

The late historian for the OPC, Charles Dennison, surmised that the most important theologian to the OPC in its early years was Geerhardus Vos, who taught at Princeton Seminary from 1893 to 1932.

This might surprise those who are familiar with the contributions of J. Gresham Machen, Cornelius Van Til, and John Murray. Machen led the fight against liberalism. Van Til stood faithfully against the world with his consistently Reformed apologetic. Murray set an example for Reformed scholarship and pastoral ministry in his careful exegesis of Scripture.

But what can we say about Vos? Dennison tells us that he was a private, even “eccentric” man, who never entered the OPC, never taught at Westminster Seminary, and at the time of his death was so obscure that no one from the seminary he served for forty years even bothered to attend his funeral.

What did Charlie Dennison see in him that many may have missed? Perhaps he saw the same thing that the Lord Jesus saw in a small congregation located on an old Roman trade route that passed through the ancient city of Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7–13). This old Asian city, not to be confused with the American Philadelphia, was to be the “gateway to the East” for Greek culture and influence (Robert Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, p. 115).

In the providence of God, a church of the Lord Jesus was strategically planted there, though it remained obscure in the eyes of many. Jesus himself said that they had “little strength” (Rev. 3:8). What could they do for King Jesus? Could they become a “gateway” for the gospel of Jesus into a pagan world? Not on their own!

If we are honest, we might say that we too have little strength. But what the congregation in Philadelphia did have was the presence of the Lord, who held “the key of David” (v. 7). He was the faithful steward who could open the door to God’s temple palace. Long ago, King Hezekiah had a steward named Shebna, who used the key of David to make a lasting name for himself rather than to protect God’s afflicted people (see Isa. 22:15–25). God was so displeased that he threw him out of office like a ball of trash. We should certainly take note of this.

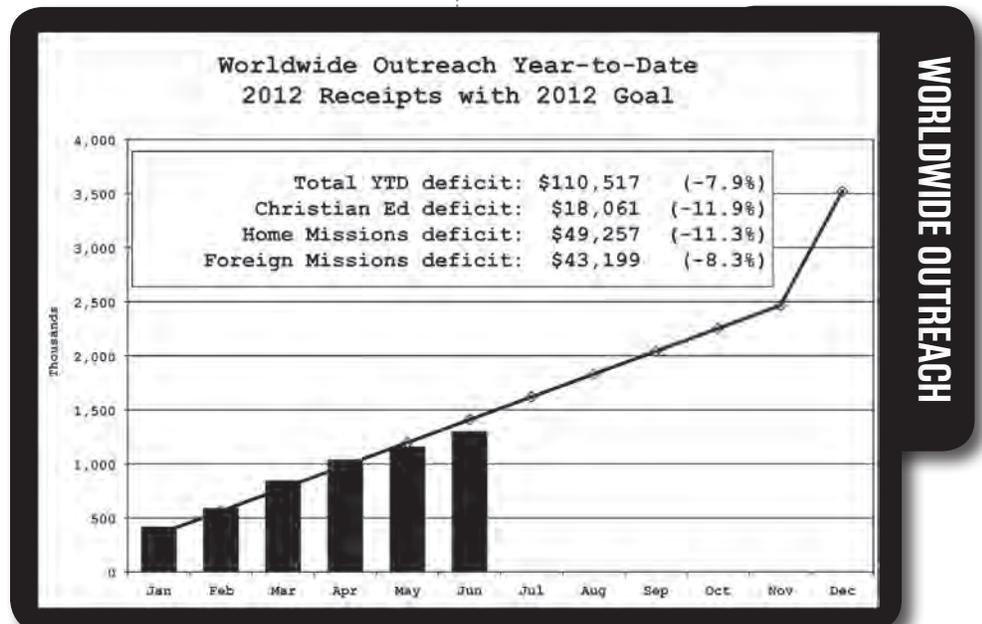
The Lord Jesus, however, shows himself to be the “holy and true” steward in God’s house. He graciously opens a door for his church. Some think he means a door for evangelistic witness; others think he means a door into the heavenlies for divine worship (cf. Rev. 4:1).

Either way, Geerhardus Vos understood. He knew that God’s self-disclosure culminated in his Son, the Lord Jesus. This

historic revelation is not irrelevant for us, for we live in the same eschatological age as the little church in Philadelphia. As Dennison so clearly notes, “The direction that Vos is pushing us is towards the realization that we are no mere spectators to the drama of redemption. Rather . . . we are involved in the drama itself” (*History for a Pilgrim People*, p. 77).

Jesus holds the key of David, he is the great steward of God’s house, and he calls us to covenantal fellowship and faithfulness in a troublesome world. As those who are remade in his image, we should be faithful stewards in the Lord’s house as well. Let us not seek to make a name for ourselves, but rather to see the open door that Christ sets before us, and enter the eschatological world of consummation rest and work! What shall we do for Christ our King?

The author is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Perkasie, Pa. He quotes the NIV.



August-September

1. Pray for affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic (on furlough), as they visit their supporting churches. / **Ben and Sarah Miller**, Huntington, N.Y. Pray for good fellowship at Trinity OPC. / Summer interns **Jeffrey (and Dawn) Scott**, New Covenant Community Church, New Lenox, Ill.; **Bradley (and Cinnamon) Peppo**, Covenant OPC, Vandalia, Ohio.
2. Home Missions associate general secretary **Dick Gerber**. / **Ethiopian Reformed Presbyterian Church**. Pray for the ministry of the Word and sacraments. / Pray for **Danny Olinger**, Christian Education general secretary, as he directs the Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC.
3. **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the completion of the new clinic construction. / **David and Rashel Robbins**, Huntington, W.Va. Pray that many will be drawn to Christ through the ministry of Trinity Presbyterian Church. / **Carson Ryan**, yearlong intern at Lake Sherwood OPC in Orlando, Fla. / Army chaplain **Jonathan (and Marion) Gibbs**.
4. **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. Pray that God would bless Gospel Life Presbyterian Church's summer outreach efforts. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Erika Bulthuis, Emily Pihl**, and **Tessara Raposa**, Uganda. / **Geoff (and Heather) Downey**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa., beginning in September.
5. **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray that God would guide and equip them for their ministry in Uganda. / **Brad Hertzog**, Queens, N.Y. Pray that leaders will be raised up at Reformation Presbyterian Church. / **Paul (and Jana) Sandbulte**, summer intern at Spencer Mills OPC in Gowen, Mich.
6. Home Missions administrative assistant **Sean Gregg**. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that preaching of the Word will bear fruit in Karamoja. / Pray for stated clerk **George Cottenden** as he prepares the Minutes of the 79th General Assembly for the printer.
7. **Al and Laurie Tricarico**, Nakaale, Uganda (on furlough). Pray for safe travel and good visits to OP churches. / **Geoffrey and Sharon Willour**, Cleveland, Ohio. Pray for a smooth transition at Lake OPC for the Willours. / Summer interns **Steve (and Sarah) Moulson**, Providence OPC, Temecula, Calif.; **John (and HaeSung) Keegan**, Calvary OPC, Glenside, Pa.
8. **Ken and Cressid Golden**, Moline, Ill. Pray that the Lord would strengthen Sovereign Grace OPC's core group with more families. / Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Heather Foss** and **Leah Hopp**, Nakaale, Uganda. / **The Subcommittee on Internet Ministries**.
9. Pray for **Jim and Jenny Knox**, M.D. and R.N., Nakaale, Uganda (on furlough), as they maintain a busy schedule. / **Vern and Olena Picknally**, Fremont, Mich. Pray for Fremont OPC's leadership class. / Pray with short-term missions coordinator **David Nakhla** for fruit from this summer's many short-term missions activities.
10. **Joe and Jennifer Troutman**, Bedford, Tex. Pray for continued development in the ministry of Mid Cities Presbyterian Church. / **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for new believers' growth in grace. / **Alan (and Carrie) Dueck**, yearlong intern at Church of the Covenant in Hackettstown, N.J.
11. Missionary associate **Debra Blair**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for follow-up with contacts made in this summer's English Bible camps. / **Doug and Kristi Bylsma**, Beamsville, Ont. Thank the Lord for Living Hope Presbyterian Church's new facility.
12. **Sacha and Martina Walicord**, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Pray that God's elect will be brought into Knox Presbyterian Church. / **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, Lviv, Ukraine. Pray for the young church as they welcome new members. / Administrative office staff: **Jim Scott, Doug Watson, Kathy Bube, Jan Giandomenico**, and **Pat Clawson; Sarah Pederson**, *New Horizons* proofreader.
13. Retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Greet Rietkerk, Young and Mary Lou Son**, and **Fumi Uomoto**. Pray for their health and strength. / Home Missions general secretary **Ross Graham**. / **Andrew (and Rebekah) Miller**, yearlong intern at Bethel Reformed Presbyterian Church in Fredericksburg, Va.
14. **Everett and Kimberly Henes**, Hillsdale, Mich. Pray for Hillsdale OPC as they prepare to minister to college students. / **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. M. as he teaches a class for young men preparing for ordination this fall. / Summer interns **Joshua (and Kristen) McKamy**, Redeemer OPC, Danville, Pa.; **David Landow** in Nakaale, Uganda.
15. Missionary associates **E. C., T. D.**, and **E. H.**, Asia. Pray for ministry opportunities during this month's university vacation. / **John and Lois Hilbelink**, Rockford, Ill. Praise God for recent baptisms at Providence OPC. / Summer interns **Caleb (and Erika) Smith**, Grace OPC, Vienna, Va.; **Rhett Lemmel**, Providence OPC, Mantua, N.J.
16. **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Cedarburg, Wis. Pray that God will bless Mercy OPC with additional families. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray that God would bring new students to the Bible studies with hearts open to the Word. / **Tom Patete**, executive director of Great Commission Publications.
17. Pray for missionary associates **M. and M. C.** and **T. L. L.**, Asia, as the new semester at the university gets under way in September. / **Tim and Joanne Beauchamp**, Bridgton, Maine. Pray for unity and fellowship among the families of Pleasant Mountain Presbyterian Church. / **Alan Strange**, Psalter-Hymnal Committee chairman.
18. **Brandon and Laurie Wilkins**, Crystal Lake, Ill. Pray for Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church's witness in Crystal

- Lake. / **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for the Haitian children attending VBS in August. / **Jason (and Amanda) Kirklin**, yearlong intern at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.
19. Pray for missionary associates **Marcie Winslow**, Haiti, and **Jana Crum**, Uruguay, as they assist our missionary families. / **Joby and Carla Fowler**, Gastonia, N.C. Praise God for his continued blessing on Reformation OPC. / **Joshua (and Jessica) Lyon**, yearlong intern at Branch of Hope OPC in Torrance, Calif.
 20. **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray that God would add several new families to San Antonio Reformed Church. / Pray for **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Uruguay, as they prepare to move to Montevideo and take up their labors there. / Navy chaplains **Tim (and Janine) Power** and **John (and Linda) Carter**.
 21. **Steve and Linda Larson**, Uruguay. Pray that the Holy Spirit would work in the hearts of the young people. / **Kent and Laurie Harding**, Doniphan, Mo. Pray for the love of Christ to abound at Sovereign Grace OPC. / **Geoffrey (and Hannah) Grissom**, summer intern at First Congregational Church in Merrimack, N.H.
 22. **Philip and Jenny Dharmawirya**, Philadelphia, Pa. Pray that the young adults of Emmanuel Indonesian Protestant Church will keep their ways pure. / **Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa. / **David Haney**, director of finance for the Committee on Coordination.
 23. **Church in the Horn of Africa**. Pray for spiritual growth and maturity in this church as it faces many difficult challenges. / **Carlos and Diana Cruz**, San Juan, P.R. Pray for the ministry of Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada. / **Andrew (and Jacqueline) Minatelli**, summer intern at Church of the Lakes in Brainerd, Minn.
 24. **Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, Ky. Pray that Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church will continue to mature spiritually. / Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson** as he meets with subcommittees September 24–25. / Summer interns **Mike (and Katy) Myers**, Faith OPC, Elmer, N.J.; **Andrew (and Elizabeth) Barshinger**, Immanuel OPC, Bellmawr, N.J.
 25. Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube**,
- as the Committee on Foreign Missions meets September 25–26. / **Jeremiah and Elizabeth Montgomery**, State College, Pa. Pray for families to come to Resurrection OPC. / Pray for a good finish for **summer interns**.
 26. **William and Deddeh Joe**, Philadelphia, Pa. Pray for God's blessing on Grace OPC (Liberian). / Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma**; secretary **Janet Birkmann**. / **Jeremy Logan**, summer intern at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Mansfield, Ohio.
 27. Pray for new missionary associates **Adam and Sarah Thompson** as they prepare to take up their labors in Japan. / **Matthew and Jessica Figura**, Cookeville, Tenn. Pray for Faith Presbyterian Church's outreach. / **Silverio (and Lisa) Gonzalez**, summer intern at Faith Presbyterian Church in Garland, Tex.
 28. **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray for God's spirit to empower the gospel witness of Keys Presbyterian Church. / **Woody and Laurie Lauer**, Numazu, Japan. Pray for the seekers who attend the English Bible study and the cooking classes. / Summer interns **Jeffrey (and Maryfrances) Carter**, Trinity Reformed Church, Wilmington, N.C.; **Brad Jones**, Harvest OPC, Grand Rapids, Mich.
 29. **Cal and Edie Cummings**, Sendai, Japan. Pray for the teaching and outreach ministries with which they work. / **Tom and Martha Albaugh**, Pittsburgh, Pa. Pray for more new people to attend Redeemer OPC Mission. / **David (and Jenna) DeRienzo**, yearlong intern at Second Parish OPC in Portland, Maine.
 30. **Gabe and Callie Fluhrer**, Cary, N.C. Pray for new visitors to come to Shiloh Presbyterian Church. / **Kaz and Katie Yaegashi**, Yamagata, Japan. Pray that children will come to Sunday school and learn about the Lord. / **Camden (and Erica) Bucey**, yearlong intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Ill.
 31. Affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne** and **Linda Karner**, Japan. / **Roberto and Marieta Laranjo**, Lowell, Mass. Pray that visitors will come and join Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira. / **Mark (and Karissa) Soud**, yearlong intern at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, Ariz.



Twice this summer the Hopps, our missionaries in Haiti, have hosted teams from the Presbytery of Southern California who put on two-day vacation Bible school programs at three different Lagonav churches. Here the children from Gran Lagonav pose with the team. Please pray that God would use the Scripture and catechism answers these kids have learned to point them to the Savior and give them a desire to serve his church in the future.

In Memoriam Abe Ediger

Larry Wilson

In 1975, Holly and I, newlyweds, were travelling across Pennsylvania so that I could start at Westminster Seminary. We stopped in Middletown to worship at Calvary OPC on the Lord's Day. The pastor was the Rev. Abraham W. Ediger. He and his wife, Anna Marie, both given to hospitality, invited us to their home, where we enjoyed wonderful Christian fellowship, little knowing that I would return to Middletown after seminary to do a one-year pastoral internship under Abe. Holly and I came to think of Abe and Anna Marie as spiritual parents, and our paths crossed many times over the years.

Abe grew up on a farm in Nebraska in a German-speaking Mennonite home. He spoke with a German lilt all his life. His father opposed higher education, fearing that it would lead his son away from simple faith in Christ. But Abe was convinced that the Lord wanted him to seek training, so he worked his way through Wheaton College, the University of Nebraska, and Gordon Divinity School. Along the way, he and Don Stanton became friends. Don was instrumental in Abe's eventual embrace of the Reformed faith and his joining the OPC. Abe faithfully served congregations in Kansas, South Dakota, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. He was known for his gentle spirit, pastoral wisdom, good humor, and, above all, his love for our Lord and his church. I knew him as a man of deep piety and earnest prayer.

Abe finished his earthly pilgrimage and went to dwell in the house of the Lord forever on May 31, 2012. He was 92. Anna Marie had died in August 2005. Grieving and reflecting on her death led him to write "Our Home in Glory Land" (http://opc.org/nh.html?article_id=507). Abe will be remembered with



Abe Ediger

gratitude by his four sons—Steve, Craig, Jeff, Jay—and their families, as well as by his extended family and his many Christian brothers and sisters and spiritual children, including me. "When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain; but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again. This glori-

ous hope revives our courage on the way, while each in expectation lives, and longs to see the day."

UPDATE

Churches

- **Lake OPC** in Cleveland (Mayfield Village), Ohio, was received by the Presbytery of Ohio as an organized congregation of the OPC on June 22.

Ministers

- On May 20, the Presbytery of the Dakotas ordained **David A. Bosch** as a minister and installed him as pastor of High Plains OPC in Calhan, Colo.
- **Todd V. Wagenmaker** was installed as an evangelist of the Presbytery of the Midwest on June 3 to serve as organizing pastor of Gateway OPC in St. Louis, Mo.
- **Geoffrey L. Willour**, formerly the pastor of Redeemer OPC in Toms River,

N.J., was installed as the pastor of Lake OPC in Cleveland (Mayfield Village), Ohio, on June 22.

Milestones

- Retired minister **Abraham W. Ediger**, 92, died on May 31.

LETTERS

SINGING IN CHURCH

Editor:

In regard to better singing in smaller churches (June issue), I thought other congregations might benefit from some things we've done at Heritage Presbyterian Church. As a new congregation, we wanted to learn to sing the Psalms—which almost nobody knew. Not having an evening service, we instead had "pizza night." We gathered at the home of a family in the congregation, shared a meal and fellowshiped, and then gathered in the family room with Psalters in hand to learn a few new pieces, parts and all. We developed quite a repertoire and, as a result, when we were particularized as a church we even sang Psalm 98A together in robust four-part harmony to the glory of God. Everybody knew it, everybody loved the challenge of all its intricacies, and it remains a favorite to this day. If the congregation is the choir, it pays to have "choir practice."

We also usually have a hymn of the month. Our pastor chooses a new hymn he'd like us to learn to sing together and we sing it each Lord's Day throughout the month. Frequently we'll practice it at the end of Sunday school so folks don't feel lost during the congregational singing, and by the end of a month there's another tune we all know well enough to sing heartily.

If hymns for the upcoming Lord's Day were listed in the bulletin a week early or e-mailed to interested people as soon as they are selected, families could practice them during the week. The accompaniment tools referenced in Alan

PSALTER-HYMNAL COOPERATION

At the Eighth Synod of the United Reformed Churches of North America, meeting June 11–15 at Nyack University in Nyack, New York, the Synod accepted the invitation of the Seventy-eighth (2011) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to work with the OPC on the production of a Psalter-hymnal.

Pontier's article can be used by families as well as by congregations. And children especially benefit when they can sing a hymn all week before using it in public worship. They have a greater sense of being part of God's people when they can sing as part of the congregation.

Jane Bentley
Mobile, Ala.

YOUNG WOMEN

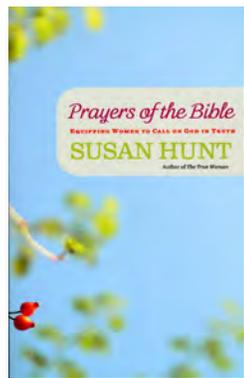
Editor:

In the "Woman to Woman" article in the June issue, Aunt June gives Kelly wise counsel as far as needing to be grounded in the church, making an impact on coworkers instead of being led astray, and looking to Christ as her comfort for loneliness, but where are Kelly's parents in all of this? A young woman out from under the guidance of her parents is setting herself up for disaster, especially at such a crucial time in her life. Aunt June should have encouraged Kelly to be in close communication with her parents about her situation, and stressed the need for parental involvement in her relationships with young men.

Sarah Dautel
San Diego, Calif.

REVIEWS

***Prayers of the Bible*, by Susan Hunt. Published by P&R, 2011. Paperback, 160 pages, list price \$12.99. Reviewed by OP member Priscilla King.**



Susan Hunt is a wife, mother, and grandmother. She holds a degree in Christian education from Columbia Theological Seminary and is the former Director of

Women's Ministries for the Presbyterian Church in America. She has written eight books, coauthored six, and contributed to

an additional two. Five are for children.

The author is concerned to see women equipped for biblical roles in the church. This study takes its place beside others intended to provide that training.

Its fundamental purpose is to teach prayer by biblical example. It is one of over 5,700 books on prayer listed on Amazon.com, 614 of those for women. One would most likely find it distinguished from the rest by failing to promise increased happiness, self-esteem, or results.

So what *does* it do? The study has two foci. First, the features of "the true woman" are painted, stroke upon stroke, throughout the book. She is "a reflection of redeemed womanhood." Her authority is God's Word; her purpose is God's glory. She stands in stark contrast to the "new woman," who lives to find happiness where and how she pleases. The second focus is on the nearness of God, developed in answer to the repeated question, "How do we call on God in truth?" Its fundamental answer is: "The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth" (Ps. 145:18). These foci are not unrelated. Only true women *can* call on God in truth. Conversely, being a true woman *is* to experience God's nearness.

This is prime meat, skillfully prepared vegetables, fresh fruit, and fine wine—not baby food. The author serves up truth, plain but profound. And the reader makes a speaking acquaintance with a few of history's greatest preachers and teachers, who stride through its pages. As with the best books concerning God's Word, what you get out of this one will be in direct proportion to what you put into it. Those who compare it with Scripture, who ponder and pray over it, who take note of the deep things worth remembering—these will feast, while she who looks for a quick snack will miss the bounty.

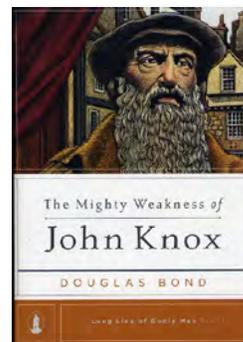
That's not to say that the book is without errors. Page 91 cites Hebrews 12:15, interpreting "bitter root" as a bitter or resentful spirit, when the reference in all probability is to Deuteronomy

29:18, in which the "bitter root" is apostasy. In John 17:6–19, Jesus prays for the apostles, not—as the author supposes—believers in general (for whom he prays in the final section; note the transition in verse 20).

Still, I would recommend this book with enthusiasm.

* * *

***The Mighty Weakness of John Knox*, by Douglas Bond. Published by Reformation Trust Publishers, 2011. Hardback, 175 pages, list price \$16.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Larry Wilson.**



I find it helpful to read Christian biographies. The examples of others and how the Lord worked in their lives are encouraging to me. But

once I acquired this book, I had second thoughts: "John Knox was so strong and brave; he had a ministry that was so fruitful! Do I really want to read a whole book about that? It's bound to discourage me." Boy, was I in for a surprise!

I was surprised to learn that John Knox was even more brave and his ministry was even more fruitful than I had thought. Those who claim that the Reformers were not mission-minded surely haven't considered that Knox himself was a missionary, and that *thousands* were converted to Christ under his ministry. But I was even more surprised to learn that Knox was physically small and frail,

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always changing!**

Check out the new features mentioned on the Christian Education pages of this magazine (pages 14–15).

and that he was temperamentally timid, struggling with doubts and fears. When he was first called (virtually conscripted) to be a minister of the Word, he burst into tears and ran out of the room! John Knox, insists Douglas Bond, was “a weak man made mighty.”

Bond, the author of several works of historical fiction, says that he means for this book to be “a practical biography” (p. xxi). His experience as a novelist serves nicely, for this book is well written. Moreover, it is indeed practical. It could be called a *devotional* biography; from the life of John Knox, it illustrates 2 Corinthians 12:10: “For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

The first chapter provides a chronological survey of Knox’s life and ministry. The rest of the book looks more topically at different facets of his life and ministry (such as his preaching, praying, writing, and doctrine). The Scots Confession, of which Knox was a major author, is included as an appendix in the book, along with a time line of Knox and the Reformation.

Readers from older teens on can find this book both interesting and encouraging. As Bond illustrates, what made Knox mighty in his weakness was that “Christ was at the center of every dimension of his life” (p. 25). And what makes this book so encouraging and edifying is that Christ is at its center as well. Highly recommended.

* * *

***Parenting by God’s Promises: How to Raise Children in the Covenant of Grace*, by Joel R. Beeke. Published by Reformation Trust Publishing, 2011. Hardback, 350 pages, list price \$19.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Charles R. Biggs.**

Joel Beeke, who serves as president and professor at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and is a pastor of the Heritage Netherlands Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan, has written a book full of biblical truth and godly, parental wisdom. It presents an

overview of God’s covenant promises and how they apply to our parenting as heirs of the covenant in Christ.

Beeke reminds parents that they must rely upon God’s grace, not only for their own salvation and sanctification, but also on behalf of their children. Parents can have daily hope in using God’s means for training up our children and for resting in his promises.

Beeke explains how parents are prophets, priests, and kings. As prophets, we teach God’s Word; as priests, we mediate God’s love and mercy; and as kings, we rule as servants over our home. This special emphasis on the threefold office of parents, drawing from our Lord’s threefold office as our Savior, is the best part of the book. Parents should model Jesus in both their teaching and their lives.

This book is laid out very well. The chapters can be read in segments of 30–45 minutes. This might be a good book for devotions. It could be read as a study on covenant theology and its application to child rearing, or used as a compendium on biblical parenting.

The helpful topics include how to get family worship started and maintained, how to help our families prepare to worship and hear sermons, how to assist our families in sermon review, and devoting one’s heart to Jesus. Wonderful attention is given to teens and how to assist them with wisdom.

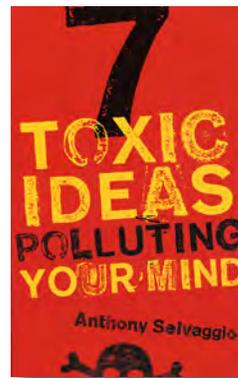
This book is full of theological and practical wisdom. Beeke constantly reminds us of Christ and the grace that we as parents need. I will leave you with an important quotation that encouraged me:

Children are not looking for perfect parents. . . . They need to see

in us an unwavering commitment to Jesus Christ, and unconditional love for them, and a strong bond of love for each other as husband and wife. They need to see a mom and dad . . . of whom the children can say: “My mom and dad hate sin, they love God, and their only hope is in Christ Jesus. They want with all that is within them to live holy and godly lives. I can see it, I can feel it; I know it is true and it is real, and I want to be like them. I want the God of my father and mother to be my God.”

* * *

***7 Toxic Ideas Polluting Your Mind*, by Anthony Selvaggio. Published by P&R, 2011. Paperback, 144 pages, list price \$11.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Reid Hankins.**



Ideas are powerful and they have consequences, says Anthony Selvaggio as he warns about seven ideas that threaten the church today. His concern is

Positions Available

Pastor: Garst Mill Presbyterian Church in Roanoke, Va., is seeking a pastor. Roanoke (metro population, 250,000), right off the Blue Ridge Parkway, has five times been voted an “all-American city.” We are looking for a man who first will live up to our motto, “Faithfully Teaching God’s Word.” His preaching should encourage us as we seek to live godly lives, grow in the Lord, and make a difference in the various mission fields God has placed us in. Our new pastor should help in our efforts to grow our church and bring the words of eternal life to others. If you are interested in applying for this position, e-mail your information to Lee Lawson, the chairman of our Pastoral Committee, at lawson59@cox.net.

Pastor: Covenant OPC in Vineland, N.J., is seeking a pastor. We are a small congregation hoping to grow. Interested candidates are invited to send their résumé to Edward Duffy, P.O. Box 54, Vineland, NJ 08362 or 71 Almond St., Vineland, NJ 08360 or e-mail prgg1@verizon.net. All submissions will be kept strictly confidential.

NEWS, VIEWS, REVIEWS (cont.)

that Christians may think they can avoid worldliness simply by watching over their actions. He warns that Satan can also use what he calls “toxic” ideas to influence us to adopt an unbiblical worldview and ultimately idolatry. The seven toxic ideas that he discusses are technopoly, neophilia, egalitarianism, individualism, materialism, consumerism, and relativism.

The strength of this book is Selvaggio’s thoughtful reflection on these ideas. He presents a searing challenge to many current trends in modern Western thinking. For example, in considering technopoly, which he defines as the “deification of technology,” he exposes many problems associated with the undiscerning embracing of technology. He describes how people can become disengaged, distracted, and virtually disembodied through technology—something that most have either experienced themselves or witnessed in others. Such cautions need to be heard and considered.

However, Selvaggio’s criticisms often seem overstated and opposing viewpoints often seem oversimplified. For instance, he repeatedly states that technology can cause a loss of community. Yet advocates of such technology regularly speak of online communities. Clearly, this is a different form of community than what Selvaggio desires, but it is still a form of community. There can be healthy debate over the value of such online communities, but to dismiss them entirely as not community sounds like cultural bias.

It is imperative, when critiquing social trends, to distinguish between



Lake OPC welcomed as a congregation of the OPC

different cultural values and what are actually sinful idolatries. When Selvaggio criticizes relativism, all Christians should agree in light of the Bible’s affirmation of absolute truth. Yet when he points to cyber gossip as symptomatic of the deification of technology, it should be noted that gossip existed prior to the Internet. Sinful people will tend to gossip, whether they have a computer or not. Many of Selvaggio’s concerns with technology are just age-old sins expressed in ways unique to this new medium. The root of the matter is deeper than a worship of technology; it starts in the heart with the struggles of sin that people have had since the Fall. Selvaggio should have given closer attention to these considerations.

LAKE OPC ORGANIZED

When Lake OPC in Cleveland, Ohio, was received as an organized congregation on June 22 by the Presbytery of Ohio, there were several ordinations and installations. Seth Oldaker (far left) was ordained and installed as a deacon. John Grubb (second from left) was installed as a ruling elder. John Collins (third from left) was ordained and installed as a ruling elder. Geoff Willour (third from right) was installed as pastor. Participating in the service of recognition, ordination, and installation were ministers Bob Eckardt (far right), Joe Puglia (second from right), Everett DeVelde (center), and Larry Oldaker (behind the camera).