

REVIEW: D. A. Carson's *Intolerance of Tolerance* by Joel Pearce

# New Horizons

IN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JUL 2012

# How to Plant a Presbyterian Church

BY ROSS W. GRAHAM

**ALSO: God's Use of Our  
Varied Vocations**

by Larry and Holly Wilson



# Contents

## FEATURES

- 3** HOW TO PLANT A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
By Ross W. Graham
- 6** GOD'S USE OF OUR VARIED VOCATIONS  
By Larry and Holly Wilson
- 8** USING TESOL TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL  
By Mary Yopez

## DEPARTMENTS

- 10** HOME MISSIONS  
*Presbytery of Ohio · Gastonia, N.C. · New staff member*
- 14** CHRISTIAN EDUCATION  
*Timothy Conference 2012 · Four favorites · Out of the mouth ...*
- 16** WOMAN TO WOMAN
- 17** PRAYER CALENDAR
- 19** FOREIGN MISSIONS  
*Eric and Dianna Tuininga*
- 21** NEWS, VIEWS, REVIEWS

## NEW HORIZONS

IN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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The Presbytery of New York and New England met on April 30 and May 1 at Amoskeag Presbyterian Church in Manchester, New Hampshire, where Greg Reynolds (front row, second from the left) is the pastor. The moderator of the Presbytery is Tim Gregson (front row, third from the right). The stated clerk is Stephen Tracey (standing, third from the left).



ROSS W. GRAHAM

# How to Plant a Presbyterian Church

**T**he Orthodox Presbyterian Church has a way of starting new churches that seems to be intuitive to the ministers and elders who have embraced and made use of it to start dozens of new congregations among her seventeen presbyteries over the past decade.

Simply put, it goes like this: start with a group, provide elder oversight, call an organizing pastor, take time to let the group mature into the body of Christ, organize it as a new congregation, and expect it to take its place among the working, serving and giving churches that helped to begin it. But this crisp, six-stage process needs unpacking to appreciate its biblical conformity, its Presbyterian consistency, its Reformed distinctiveness, and its working simplicity.

## 1. START WITH A GROUP

The apostle Paul used this method in his church-planting ministry. “And Paul went in [to the synagogue] as was his custom...” (Acts 17:2). The Holy Spirit chose to reveal that Paul had a regular plan of approach—to go where God-fearing believers honored the Scriptures and looked for the Hope of Israel. There he gathered groups that would form the nuclei of the churches he established in Asia Minor and Europe.

Starting with a group of sincere believers makes a lot of sense. It ensures that God is at work in the gathering process and that there is reason to believe a new church should be established. Groups can be gathered for the purpose of starting new churches in a number of ways. Advertising and then leading a Bible study in a targeted community, holding an exploratory informational meeting about whether a new church could be started, and conducting sample evening worship services are all means that have been effectively used to collect the names of interested families and individuals. But by whatever means people are gathered, objective evidence such as regular attendance, willingness to spend time and energy on

the work, inviting friends and relatives to become involved, and beginning the practice of regular financial support of the work, all help those initiating the establishment of the new church to determine whether the hand of God is on the work.

## 2. PROVIDE ELDER OVERSIGHT FOR THE GROUP

When Paul began his church planting ministry in Corinth in Acts 18, he labored with Aquila and Priscilla in the trade of tent making, and he reasoned and persuaded in the local synagogue (verses 1–4). But when Silas and Timothy arrived, Paul was “occupied with the word,” testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ (verse 5). It was when a plurality of elders was

The overseeing session at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.: Pastor Chad Mullinix and elders Gene Douglass, Bill Watson, and Bill Snyder



present that the work and witness of the church got under way. Paul's traveling companions were more than assistants and trainees. He traveled with a plurality of elders who were given on loan to help direct and govern the new, developing churches that were planted until their own overseers could be put in place.

Providing elders to oversee the new work from its start, rather than relying on the leadership of a single individual, has the advantage of starting the church in the way it will operate for the rest of its life. And it allows the whole church to see an example of the kind of men they will want to choose in the future from their own midst.

Ruling elders and ministers (teaching elders) from other churches are routinely borrowed for this work in the OPC. Sometimes it is the whole session of another congregation that is appointed for this responsibility. Sometimes the presbytery appoints officers from various congregations as a committee to provide such help. These men selflessly take the time necessary to arrange and oversee worship and preaching, to receive members, to provide for the administration of the sacraments, and to begin the initial training and preparations for the group to become a new congregation of God's people.

### 3. CALL AN ORGANIZING PASTOR TO WORK WITH THE ELDERS TO MOLD THE GROUP INTO A CHURCH

"This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you" (Titus 1:5). This simple statement provides the job description for the organizing pastor of a mission work. He is a man who is specially called of God and is so intensely gripped with the significance of the doctrine of the church that, at the bidding of his presbytery, he is willing to move to a place where he is needed and to love and serve a group of people temporarily as God builds them into a mature body of Christ, and who is able to consider his work completed if they decide to call another man to be their pastor.

Note that the organizing pastor comes to a group that already has a history. So he does not necessarily function as the pacesetter or the visionary leader in this process. But this is difficult and demanding ministry. Only the rudiments of church life have been set in place by the time of his arrival. He must be a man

Organizing pastor Markus Jeromin doing the work of an evangelist at Providence Presb. Church in Manistee, Mich.



of great faith to be able to see, in the core group of families with which he works, the church that they will become. He must also do the work of an evangelist to see to the addition of new families as God supplies. And throughout his specialized service as an organizing pastor, he must model a sincere faith in a God who will supply his and the church's needs and will raise up men to join him in ministry as godly elders and deacons.

### 4. TAKE THE TIME NECESSARY TO LET THE GROUP MATURE INTO A LOCAL BODY OF CHRIST

In Paul's message to the erring Galatians, who "are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel" (Gal. 1:6), he chides them for their folly, but he also teaches them some important lessons about the church. He speaks to them as "my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!" (Gal. 4:19). He employs the plural pronoun: you all. He intimates that there is a time in the life of a gathered group before it may be appropriately called the body of Christ. Just as the Holy Spirit takes up residence in the life of an individual at a point in time at which it may be said that he has been born again, so the Spirit forms a group of believers into that which may be called a local body of Christ at a point in time after they have been initially gathered together. It takes time for that group to

Pastor Eric Watkins working with new members and friends of Covenant Presbyterian Church in St. Augustine, Fla., to build the local body of Christ



develop its unity and maturity. And the process by which the Spirit does this cannot be rushed.

The process of building maturity into the corporate life of a group of people who have come together with their borrowed elders and their appointed organizing pastor may take two to three years to work through. It involves at least four areas of church life. First, it is vital to develop means to promote the spiritual growth of the people of the mission work, establishing sound worship practices, a solid education and discipling foundation, and ministries to strengthen and maintain healthy families. Second, it is necessary to develop and ensure ongoing ministries of outreach and evangelism in order to faithfully carry out the Great Commission. These involve, on the one hand, outreach ministries that make the work of the church known to the people of the community in which the congregation ministers. They involve, on the other hand, direct gospel activities that bring the righteous requirements of God and his plan for the salvation of his elect before the people of that same community. Third, it is important to develop ministries of mercy and concern to demonstrate the compassion of Christ for the household of faith and for all God's image-bearers as well. Fourth, it is also important that sound administrative practices and procedures be put in place so that the ongoing life and ministry of the church may be protected and ensured.

## 5. ORGANIZE THE GROUP INTO A NEW AND SEPARATE CHURCH

In Ephesians 4:11–16, Paul describes what Christ has done to take the things believers have in common and build them into a mature body of Christ in a local place. The goal of church planting is not simply to gather a group of individuals with shared common interests, but to establish a mature body of Christ that is able to care for itself and minister through Christ to the world around it.

The work that has been done over a number of months or years is expected, as its end result, to produce a mature body of Christ. But that work must be carefully evaluated by the scrutiny of wise and objective presbyters. Determining the maturity of the group and the presence of the body of Christ in them is not an easy job. It is not as simple as counting noses and dollars and saying yes when there are enough of them. Those involved in the church-planting process in the OPC have learned that asking lots of questions and getting consistent, anticipated answers is the best way to determine a group's readiness to stand on their own with their own pastor and elected officers and take their place among the working, serving, and giving churches that helped them get started.

So answers to questions such as the following are sought: Does the group demonstrate a commitment to godliness of conduct, to a covenant community, to God-centered wor-

ship, to constancy in prayer, to seeing lives changed by Christ through the gospel, and to a worldwide vision and outreach? Do the members of the group love, respect, and defer to one another? Does their worship of God as a congregation unify them and encourage their hearts? Do they share the interests and concerns of the OPC, and are they praying for, and financially supporting, her ministries?

## 6. EXPECT THE NEW CHURCH TO TAKE ITS PLACE AMONG THE WORKING, SERVING, AND GIVING CHURCHES THAT HELPED TO BEGIN IT

“And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again” (Phil. 4:15–16). Paul was pleased with the exemplary role that the church in Philippi had played in his church-planting efforts. He was subtly signaling, “If you want to see a church that is really shouldering its load, look at our brothers and sisters in Philippi.”

If this kind of mature participation with other churches of close association in the work of the gospel is expected, it must be instilled from the very beginning of the church-planting process. An axiom of Presbyterian church-planting practice is that the way a church is begun will determine much of the way it will function throughout its maturity. If it is to be a Presbyterian church, then the presence and oversight of godly and competent elders ought to be there from the start. If it is to be a connectional church, then its interaction with people from related churches should be fostered and modeled from the earliest days. If it is to be a congregation that holds to the rich doctrinal tradition of the Reformed faith, then confessional documents ought to be known and taught and referenced in sermons from the beginning of the church.

Newly organized congregations that follow this Philippian model find it easy to become involved in the work of their presbytery and the life of their denomination. They have been seeing it practiced and expect to take an active role in the affairs of their larger church.

## CONCLUSION

Church planting is from first to last a spiritual undertaking. It is the implementation of all that the Bible teaches concerning the nature and purpose of the church. But it must be remembered that it is also a frontal assault on the forces of Satan. So those who are involved in this work must stand in awe of the power of God and the truth expressed by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 16:18: “I will build my church.” □

*The author is general secretary for the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension. He quotes the ESV.*



LARRY and HOLLY WILSON

# God's Use of Our Varied Vocations

**E**arly last year, we departed from Indianapolis for a trip to Escanaba, Michigan, to visit Holly's parents. We drove north on I-65, then headed west on I-80/90. As we approached Chicago, we had some debate about whether to take US 41 or the interstate. Someone in the family thinks that it is a form of recreation to avoid toll roads. The last time we took that same road, however, Someone Else decided that it uses more time and gas to go that way, so that it is wasteful. Someone, however, believes that that assessment is inaccurate. Besides, he thinks the drive on US 41 along Lake Michigan is more interesting.

Someone Else was sure that she had persuaded him to go through the city on bigger roads this time. But no! Someone took the exit for US 41, the scenic route. Someone Else was less than thrilled about that, but what could she do? She wasn't driving. She resorted to working on a crossword puzzle and ignored both the scenery and Someone's attempts to discuss it. We did move along at a steady pace, though slower than Someone Else believed the other route would have been. Someone suggested that the interstates are so congested that they are actually no faster, but Someone Else did not find that to be even a wee bit persuasive.

When we stopped at a red light, Someone was uncertain which way to turn. Since no cars were coming, he decided to turn right and find a place to stop and get his bearings. As he moved into the right lane, we heard a loud clunk from the front driver's side. Something was very wrong, so we sort of limped about two feet to the side of the road. There was no shoulder on that road. So there we sat, unable to move and rather effectively blocking the far right lane of traffic. To quote Bugs Bunny, "What a revoltin' development!" Someone activated our four-way flashers, and Someone Else called AAA.

AAA promised a tow truck by a quarter 'til. That would be no more than half an hour, so we breathed a huge sigh of

relief. But as we watched cars whizzing around a curve and coming up fast behind us, we easily imagined a collision in which they and we would suffer plenty of damage. Such a circumstance does wonders for one's prayer life. After the half hour came and went, Someone Else called AAA again. As she was talking to the lady, she suddenly realized that while our clocks were set on Eastern Time, we were now in the Central Time Zone. Yikes! The promised time was still an hour away. And the traffic seemed to be picking up.

So there we sat, both unhappy with our situation, praying about it, and refraining from taking it out on each other. We had just read the old book *Pollyanna*, by Eleanor Porter, so we began to play her "glad game." It's basically an application of the verse, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18). The idea of the game is this: whatever happens, think of something in it about which to be glad.

Eventually a Chicago policeman arrived on the scene. He quickly found out our situation and called a city tow truck, saying we needed to be moved as soon as possible to avoid an accident. He told us that if the truck that AAA called arrived first, it could take us away; he just wanted us to be moved away from that dangerous location as soon as possible. Then he

sat behind us with his lights flashing—certainly a better warning than our four-way flashers. We worried about having to pay for two tow trucks, but he was right about the urgency, so we kept our mouths shut (except to pray). The waiting game continued.

Finally, almost two hours after we came to our abrupt halt, the city tow truck arrived. He and the policeman agreed on a safer spot to take us. Just then, the AAA tow truck driver called to say he was about fifteen minutes away. We were able to hand the phone to the city worker, and he explained where he would take our car. He moved us to an empty parking lot, and for his efforts—to our surprise—he charged us a whopping nothing! He explained that it was all part of keeping the roads clear and preventing accidents. Meanwhile, the policeman drove us to the spot in his cruiser.

As soon as our car was unhooked, the AAA tow truck arrived and began to hook us up. Seeing that we were safe, the policeman left. We didn't get his name, but he was very nice and very helpful, as was the tow truck driver. Just then, a brisk wind blew off Lake Michigan, and suddenly it dawned on Larry that he had left his hat and gloves on the back seat of the police cruiser. They had gone with him off to his next adventure. *C'est la vie.*

The AAA tow truck man looked under our car and diagnosed our trouble as a disconnected ball joint. He told us that if we had been speeding up the highway when this happened, we would have totaled our car and would probably have caused a serious, multicar accident. We became doubly grateful for the safekeeping we had experienced. Someone Else immediately repented of her unhappiness over the scenic route that Someone took.

The tow truck guy then asked where we wanted him to take us. We said that we didn't have a clue; didn't AAA tell him a place? Did he have any suggestions? He named the place that AAA had proposed, but said that if we went there, we would probably be stuck in town for a day or two. He suggested another place that could repair our car on the same day. We asked him to take us there, and off we went.

AAA would pay for the first five miles of the tow, and as we pulled into the station, it turned out that we had driven exactly that far. The driver told us that we didn't owe him anything. He unceremoniously dumped our crippled vehicle into one of their bays while we went to fill out the paperwork. One fellow asked what year our car was, because they had to order parts. We sighed, figuring this would take a while. When another fellow had it all written up, he said, "Come back in an hour." After waiting two hours for a tow truck, we could hardly believe that, but there was nothing we could do about it anyway.

We took our computers directly across the street to the only available restaurant. This was a local joint that had free

WiFi—and advertised fresh pies. We figured we could have pie and coffee while we waited. But we discovered that, on Wednesdays, if you order something off the menu, you can get a free piece of pie with it. Well! A bowl of soup seemed to fit the bill—and it cost the same as a piece of pie. Take it from us, both the soup and the pie were delicious. So we kept busy with our computers and food. We were able to communicate our situation to friends near Milwaukee with whom we were planning to have supper. An hour later, Holly looked out the front door and saw that our car was out of the bay, waiting for us. That was the most amazing repair experience we can remember! They had put two mechanics on it, one on each side of the car, and they put in a new axle and ball joint for what seemed to us like a pittance when they totaled it up.

So we got back on our way, and we were still able to stop to see our friends. Instead of feeding us supper, as originally planned, they gave us warm fellowship and a nice bed for the night.

Thinking back on it, that day could easily have been our last day on earth. Instead, it turned out to be a lesson in our Lord's watchful care over his redeemed children. He guided and provided and took care of us each step of the way, making sure we came through unscathed.

Furthermore, he provided an illustration of the biblical doctrine of *vocation* (or calling). Our Lord generally works through means. He distributes interests and abilities to people and thus places them in many different vocations and stations in life. Then he providentially uses them to care for, and provide for, his creatures. How we thank God afresh for the vocations of policeman, tow truck driver, mechanic, farmer (who grows the ingredients for our food), truck driver (and others involved in transporting food), soup maker, pie baker, waitress, etc.—not to mention our friends who opened their home to us. And think of all the people, in many different vocations, who worked together to provide us with a car, gas and oil for the car, cell phones and cell phone service, the cooking implements and soup bowls and pie plates and coffee cups and silverware, and the clothing that we wore (including Larry's new hat and gloves). Through the service of all these people, the living God himself cared for us. (See Gene Edward Veith, *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life*, for a helpful treatment of this subject.)

We only hope that God also provided a hat and gloves for some poor soul as a result of Larry's absentmindedness. We know for sure, however, that he did provide a fresh line of reasoning. The next time we have that debate, Someone Else is now in a position to tell Someone that the last time we took US 41 through Chicago, it took us almost four extra hours. ◻

*Larry Wilson is the pastor of Redeemer OPC in Airdrie, Alberta. Holly is his wife.*



MARY YEPEZ

# Using TESOL to Spread the Gospel

**M**ore and more people all over the world want to learn English in order to get ahead in life, whether in the United States or abroad. So teachers of English are highly valued all around the world. Christians who teach English can use it to reach people with the gospel, either in their home church or on the foreign mission field.

TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language) classes are in high demand. Those offering English classes for free have little difficulty attracting students for what is also called ESL (English as a Second Language) or ELL (English Language Learning). Outside of the United States, this field is called EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and is a huge industry.

## STARTING A TESOL PROGRAM AT YOUR CHURCH

If there is a member in your church who is an English teacher, that person may want to organize a simple conversation class and galvanize others in the church to host it. It is not necessary, however, to be a teacher. Inviting internationals from the community for some practice in conversation and refreshments is a simple, social activity.

With a little training (i.e., taking a TESOL class online), these conversation classes can expand to lessons in grammar and idioms. There is no pressure, since these are not academic programs and are free of charge. A minimal amount of material is needed. You could use photocopied handouts found on the Internet (search for: ESL/ELL free materials) or simply copy articles from a magazine.

Once the participants become familiar with your church, you can host a Sunday brunch and invite them to a service and a meal. Internationals greatly appreciate hospitality. In this

TESOL class at Franklin Square (N.Y.) OPC



way, we help meet both a practical need and a spiritual one.

At Franklin Square OPC in Franklin Square, New York, we have a group that meets during the week for a couple of hours, and both the teachers and the students have a lot of fun. The volunteers hold conver-

sation classes and have now also begun teaching grammar and idiomatic expressions. Of course, there are always snacks. It is only a question of praying and getting started.

We began the Franklin Square TESOL ministry a few years ago with our Spanish-speaking group led by Pastor Nathan Ketchen, and then restarted it in February 2012 with facilitators, encouragers, and teachers Janis Seminara, Jacque Zarek, Pamela Smith, Miguel Lopez, and Dan Seminara. I have provided some training through the years, and other congregants have attended these training sessions, including our pastor, William Shishko.

He has been an enthusiastic supporter and has said, "Through our TESOL classes, we have learned new aspects of

the meaning of ‘We are all things to all people.’ We also have learned new and blessed dimensions of love, while giving ourselves to the good of others. Seeking to work with people of other cultures takes us out of our comfort zone and into the world of others. For that very reason, it is a special part of learning about the love of the Son of God, who came from heaven to give himself for us.” Pastor Shishko and his wife, Margaret, also host “Spanish nights” at their home, where there is a meaningful cross-cultural outreach for Spanish speakers and where one can enjoy a delicious paella made by the Shishkos.

## TESOL PROGRAMS OF STUDY

TESOL has been an academic field for more than a quarter of a century. In many states, TESOL specialists and courses are required in high schools and colleges.

TESOL services are provided for thousands of immigrant students who need greater proficiency in English in order to proceed along academic tracks.

TESOL generally requires training. How much training is necessary depends on the level of involvement and the goals of an ESL/ELL program. Missionaries conducting English camps, English cafés, and conversation classes may benefit from some training, but it is not imperative. The goals of these activities are not academic and neither are the end assessments. However, if a missionary wishes to establish an English language school, training will be required.

There are nondegree programs from which you can obtain a TESOL certificate that qualifies you to be an English teacher. The most popular one is the Cambridge Certificate for ESL. Certificates can also be obtained by completing online courses. Christian colleges, such as Regent University, Pepperdine University, Azusa Pacific University, and Wheaton College, provide TESOL/missiology training. A certificate can be earned in a short time—a year or less. Check your local colleges and universities for these programs.

Hundreds of colleges and universities offer degree programs (B.A. or M.A.) in TESOL. This preparation is excellent for missionaries who want to work full-time as tentmakers teaching English in a foreign country. This helps meet the financial burden of supporting the missionary. For example, if a missionary couple has been accepted as missionaries, the wife could work as an English teacher in the secular realm while her husband focuses on church business.

Doctoral degrees (Ph.D., Ed.D.) and postdoctoral studies in TESOL are also available at many universities, including Christian ones. These programs are for those who wish

to teach at the college level and do research. Holders of a doctorate in TESOL can easily get teaching positions at higher educational institutions in places that are difficult to reach for the gospel, such as the Middle East and China.

## MY OWN EXPERIENCE IN TESOL

While studying medicine, I would spend summers helping my grandmother with her English school in Spain, and that is where I first felt a call to become a teacher. It would take eight years of working in a medical office before I decided to act on this call and get an M.A. in teaching. Later I earned a Ph.D., did postdoctoral work in psychology and linguistics, and established myself as a TESOL researcher.

God has used me greatly in this field. A career in TESOL has taken me all over the world. I have lived in five countries as a TESOL university professor, a senior Fulbright scholar in applied linguistics, and a missionary and trainer. When holding secular TESOL positions, I have been able to share the good news with thousands of people—inviting them to local churches, distributing Bibles, and praying for and with many students and colleagues. My work in TESOL

has taken me into arenas where missionaries cannot usually go.

If you enjoy international students and linguistics, I encourage you to look into the TESOL field. There are also jobs in TESOL for folks with no TESOL background. These afford opportunities to work and live abroad to share the good news with students and colleagues. Some websites for this and other resources in TESOL are:

- Dave’s ESL Café: [www.eslcafe.com](http://www.eslcafe.com)
- The Tesol Zone: [www.tesolzone.com](http://www.tesolzone.com)
- TESOL International Association (a professional organization): [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)
- Your local TESOL affiliate: e.g., in New York: [www.nystesol.org](http://www.nystesol.org); in New Jersey: [www.njtesol-nibe.org](http://www.njtesol-nibe.org)
- For more gospel-oriented programs, search the Internet for: Christian TESOL

TESOL provides a wonderful way to show God’s love to our international neighbors. It is a missionary tool that can be used for God’s purposes and to his eternal glory. □

*The author, who teaches at New York University, is a member of Franklin Square OPC in Franklin Square, N.Y.*



# In Focus: Larry Oldaker in the Presbytery of Ohio

**T**he Regional Home Missionary program in the Presbytery of Ohio (which extends into Indiana, Kentucky, western Pennsylvania, and West Virginia) took a hit in 2009.

As the economy plummeted in 2008, the denominational Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension began support for twenty new mission works. In the four-year field support program that CHMCE normally grants, the largest amount of support flows to a mission work in its first two years. These two factors meant that CHMCE's 2009 budget was already large, even without undertaking any new field support for additional mission works. A big question mark was hanging over CHMCE's finances as 2009 approached.

At that juncture, Lake OPC in Mayfield Village (east of Cleveland) was ready for an organizing pastor. Larry Oldaker, the regional home missionary (RHM) for the Presbytery of Ohio, had been nurturing this work along. As the CHMCE staff and the presbytery representatives at the November 2008 Regional Church Extension Conference wrestled with the strained finances and the church-planting opportunities across the church, RHM Larry Oldaker and the Presbytery of Ohio were asked to make a sacrifice.

Would Larry become the organizing pastor of Lake OPC, stepping down as RHM? This would provide an organizing pastor for Lake OPC without adding to CHMCE's budget. Larry agreed. Since he and the presbytery wanted to see a continuation of the home missions program in the presbytery, Larry continued to cover some regional home missionary responsibilities.

For three years, Larry served Lake OPC as its organizing pastor. He also nurtured a new church getting started in Huron, Ohio. He sought to encourage the mission work in Huntington, West Virginia, as it went through a traumatic change in church planters. With help from the Rev. George Scipione and ruling elder Paul Tavares, he was involved in getting a mission work under way in Wilkinsburg (Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania.

He tried to follow up with other leads in places like Louisville, Kentucky. His weeks were hectic as he tried to focus on multiple fronts.

During this time, he was also having problems with his vision. He would see double. His vision would blur. God led him to a doctor who diagnosed the situation. She also discovered that Larry lacked proper depth perception. These problems with his vision stemmed from an auto accident that he was in as a child.

Praise God that through therapy Larry has now developed depth perception, and proper corrective lenses have helped with the other issues.

Throughout the years of this uncertain economy, the people of the OPC have given generously

to the work of Worldwide Outreach. Also, there have been fewer new church plants for several years. The Committee's finances are faring well. So changes are taking place for Larry and the Presbytery of Ohio.

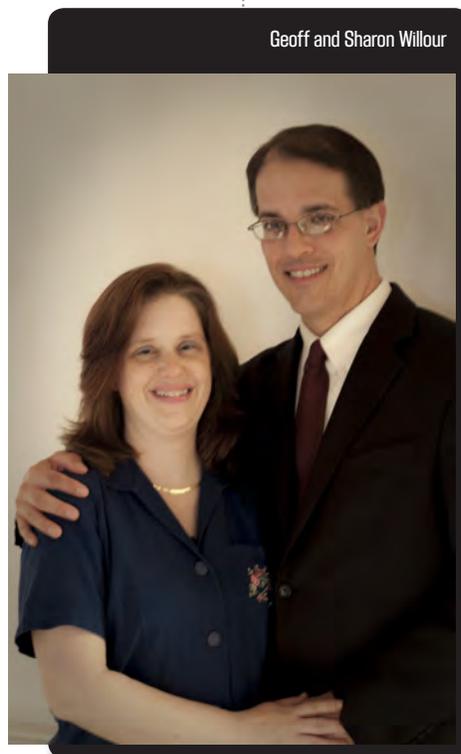
After these years of having his attention scattered in so many directions, Larry resumed his full-time labors as regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Ohio on June 1.

Lake OPC has a new organizing pastor, Geoffrey Willour. He had been the pastor of Redeemer OPC in Toms River, New Jersey. Lake OPC has progressed well and was organized as a new and separate congregation as Pastor Willour arrived.

Larry is focusing his labors on Grace OPC in Huron. This group has been

meeting for evening worship on Sundays. But until now, Larry has had limited time to lead the work in outreach and other areas of ministry development.

Larry hopes that Grace OPC can begin to meet on Sunday mornings this summer for worship. Lord willing, outreach and evangelism ministries will be in place for the fall. As the Lord prospers



Geoff and Sharon Willour

Larry Oldaker (second from right) leading a Bible study in Huron, Ohio



the work, the goal is for Larry to hand the ministry of Grace OPC over to an organizing pastor within a year.

Other church-planting endeavors call out for his attention. Two different groups of people in Cincinnati have been in contact with the presbytery. He is praying and working to see what the Lord has in store for that city.

Providence Presbyterian Church in Pataskala, Ohio (east of Columbus), initiated a Bible study in Mount Vernon, Ohio. Teacher Sacha Walicord of that congregation was teaching at a university there. He saw no Reformed churches in the area, so with his session's approval he began a Sunday evening Bible study. The group grew quickly. Four OP families who live near Mount Vernon have become part of the work. Two are from Providence Church, and two have come from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Mansfield. In March, the group was received as a mission work of the presbytery and became known as Knox Presbyterian Church. As of July 1, Sacha will focus his labors on ministering to this new group, which numbers about fifty. Larry will be encouraging Sacha and the mission work and serving on the overseeing session.

To help the work in Wilkinsburg move forward, it was determined to bring in a minister who could devote full time to the work. Tom Albaugh came from a pastorate in Vermont to

labor for a year. His task was to gather more people and strengthen the core group. By God's grace, new people have been added. The group has grown from the teens to the upper twenties. Tom's call has been extend-

ed to continue his labors as the organizing pastor of Redeemer OP Mission. Larry also serves on the overseec-

ing committee. Covenant OPC in Vandalia, Ohio (North Dayton) is thinking about planting a daughter church. Pastor Charles Jackson has been seeking Larry's counsel about such an undertaking.

Kalynn Oldaker is a great helpmeet for Larry. She has traveled with him every Sunday from their home in Bellville, Ohio, to Cleveland, then on to Huron, and then home—a circuit of about 225 miles. She has been the church pianist at Lake OPC and elsewhere. She is also the nurse manager at a crisis pregnancy center, ministering to many women facing major changes in their lives.

Larry and Kalynn are thankful for God's mercy to them. Since first becoming regional home missionary in 2004, Larry has clocked over 280,000 miles on

Prayer group in Mount Vernon, Ohio (Sacha Walicord, upper left)



The people of Knox Presbyterian Church in Mount Vernon, Ohio



his car. Even with Larry's vision challenges, God has kept them safe.

Please pray that God would continue to give Larry the wisdom he needs in ministering throughout the Presbytery of Ohio. This is a very diverse region. The cultures of the South, Midwest, and East converge here. Different parts of the presbytery reflect those distinct cultures.

Pray, too, that God would give Larry continued good health and renewed energy. He wants to be physically and spiritually ready to assist churches in taking the initiative to start daughter churches. He wants to be open and ready

Martha Albaugh handling registration for a marriage conference sponsored by Redeemer OPC in Wilkesburg, Pa.



to minister to the people and groups that God may bring his way.

Thank God for Larry and Kalynn. Rejoice that God has given the Orthodox Presbyterian Church many faithful servants like them.

attended the Home Missions Conference at the Machen Retreat and Conference Center in June 2009. The Monteiths, the Routszongs, and the Griggs came to explore what it would take to plant an Orthodox Presbyterian church. Some of the families worshipped at Redeemer OPC in Charlotte until morning worship began in Gastonia in the fall of 2011.

Organizing pastor Joseph (Joby) H. Fowler, Jr., describes Reformation Church ([www.reformationopc.com](http://www.reformationopc.com)) as a group that is hungry for the Lord. It readily avails itself of the means of grace, eagerly participating in worship and receiving the preached Word of God with joy. Worship attendance currently fluctuates between thirty-five and fifty. The mission work is eager to grow.

Gastonia is in the greater Charlotte metropolitan area and is home to 80,000 people and many churches. Gaston County (which does not include Charlotte) has a population of over 200,000. Gastonia is a warm, friendly community. Some of the participants in Reformation OPC are longtime residents.

The people are working hard to minister to the community. They canvass neighborhoods, handing out flyers. They invite neighbors and others in their circle of contacts to come to worship and other events. The congregation is ministering in several nursing homes, seeking to give spiritual care to people who are

## A Growing Presence

The presence of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in greater Charlotte, North Carolina, continues to grow.

Our first mission work there began to meet in the spring of 1975, with three families and one single. Today Matthews OPC is a congregation of about three hundred at morning worship. In the spring of 2003, Matthews OPC sent off her associate pastor, Cliff Blair, and fifteen households, including two elders and three deacons, to begin Redeemer OPC in the city of Charlotte. Redeemer OPC, which now numbers about one hundred at morning worship, has in turn

encouraged and nurtured the start of Reformation OPC in Gastonia.

Matthews is southeast of downtown Charlotte, straddling the I-485 beltway.

Gastonia is twenty-five miles due west from downtown Charlotte. Redeemer Church is about midway between the other two congregations.

Three families interested in the idea of an OP mission work in Gastonia

Worship at Reformation OPC in Gastonia, N.C.



Joby and Carla Fowler



not getting a lot of support from other local churches. They want to see Christ's eternal kingdom grow, as well as this new congregation.

Plans are being laid to reach out at Gaston College, which is located a quarter mile down the road from Reformation Church's meeting location. This is a community college, where five thousand curriculum students and sixteen thousand continuing education students study. Since most of them are from the local area, it seems to be a good place to connect with local people.

Joby grew up in a Christian home. His dad is a ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church in America. After college, Joby spent two years in China doing evangelism and discipleship. Feeling the constraints of parachurch ministry, he came home to Charlotte to attend Reformed Theological Seminary in order to prepare for ministry in the church. He did a summer internship and a yearlong internship at Matthews OPC.

There he met his future wife, Carla. She was a newly single mom with three children. Joby and Carla now have five children.

## Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail [HomeMissionsToday@opc.org](mailto:HomeMissionsToday@opc.org). New editions: **July 4, 18.**

Please pray that more of the people who are invited to services and events at Reformation OPC would attend, be drawn to Christ and this body, and unite with the church.

Pray, too, that the Lord would cause the church families to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and be more united to one another. The full schedules that drive everyone's week can be distracting.

Joby is a new pastor. He was

ordained eight months ago. Preparing and delivering two sermons each week seemed really daunting when he started. He thanks God for his assistance and for how he has blessed the preaching and used it in people's lives. Joby has grown to love the very act of preaching, not just the idea of preaching. He asks you to pray that the Lord would continue to give him the assistance he needs in his preparation and proclamation.

Pray that the Lord would increase the ministry and influence of Reformation OPC in Gaston County, and that each person in the group would take advantage of the opportunities for ministry that God sends every day.

## New Staff Member

Sean Gregg recently joined the Home Missions office staff in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, as the new administrative assistant. After earning his B.A. in communications with a journalism emphasis from Dordt College in 1999, he reported the news for the weekly newspaper in Pipestone, Minnesota.

After several years, he returned to Pennsylvania to marry Heather Smith, whom he met at French Creek Bible Conference. Together with their children, they attend Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pennsylvania, where Sean serves as a ruling elder.

Trinity is the fourth Orthodox Presbyterian church in Pennsylvania that Sean has called home. He was baptized at Covenant OPC in Grove City, and made his profession of faith at Calvary OPC in Middletown, where his father, David, currently serves as a ruling elder. He joined Grace Fellowship in Mansfield when his parents moved there during his college years. Sean has been at Trinity since returning to his home state.

When Sean is not in the office, he can often be found start-

ing a new project on his family's house in Glenside or exploring Penn's Woods with his family.

As you have occasion to contact the Home Missions administrative offices, please welcome Sean to his new role. He can be reached at [gregg.1@opc.org](mailto:gregg.1@opc.org).

Sean and Heather Gregg



# Timothy Conference Bearing Fruit

DAVID WINSLOW

In late March, the Timothy Conference (TC) completed its first circle around the OPC. From Escondido to Chicago, Charlotte, Philadelphia, and back to Escondido, the conference has been hosted by OP churches with nearby Reformed seminaries. Over the last four years, the OPC has invested about \$50,000, encouraging ninety-six young men to consider whether the Lord might be calling them to the ministry. That is a significant investment, though it represents just 2 percent of the Christian Education budget over that time.

“So how’s that TC thing workin’ for ya?” is a question that we are starting to get. And it’s a good one. How is the Lord answering our prayers? Is he using the TC to draw young men into the gospel ministry? In answering these questions, it is important to remember that the “cedars of Lebanon” that flourish in the courts of the Lord are not grown in a day, or at a single conference. More importantly, we must remind ourselves that the gifts and calling are from God. As we pray that he will raise up more workers for the harvest fields, we also acknowledge that the whole harvest belongs to him. We will be content if the TC is one of many means that the Lord uses to spark a recognition of his gifts and calling in the lives of these young saplings that attend the conference.

Actually, it

is a bit too soon to assess the conference’s impact on the OPC. Those who attended in 2008 are just now entering the years when they would be attending seminary and coming under care of

their presbytery. Several have done just that. It is easier for us to assess the more immediate effectiveness of the conference by what we hear from the young men who have attended and from the ongoing interest shown by sessions nominating them to attend.

River La Belle, from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, summarized well this year what we have heard from others: “This conference has truly been life-changing

Michael Babcock speaking about the pastoral ministry



in regard to my plans for the future. . . . I am very eager to serve in my church and presbytery as extensively as possible to build up the kingdom of Christ in whatever small ways I can, and prepare for the ministry. The TC has been a great blessing in other ways too. The fellowship I have had, both with speakers, the seminarians, and the other young men, has been extremely uplifting, inspiring, and encouraging in my own walk with God.”

It would be good to emphasize what the seminarians brought to the 2012 conference. At each TC, we have tried to have OP seminarians mingle with our “Timothies,” but this year we had our most effective interaction. Timothy Cho and Geoff Downey were among six Westminster students who were particularly helpful in sharing their personal reflections. Tim and Geoff are both under care, and Geoff will begin a yearlong internship in September. So from firsthand experience, they could explain how the church and their seminary education have helped to bring together, and strengthen in their hearts, the internal and external nature of the call to the ministry.

Seminarians Cho and Downey (rear) lunching with “Timothies”



Elijah De Jong pondering a lecture



As Joel Carini said, “I was most challenged by considering the gravity of what it means to be a ‘steward of the mysteries of God’ ... ‘rightly handling the word of truth.’ Pastor Keele’s insights about the many ways a pastor must image Christ—in proclaiming the word of truth, in loving people sacrificially, and even in suffering for the sake of the glory of God—have required me to begin to count the cost of what it would mean to become a minister of the gospel.” It was indeed very helpful to see young seminarians living the challenge that was set before the conference attendees through the lectures delivered by Zach Keele, Michael Babcock, Dave Crum, Danny Olinger, and Dave VanDrunen. They were living examples of the content of the conference lectures!

Thinking of the return on our investment, we do see immediate fruit, as exemplified in a pastor’s words of thanks for the 2012 conference: “I wanted to tell you that the Timothy Conference had a profound effect on my son. He came back with a much clearer idea of what it means to be called to the ministry. He told me that while he doesn’t yet know whether God would have him serve as a minister, he does think that God is doing something very significant in his life. He committed himself to two things: to having a closer walk with Christ, and to knowing the Scriptures more thoroughly.” We expect to be able to show you more in future years to come, and so we will continue to sow at the Timothy Conference.

## Four Favorites

### Books on Prayer

**1. Matthew Henry, *A Method for Prayer*. 1710. Reprint, Christian Heritage, 1994.**

This is by far my favorite book on prayer. It has served many generations of Christians. Henry organizes his work according to the standard categories of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and intercession. He also provides a few examples or forms of prayer for various occasions. He writes Scripture phrase after Scripture phrase, one category of prayer language following another, for nearly two hundred pages! Remarkably, he says in his introduction, “I have only set down such as first occurred to my thoughts.”

Henry taught me that the whole Bible is to serve as my prayer book. From it, Christ’s disciples learn how to employ “sacred dialect,” as he calls it.

Henry also taught me that the one who prays publicly must not look only within his own heart as he prays, but must see “the edification also of those that join with him; and both in matter and words should have an eye to that.”

Thankfully, Henry’s *Method* is now available in a new edition edited and revised by O. Palmer Robertson, entitled *A Way to Pray*, rendered more accessible by modern English usage (Banner of Truth, 2010).

**2. Isaac Watts, *A Guide to Prayer*. 1715. Reprint, Banner of Truth, 2001.**

Watts covers much of the same ground as Henry with, if anything, more eloquence. So moved was I by his opening chapter that I included most of it in *The Family Worship Book*. Watts discusses the practical aspects of prayer (which Henry does not), such as expression, voice, and gesture, as well as the gift, grace, and spirit of prayer. He asks, “Why should the rules of speaking to God be so much untaught?” For him, it is a “divine skill” to be “cultivated.”

**3. Kenneth Boa, *Handbook to Prayer*. Trinity House Publishers, 1993.**

This is a helpful resource for Scripture-based prayer.

**4. Douglas F. Kelly, *If God Already Knows, Why Pray?* Christian Focus, 1995.**

For a comprehensive, readable, inspiring book on prayer, one which faithfully and convincingly deals with prayer and the sovereignty of God, this one tops my list.

Terry L. Johnson

## Out of the Mouth ...

My son Val, age 4, was thinking about communion: “The bread is Jesus’ body.... But little kids don’t take it, right?”  
I replied: “Right.”

Val, nodding knowingly, continued: “Right. Because it has bones.”

—Anneke Fesko  
Escondido, Calif.

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

# Missionary Dating



**To: JuneMcrea@ustel.com**  
**From: rose@hotfone.com**

*Hi Sis,*

My heart is heavy. I know Kelly has already told you she's dating an unbeliever, Ryan. Maybe we should have encouraged her to stay home longer and stick with the part-time jobs. I feel like we've failed her somehow.

What should I do? She doesn't even want to listen to me.

*Love, Rose*

**To: rose@hotfone.com**  
**From: JuneMcrea@ustel.com**

*Dear Rose,*

Pray, pray, pray! Get those knees on the floor. Our first instinct as moms is to "do" something, but for now, just pray.

This is not about how you failed. All of us could have been better parents. We struggle, we try, we teach them as best we can—and all along God is working both through us and in spite of us.

Pray for the Lord to protect and guide Kelly. Pray for Kelly's church to be faithful in pursuing and reaching out to her. Pray for the right words to say if you get an opening for discussion.

Praying will remind you that this is in the Lord's hands. Your faith is being shaped in this crucible; you are learning to wait on God and trust him.

*Love, June*

**To: JuneMcrea@ustel.com**  
**From: KellyTodd@linkmac.com**

*Dear Aunt June,*

I guess I haven't written in a long time. I didn't know what to say. Well, Mrs. Hillston, a widow at church, stopped Ryan and me downtown on our

lunch break one day. She lives downtown, and asked me over for lunch the next day.

She was really sweet. She fixed me an incredible lunch with homemade bread and told me about working as a telephone operator before she got married. But then it got awkward. Over coffee after lunch, she started asking who that boy was that she'd seen me with. She also asked why she hadn't seen me in church much lately.

So ... I've been going to church. But I'm still dating Ryan. Maybe I could lead him to Christ. It's not like we're supposed to cut ourselves off from the world; we're supposed to be salt and light, right?

*Kelly*

**To: KellyTodd@linkmac.com**  
**From: JuneMcrea@ustel.com**

*Dear Kelly,*

Thank you so much for writing. You're talking about what we used to call "missionary dating," and it's dangerous business, hon. Yes, there are times when it works out. But often it doesn't. Three women in our church attend alone, or with only their children, because they married men who did not love the Lord and have never changed. The trials they face are fierce: pressure from their husbands, questions from their children about why church is so important if Daddy doesn't go. I'm convinced that people can be lonely in such marriages.

And it would be even worse if you left the church yourself. It doesn't necessarily happen overnight. It can happen through continual compromises over time, as you drift further and further from the Lord. You already know how easy it is to stop attending for a time.

True, the Bible tells us to be salt and light. But there's a difference between influencing the world and joining forces

with it. The Lord warns us not to be "unequally yoked" because he *loves* us!

*Love, Aunt June*

**To: JuneMcrea@ustel.com**  
**From: KellyTodd@linkmac.com**

*Dear Aunt June,*

Well, the joke's on me. After all that, Ryan broke up with *me*! I know you'll be happy, anyway. Half of me is so mad I can't stand to look at him. But I'll admit that I had my ears open in church yesterday in a different way. God does love us better than some loser of a guy.

*Kelly*

**To: KellyTodd@linkmac.com**  
**From: JuneMcrea@ustel.com**

Oh, sweetie, I'm sorry. I know it hurts you to go through this. Please don't grow bitter. Have you considered that you might find solace for your loneliness in your church, even though almost everyone, as you once told me, is "married with four kids"? Why don't you start attending the women's group? As you develop friendships and your own relationship with God grows, some of the women might be able to introduce you to godly young men. Give it time. See what the Lord has in store for you.

Your note was short, but I was encouraged to hear that the Lord opened your ears in church. Call out to him! I am praying for you daily. Write or call anytime. I love you, and more than that, the Lord loves you. He never forsakes us. That's more real than anything you will ever pursue in this world.

*Love, Aunt June*

*This is the last in a series of fictitious e-mail exchanges written by three women in the OPC.*

# July

1. **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Uruguay. Pray for the family as they enter their final months of language school. / **Everett and Kimberly Henes**, Hillsdale, Mich. Pray that God would bless Hillsdale OPC's community Bible study. / **Thomas E. Tyson** and **William H. Smith**, theological advisors for Great Commission Publications.
2. **Kent and Laurie Harding**, Doniphan, Mo. Pray for increasing fellowship with visitors at Sovereign Grace Reformed Church. / Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Janet Birkmann**. / Pray for **Danny Olinger**, Christian Education general secretary, as he edits *New Horizons*.
3. **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for students and teachers at this week's English/Bible camp. / **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Cedarburg, Wis. Ask God to grant joy to members of Mercy OPC as they speak of Christ. / Short-term missions coordinator **David Nakhla**. Pray for the teams serving in Haiti, Quebec, Uruguay, and Japan this summer.
4. **Brandon and Laurie Wilkins**, Crystal Lake, Ill. Pray for Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church as they bear witness to the gospel in their community. / **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for wisdom in developing strategies for ministry. / OPC administrative office staff: **Doug Watson**, **Kathy Bube**, **Jim Scott**, **Jan Giandomenico**, and **Pat Clawson**.
5. Pray for missionary associate **Debra Blair**, Quebec, Canada, working with the "English for Kids" Bible camps this summer. / **Todd and Julie Wagenmaker**, St. Louis, Mo. Pray for Gateway OPC as they begin receiving denominational aid. / Pray **George Cottenden**, stated clerk of the General Assembly, as he works with the assistant clerk to edit the journal of the GA for publication.
6. **John and Lois Hilbelink**, Rockford, Ill. Praise God for opportunities that Providence OPC has had to share the gospel. / **Woody and Laurie Lauer**, Numazu, Japan. Pray that many children will come to Sunday school and hear the gospel. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
7. **Cal and Edie Cummings**, Sendai, Japan. Pray for their efforts to establish contacts that will open the door to witness. / **Tim and Joanne Beauchamp**, Bridgton, Maine. Pray for steady growth and unity at Pleasant Mountain Presbyterian Church. / Pray for productive service for **the summer church interns**.
8. **Jeremiah and Elizabeth Montgomery**, State College, Pa. Pray for new families to come to Resurrection OPC. / **Kaz and Katie Yaegashi**, Yamagata, Japan. Pray for the ministry at Yamagata Chapel. / Summer interns **Joshua (and Kristen) McKamy**, Redeemer OPC, Danville, Pa.; **Mike (and Katy) Myers**, Faith OPC, Elmer, N.J.
9. Pray for affiliated missionary **Linda Karner**, Japan, as she prepares to return to Japan next month. / **Joby and Carla Fowler**, Gastonia, N.C. Pray for growth at Reformation OPC. / **Alan (and Carrie) Dueck**, yearlong intern at Church of the Covenant in Hackettstown, N.J.
10. **Carlos and Diana Cruz**, San Juan, P.R. Pray for the discipleship and ministry of Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada. / Affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne**, Urayasu, Japan. Thank God for a growing circle of contacts. / **The Psalter-Hymnal Composition Subcommittee**.
11. **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for stability during politically challenging times in Haiti. / **Matthew and Jessica Figura**, Cookeville, Tenn. Pray for growth and unity within the congregation of Faith Presbyterian Church. / Summer interns **Jeremy Logan**, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Mansfield, Ohio; **Jeffrey (and Maryfrances) Carter**, Trinity Reformed Church, Wilmington, N.C.



Hope Reformed Presbyterian Church in Pella, Iowa, is at the end of its four years of field support from the Committee on Home Missions. Pastor Chuck Muether has energetically reached out to the community and ministered to the congregation and beyond. He says, "God has blessed our congregation with employment, expanding families, and new homes and home improvements. The church faithfully comes to all the studies and the enthusiasm for Hope has not waned a bit." But worship attendance has not risen past the thirties. Please pray that a bunker mentality will not take over. Pray that the congregation's finances will be adequate. Many people are in the church's ministry network, but have not committed to the mission work. Especially ask the Lord to add four committed families to the church.

12. Home Missions associate general secretary **Dick Gerber**. / Pray for missionary associate **Marcie Winslow**, Haiti, as she assists with the schooling of the Hopp children. / **Mark (and Karissa) Soud**, yearlong intern at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, Ariz.
13. Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson** as he meets with OP missionaries in Asia. / **Roberto and Marieta Laranjo**, Lowell, Mass. Pray that visitors will desire to join Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira. / Summer interns **Michael (and Rachel) Borg**, Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod, Cape Cod, Mass.; **John (and HaeSung) Keegan**, Calvary OPC, Glenside, Pa.
14. **William and Deddeh Joe**, Philadelphia, Pa. (Liberian). Pray that the people of Grace OPC will learn to observe all that Christ has commanded. / Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube**. / Summer interns **David Landow**, Nakaale, Uganda; **Rhett Lemmel**, Providence OPC, Mantua, N.J.
15. Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Czech Republic (on furlough). Pray for balance in scheduling travel and time for rest and refreshment. / **Terry and Karen Thole**, Fargo, N.Dak. Pray that the Lord would add new families to Grace OPC. / **Sarah Pederson**, *New Horizons* proofreader.
16. Home Missions administrative assistant **Sean Gregg**. / Pray for **James and Jenny Knox**, M.D. and R.N., Nakaale, Uganda (on furlough), as they speak at the Presbytery of Ohio's youth camp this week. / Summer intern **Bradley (and Cinnamon) Peppo** at Covenant OPC in Vandalia, Ohio.
17. Pray for **Eric and Dianna Tuininga** and their children, traveling to Uganda tomorrow. / **Tom and Martha Albaugh**, Pittsburgh, Pa. Pray for more new people to attend worship at Redeemer OPC Mission. / Summer intern **Jeffrey (and Dawn) Scott** at New Covenant Community Church in New Lenox, Ill.
18. **Philip and Jenny Dharmawirya**, Philadelphia, Pa. (Indonesian). Pray that God will use Emmanuel Chapel's Sunday school to nurture their children. / **Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa. Pray for Brian as he works with local churches. / Summer intern **Geoffrey (and Hannah) Grissom** at First Congregational Church in Merrimack, N.H.
19. **Ethiopian Reformed Presbyterian Church**. Pray for the pastors and elders. / **Gabe and Callie Fluhrer**, Cary, N.C. Pray that God will bless Shiloh Presbyterian Church with additional families. / **Joshua (and Jessica) Lyon**, yearlong intern at Branch of Hope OPC in Torrance, Calif.
20. **Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, Ky. Pray that God would make members of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church ready to bear witness to their neighbors. / Pray for **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda, who resume their labors after a short furlough. / Army chaplains **Chris (and Virginia) Wisdom**, **Earl (and Susan) Vanderhoff**, and **Paul (and Mary) Berghaus**.
21. **Al and Laurie Tricarico**, Nakaale, Uganda (on furlough). Pray for Al as he speaks to churches in the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic this month. / **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray for Keys Presbyterian Church, that God would save local families. / **Stephen Pribble**, web-site senior technical associate.
22. Pray for **Chris Walmer**, area home missionary, as he supports the Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania's church plants. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the Nakaale congregation's spiritual growth. / Summer intern **Silverio (and Lisa) Gonzalez** at Faith Presbyterian Church in Garland, Tex.
23. Missionary associates **Heather Foss** and **Leah Hopp**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Heather's labors at the Clinic. / **Todd and Cheryl Bordow**, Rio Rancho, N.Mex. Pray for visitors at the OPC of Rio Rancho. / Air Force chaplain **C. Phillip (and Melanie) Hollstein III**.
24. **Christopher and Della Chelпка**, Tucson, Ariz. Pray for God's continuing blessing on Covenant OPC. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. F. as he works with a short-term ministry team visiting their city. / Summer interns **Caleb (and Erika) Smith**, Grace OPC, Vienna, Va.; **Brad Jones**, Harvest OPC, Wyoming, Mich.
25. Missionary associates **E. C.** and **E. H.**, Asia. Pray for a fruitful summer term of teaching and learning experiences. / Home Missions general secretary **Ross Graham**. / **Andrew (and Rebekah) Miller**, yearlong intern at Bethel Reformed Presbyterian Church in Fredericksburg, Va.
26. **Chad and Katie Mullinix**, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Pray for deepening fellowship among believers at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church. / Missionary associates **M. and M. C.** and **T. L. L.**, Asia. Pray for opportunities for witness during the summer term. / Summer intern **Paul (and Jana) Sandbulte** at Spencer Mills OPC in Gowen, Mich.
27. **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. M. as he works with local groups. / **Brian and Sara Chang**, Cottonwood, Ariz. Pray that God would bless Verde Valley Reformed Chapel with growth. / **Jonathan (and Lauryn) Shishko**, yearlong intern at Reformation Presbyterian Church in Queens, N.Y.
28. **Stephen and Catalina Payson**, Mifflinburg, Pa. Pray that God's elect will be brought to Providence OPC. / Missionary associates **T. D.** and **H. L.**, Asia. Pray for their labors this summer. / **Jason (and Amanda) Kirklin**, yearlong intern at Grace Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.
29. **Church in the Horn of Africa**. Pray for wisdom and grace for church leaders. / **Mark and Michele Winder**, Collierville, Tenn. Pray for a better meeting place for Wolf River Presbyterian Church. / Summer intern **Andrew (and Jacqueline) Minatelli** at Church of the Lakes in Brainerd, Minn.
30. **Larry and Holly Wilson**, Airdrie, Alberta. Pray that God would raise up officers at Redeemer OPC. / **Steve and Linda Larson**, Uruguay. Pray for additional gifted and faithful leaders for the churches in Rivera. / Summer interns **Steve (and Sarah) Moulson**, Providence OPC, Temecula, Calif; **Andrew (and Elizabeth) Barshinger**, Immanuel OPC, Bellmawr, N.J.
31. Pray for the health and strength of retired missionaries **Betty Andrews**, **Greet Rietkerk**, **Young and Mary Lou Son**, and **Fumi Uomoto**. / **Drew and Sonya Adcock**, Williamsport, Pa. Pray that visitors will come to Omega OPC. / **Ryan (and Jennifer) Stoddard**, yearlong intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Ill.

# New Missionaries to Uganda

## Autobiography of Eric Tuininga

I was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, when my father was a student at Calvin Theological Seminary. I was raised in Canada, where my father served as a minister in Christian Reformed churches—in Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario.

My parents were very godly and instructed me in the ways of the Lord. I attended Christian school (but was homeschooled in ninth grade). I remember when, as a child, I was first convicted of my sin. This conviction was combined with a delight in Christ and an eager desire to follow him for his glory. This was the beginning of serious pursuit of Christ and living for him, seeking to enjoy him in every situation, and trusting in him for forgiveness and grace.

During my teenage years, our congregation left the CRC and eventually joined the newly formed United Reformed Churches in North America. At about the same time, I began to wonder if I was called to serve as a minister.

After graduating from high school, I attended Geneva College for one year and then transferred to Covenant College, from which I graduated in 1998. While at college, I attended some excellent churches, where I

heard excellent preaching and met godly Reformed believers.

After college, I was unsure whether to pursue the ministry or a degree in law, so I took a job in Atlanta, working as a paralegal. This was a time of spiritual growth. I was living all alone in a strange city, far from friends and family, and this forced me to turn more fully to Christ.

In spring 1999, Dianna and I began a relationship, and we married in May 2000. Our marriage has been a joyful, sanctifying blessing as we encourage one another and serve Christ together.

I worked next for an insurance company in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and then a law firm in eastern North Carolina. The Lord blessed us with our first child, Timothy, in March 2001.

In fall 2001, we moved to the Chicago area, where I attended Mid-America Reformed Seminary for three years.

At Mid-America, I was blessed by solid instruction and examples of godliness. My sense of calling to the ministry was confirmed by my first summer internship with a church in Edmonton, Alberta. During our years at seminary, the Lord blessed us with two daughters, Katelyn and Rebecca. After seminary, I served for about six months in what is now Momenca OPC in Momenca, Illinois.

In fall 2004, we moved to Salem, Oregon, after I accepted a call to pastor Immanuel's Reformed Church, a congregation of the URCNA. Our years there were richly blessed in many ways. We came to know and love many godly families. We saw the hunger God's people have for his Word to be proclaimed. We grew in our walk with Christ. God gave me a deeper awareness of his grace, a deeper trust in him, and a deeper desire to serve him.

Since 2004, the Lord has blessed us with five more children. Matthew and Caedmon (he goes by "Jimmy") were adopted from Liberia in 2007. William was born in the fall of 2007, Benaiah in 2009, and Talitha in 2011. Christ's call to love and shepherd our children has forced us to depend on him alone for all our strength, and he has shown himself to be faithful.

After graduating from seminary, I hoped someday to be called to foreign missionary service, but I needed to be able to preach and evangelize in my own

The Tuingas: (seated) William, Eric (holding Benaiah), Dianna (holding Talitha); (standing) Jimmy, Katelyn, Timothy, Matthew, Rebecca



culture before seeking to minister in another land. For seven years in Salem, we saw God sanctifying us and blessing the ministry there. God also opened our eyes to see the great need for preachers and teachers in Uganda.

In March 2011, Dianna and I spent two weeks in Mbale, Uganda, where I taught a course at Knox Theological College, and we were able to get a little feel for life in Mbale. Over the summer of 2011, we continued to seek the Lord's wisdom as to how we could best be a blessing in his kingdom. In fall 2011, I accepted a call from the Committee on Foreign Missions. On April 27, 2012, I was installed as a member of the Presbytery of the Northwest of the OPC.

As we look to the future, our confidence is in Christ. He is able to open doors for ministry. He is able to watch over our family in such a way that we thrive. He is able to fill us with his presence, so that his glory shines in everything we do. I ask you to pray for the churches in Uganda, and pray that Christ will provide us with all we need to be a blessing to his church there.

## Autobiography of Dianna Tuininga

I was born into a world of chaos. My biological parents were sixteen and seventeen when I let out my first cry of life. Because of God's amazing grace, my time with them lasted only six weeks before the Lord began to pull me out of the pile of pots ready for destruction and turn me into a vessel of honor. Humanly speaking, the Georgia Department of Family and Children's Services, together with local law enforcement, pulled me from the hotel room that I was living in and the box that served as my crib. But really, it was God looking down that hot summer night and deciding that he would breathe new life into a weak little baby of whom the world took no notice.

My new life started in a foster home in Waynesboro, Georgia. My foster par-

ents were incredible people with a heart for orphans. They took me into their lives as they would their own daughter. During my time with them, they raised me in the Lord, faithfully bringing me to church and praying that God would provide for me a family that would continue this life in the Lord.

And God answered their prayers. In September 1979, at the age of three, I was adopted by a church-going family. What a gift: a dad, a mom, and two brothers to walk with me on earth! I was also given the gift of a church in which I heard the gospel faithfully proclaimed each week. Yet the world and its cheap glories still caught my attention.

But the God who called me was faithful, and during my teenage years I came to understand my sin. A true faith in Christ, leading to repentance, took hold of me, and small seeds of desiring to serve him were planted. During the remainder of my teen years, God slowly brought me out of the depths and put me on a new path. While I am nowhere near perfect, I can, by God's grace, look back and see how far he has brought me, and I am in awe of his love for me.

After graduating from high school in 1995, I spent a gap year in Japan with Mission to the World. I taught first through third grades at Keiyo Christian School in Chiba (outside Tokyo). While I don't think that I made a very good teacher, I learned a lot that year about living passionately for the sake of the kingdom.

In the fall of 1996, I began my studies at Covenant College. I majored in psychology, with a minor in sociology. As my senior year was approaching, the opportunity arose for me to study for a semester in Slovakia. I was so excited about the chance to tour Europe. But ten weeks before departure, the most amazing guy dampened my enthusiasm for Europe quite a bit by asking me out on a date. Eight short weeks later, we were engaged. My European adventure turned into adventures in finding Internet cafés and long-distance calling cards in every city we visited, just to hear the voice of,

or read a few words from, my soon-to-be husband, Eric Tuininga.

Eric and I married shortly after graduation and moved into a sanctifying, single-wide trailer in North Carolina for a year before heading to the Chicago area, where Eric attended Mid-America Reformed Seminary. After seminary, we moved to Salem, Oregon, where Eric became the pastor of Immanuel's Reformed Church.

Now I am a full-time lover of God, husband, children, and home. The Lord has blessed us with eight amazing kids. Timothy is 11; he loves Legos, electronics, and anything that he can take apart with his Leatherman. Katelyn is 9; she's passionate about drawing, sewing, and taking care of babies. Matthew is 8; he is fascinated by anything with wheels and will take most any opportunity to run and jump. Rebecca is 7; she will gladly dress up as a princess and change any wet diaper (it's true!). Jimmy is delighted to finally be 6; he runs everywhere, is thrilled to finally be reading, and has a smile that will melt you. William is 4; being all boy, he loves life too much to stick to one or two favorite activities. Benaiah is our sweet two-year-old; he's passionate about Thomas the Tank Engine, and he loves to sing any song he hears. And finally, Talitha is our baby and the sweet, chubby, enrapturing-everybody-when-they-are-supposed-to-be-working, cooing caboose to our crowd.

We now look forward with eager anticipation to moving to Uganda and to the work to which God has called Eric and our family. All of our confidence to undertake such a work is in Christ. We are so thankful for another opportunity to live beyond ourselves, so that Christ receives all the glory for anything good that comes from us.

### Telenews

Call 215/830-9424, ext. \*833, for the latest Foreign Missions news and prayer requests. New editions: **July 6, 20.**

## UPDATE

## Ministers

- It was noted at the meeting of the Presbytery of the Midwest on September 16, 2011, that a letter of transfer to the PCA had been granted for **William B. Acker III**, who was taking a call there.
- **Gabriel N. E. Fluhrer**, formerly a minister in the PCA, was installed as an evangelist by the Presbytery of the Southeast on May 11, to serve as organizing pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian Church in Cary, N.C.
- The pastoral relationship between **Mark J. Larson** and Grace OPC in Fair Lawn, N.J., was dissolved as of April 24.
- **Andrew T. Moody** was installed 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., a mission work of the Presbytery.
- **Lawrence B. Oldaker**, after serving as organizing pastor of Lake OPC in Mayfield Village, Ohio, for three years, resumed his full-time labors as regional home missionary of the Presbytery of Ohio on June 1.
- **Eric W. Tuininga**, formerly a minister in the URCNA, was installed as a missionary evangelist to Uganda by the Presbytery of the Northwest on April 27.

## LETTERS

## ADAM AND COVENANT THEOLOGY

Editor:

Thank you for the excellent articles in the March issue upholding the historicity of Adam and reasserting the importance of that fact in relation to Adam being the federal/representative head of the entire human race and typifying the “last Adam,” Jesus Christ, as the federal/representative head of God’s elect. The doctrine of these two federal heads is foundational to covenant theology and the Westminster Standards. Church his-

tory has taught us that those who ignore, subvert, or reject this doctrine lead the church astray into other serious errors.

Ed Urban  
Wilmington, Del.

## CHURCH MUSIC

Editor:

Thank you for the attention you gave to hymn singing and accompaniment in the June edition. While God commands skill from his church musicians (Ps. 33:3), he only requires anyone with a “barbaric yawp” or who is timorous to sing “heartily, as unto the Lord” (Col. 3:23).

The revised *Trinity Hymnal* (pp. 9–10) exhorts the accompanist: “Prayerful analysis of each hymn (both tune and text) will enable you to play each stanza with sensitivity to its unique content.” A worthy target, even if we often fall short.

John E. Taylor  
Farmington Hills, Mich.

Editor:

In the June issue, Mr. Olinger defends the 1944 Committee’s majority conclusion that singing uninspired hymns does not violate the regulative principle by reiterating the report’s argument that “the Old Testament itself did not command the Israelites to employ only the Psalter as the exclusive manual of praise in worship.”

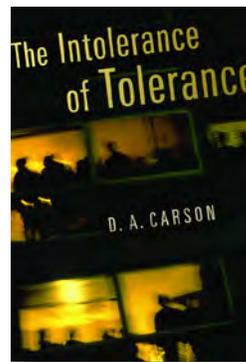
It is true that Israel was never *explicitly* commanded to use the Psalter alone, but, as the WCF (1.6) teaches us, an ordinance of worship may also be established *implicitly* by “good and necessary consequence” (i.e., by deduction of logic). The Puritans and the Covenanters argued that the logical conclusion, that God intends only the Psalms to be used in regular worship, may be deduced from the fact that only the Psalms are in the *Book of Psalms*. Exclusive psalmists have always acknowledged that other (inspired) songs were used on particular occasions prior to the close of the canon. However, not one of those other songs—Old or New Testament—was ever included by the Holy

Spirit in what appears to be a manual of songs for perpetual use in worship.

Bobby Phillips  
Morgantown, W. Va.

## REVIEWS

*The Intolerance of Tolerance*, by D. A. Carson. Published by Eerdmans, 2012. Hardback, 256 pages, list price \$24.00. Reviewed by Joel Pearce, an academic librarian and member of the URCNA. (Page numbers refer to the advanced proof copy.)



“Tolerance” has taken on golden calf status, being the predominant ideology in most areas of life. In his recent book, *The Intolerance of Tolerance*, D.

A. Carson tackles this ideology, arguing that it is not tolerance at all.

Carson argues that tolerance no longer means what it used to. At best it is veiled intolerance, and at worst it is tyrannical. The old tolerance, by contrast, acknowledges the existence of right and wrong and discoverable, defensible truth. This tolerance accepts “that a different or opposing position exists and deserves the right to exist” (p. 3). This tolerance respectfully engages in debates and criticisms.

The new tolerance is tolerant of all things on the surface, so long as no dogmatic, absolute, or judgmental remarks are made. This new tolerance has become part of the unquestioned plausibility structure, and it accepts (almost) all opinions and renders them equal. But under this view of tolerance, right and wrong cease to have meaning. It does not acknowledge specific truth, and rejects as intolerant any system of thought

that claims to have the truth. Thus, any disagreement is demonized as intolerant, leaving no room for anything but a spineless, tyrannical tolerance. The irony, not lost in the book's title, is that the new tolerance is actually vehemently intolerant of anything that isn't tolerant of the new tolerance: "No absolutism is permitted, except for the absolute prohibition of absolutism" (p. 13).

Of course, tolerance is not just an abstract concept, but the dominant thinking of the West, which is not to our credit:

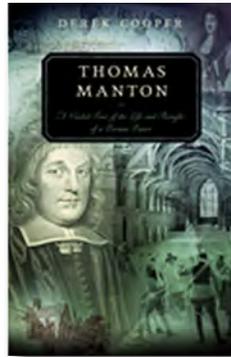
Cultures in other parts of the world often see in Western (new) tolerance not a mature and civilized culture worth emulating, but a childish and manipulative culture that refuses to engage with serious moral issues. . . . Far from bringing peace, the new tolerance is progressively becoming more intolerant, fostering moral myopia, proving unable to engage in serious and competent discussions about truth. (p. 139)

Well researched and engagingly written, this book provides many examples of this new tolerance's influence in society, including religion, politics, academics, and the news media. But Carson isn't a paranoid alarmist merely decrying the loss of the modern age or the takeover of secular humanism. Instead, he firmly engages with popular and academic sources, building his case that the old tolerance is necessary for a truly free society, while the new tolerance spirals into inconsistency and ultimately tyranny. The final chapter offers ten practical reflections, which are helpful (if brief). The only blemish this reviewer found is Carson's digression on democracy, with his meandering reflections on the separation of church and state. This fault is most likely with the reviewer, however.

The *Intolerance of Tolerance* is intellectually stimulating without being stuffy or overly academic. Carson is a gifted writer with deep insight. This work is attuned to mixed audiences of academics and the public, Christians and skeptics. It is recommended for each of these audiences.

\* \* \*

***Thomas Manton: A Guided Tour of the Life and Thought of a Puritan Pastor*, by Derek Cooper. Published by P&R Publishing, 2011. Paperback, 240 pages, list price \$14.99. Reviewed by OP pastor James A. La Belle.**



While Thomas Manton is not familiar to many laymen, his commentaries and sermons sit on the shelves of many pastors. And yet, even those pastors who enjoy this "mighty mountain of sound theology" (as Spurgeon once referred to Manton's *Works*) do not really know Thomas Manton. Derek Cooper (a professor at Biblical Theological Seminary) introduces us to the man behind the mountain, bringing Manton into the light by looking at his life, writings, and legacy.

In Part One, Cooper traces the life of Manton as a seventeenth-century Puritan pastor. He tells of his upbringing in Somerset, his education at Oxford, his ordination as a pastor of Presbyterian conviction within the Church of England, and his lectureship in Sowton, where he acquired a reputation as a gifted preacher of Presbyterianism. He then became a respected leader of the Presbyterians in the London area. Whether as a scribe for the Westminster Assembly or as the author of the preface to the second edition of the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1658 or in his preaching, Manton pleaded for the establishment of Presbyterianism in the Church of England as the best means to organize the church and unify the nation. But Manton's plea was ignored and the Presbyterian cause in England was ended by the Act of Uniformity that established Episcopacy in 1662. The rest of Manton's life was a struggle between nonconformity and conformity, as he refused to conform and

yet desperately wanted to be included in the Church of England.

In Part Two, Cooper considers Manton's work as a biblical interpreter by taking a close look at his commentary on James. His analysis shows us (1) Manton's excellence as an exegete, (2) his convictions as an expositor, (3) his interaction with the interpretive tradition before him, and (4) his stance regarding the integrity and canonicity of James—a matter of much debate in his day.

In Part Three, Cooper introduces us to Manton as the "King of Preachers" by sharing three of his sermons. Cooper's selection opens a window into both Manton's style and his person. The first is a sermon on the necessity of meditation. It shows Manton urging the saints to live as Christians. The second is a sermon preached before Parliament and presents him trying to be a faithful expositor of God's Word and yet speak to the social crises of his day. The third is a sermon on the essence of the gospel, namely, that we deny ourselves and follow Christ.

I highly recommend Cooper's book. It whets the appetite for more of Manton. It introduces the turbulent times in which the English Puritans lived and in which God strengthened them as expositors and pastors. It also helps us to appreciate the Puritan heritage on which we stand as Orthodox Presbyterians.

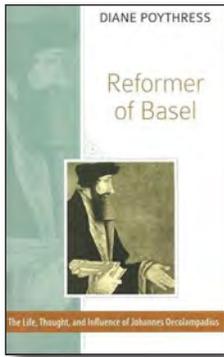
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***Reformer of Basel: The Life, Thought, and Influence of Johannes Oecolampadius*, by Diane Poythress. Published by Reformation Heritage Books, 2011. Paperback, 230 pages, list price \$25.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Brian De Jong.**

## Want to Start an OPC Church in Your Area?

Here's the form to initiate contact:

<http://chmce.org/want-to-start-an-opc-in-your-area-form>



At first glance, one might assume that sixteen flyleaf recommendations from scholars representing fifteen seminaries and Bible colleges would

constitute overkill. But after reading Diane Poythress's book on Johannes Oecolampadius, I conclude that those professors didn't say nearly enough to commend this excellent volume.

The name Oecolampadius is as unknown to most people as it is difficult to pronounce. Who was this man? Why have we never heard of him? The obscurity of this early Reformer is due, in part, to the fact that his works have not been translated into English. Furthermore, he is certainly overshadowed by Martin Luther and John Calvin—both of whom he influenced to one degree or another.

Poythress has done the Christian world a distinct service by providing us with an engaging biography of this forgotten forerunner of the Reformation. Between 1482 and 1531, this bright comet illuminated the slumbering church in Europe. The story of his life is itself stirring and provides ample insights into those very early years of change in Europe.

His ministry in Basel lasted only eight years, yet it was fruitful almost beyond belief. His teaching, his writing, his pastoral ministry, and his groundbreaking theological work were amazing. Sadly, for the most part, his work has never been rendered into English. As a treat, Poythress provides her own translation of portions of his commentary on Isaiah in an appendix. She deliberately seeks to prime the pump by encouraging other translators to focus on Oecolampadius.

The book is divided into five chapters, the first of which focuses on his life story. Then she examines his colleagues in the kingdom—showing how he influenced other Reformers.

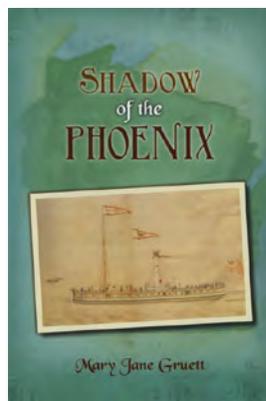
The third chapter concentrates on

the exegesis and hermeneutics of scriptural studies. Next she traces various doctrinal issues and shows how they impacted the ongoing work of renewal. The final chapter is about his labors as an author.

The book is a pleasant blend of biography, history, exegesis, and theology. It informs the mind, but also challenges the heart. The book is a thoroughly readable introduction to a long-lost father in the faith.

\* \* \*

***Shadow of the Phoenix*, by Mary Jane Gruett. Published by Sheboygan County Historical Research Center, 2011. Paperback, 148 pages, list price \$15.95. Reviewed by OP member Mary Jo Miller.**



grapple with such questions, but what if they come to a fourteen-year-old boy? Mary Jane Gruett, a member of Bethel OPC in Oostburg, Wisconsin, has taken a vivid slice of history in which to tell the story of just such a boy, who survives, grows up, and finds hope in spite of tragedy and hardship. Her novel, produced in collaboration with the Sheboygan

## Fall Singles Retreat

Machen Retreat • October 5–7

- Venue: Machen Retreat and Conference Center near McDowell, Virginia
- Designed for the single men and women of the OPC (and other churches)
- Spiritual growth, fun, fellowship
- Speaker: Norman DeJong
- Detailed information and online registration: [machen.org/2012/02/23/fall-singles-retreat](http://machen.org/2012/02/23/fall-singles-retreat)

County Historical Research Center, provides children with an attractive history lesson and a good story.

It's mid-nineteenth century in the Netherlands when Derk's story begins. He is a puny eleven-year-old farm boy. He has a best friend, a faithful dog, and a lot of trouble. His family is poor. Everything stinks, and everyone is hungry because of the potato blight. The civil authorities are persecuting the church. They put Derk's father in prison. His best friend turns against him. And to top it all off, his parents want to emigrate to America—without his beloved dog!

It hardly seems that things could get any worse, but Derk arrives in Wisconsin as a shipwrecked orphan after disaster overtakes the *Phoenix*, the steamship on which he and his family had traveled from Boston. He meets with many kindnesses as he bounces from one place to another, always working for his keep, but never getting any closer to his goal of the education his father wanted for him.

The story is loaded with authentic details, such as the importance of the Dutch woman's Sunday headdress, how to gut a Lake Michigan whitefish, why a stagecoach horn doesn't need to be

## Positions Available

**Pastor:** Grace Reformed Church (OPC) in Walkerton, Indiana, is searching for a pastor. If you are seeking a church, please submit your résumé to [office@gracewalkerton.org](mailto:office@gracewalkerton.org) or mail it to: Clerk of Session, Dan Zylstra, 700 Van Buren St., P.O. Box 105, Walkerton, IN 46574. Our current pastor will begin serving as a regional home missionary on July 1.

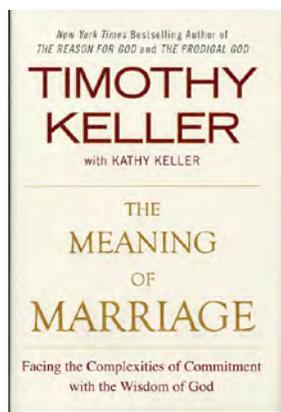
## NEWS, VIEWS, REVIEWS (cont.)

very loud, and a practical alternative to traditional medical training. The character development is edifying. Derk has few choices, but puts his hand willingly to all the work that comes his way. When he finally does have choices, he prays for guidance. The anger he has carried since leaving home is finally dealt with as he accepts his new life and country.

Families who read the book together will find lots to talk about. Classroom teachers will find it the basis for a rich unit. Children, the Dutch of any age, and most folks in Wisconsin will find it of interest.

\* \* \*

*The Meaning of Marriage*, by **Tim Keller**. Published by **Dutton Adult**, 2011. **Hardback, 288 pages, list price \$25.95. Reviewed by OP pastor Dick Ellis.**



Christian marriages, but he is also an apologist for both marriage and the gospel to those in our skeptical, secular culture.

Keller combines reflection on bibli-

cal texts (in particular, Genesis 2 and Ephesians 5) with a critical assessment of recent shifts in our culture's view of human freedom and responsibility. He seeks to persuade a suspicious generation of the timelessness of God's word and the resilience of marriage.

Keller notes the shift in the way marriage has been viewed in modern culture. Traditionally, people found freedom in binding themselves to the duties of covenant marriage. A man became truly masculine through self-mastery, not self-indulgence. For the secularist, the goal of marriage has changed to self-actualization: finding personal, emotional, and sexual fulfillment. Marriages implode when two people—inside or outside the church—are in it for themselves.

In stark contrast to the world's view, Keller offers a radically Christian mission for marriage: "to teach us more about our sins in unique and profound ways and to grow us out of them through someone who speaks the truth in love." Such a view requires a strong, gracious Savior!

Marriage as companionship and friendship is preserved by the primary responsibility to submit to one another out of reverence to Christ (Eph. 5:21). As one abandons his or her self-interest to serve the other, one practices the hardest aspect of marriage, putting your mate's needs ahead of your own "intentionally and intensely." Headship, for Keller, does not negate the primary function of being each other's bondservant. Such servanthood would relieve many marriages of the heartache that accompanies a misap-

propriation of male headship and female submission.

This reviewer finds Keller's incisiveness bracing: self-centeredness is present in every marriage, and we often respond to our spouse's self-centeredness with our own self-centeredness. Stick by the commitment to act and serve in love, especially when you don't feel much delight! The cancer that corrupts marriage is insidious; the gospel cure is robust. Therein lies the joy and power of finding in our marriages the imitation of Christ's self-giving for his Bride.

Keller cites both biblical data and wise psychological and sociological observation in his discussion of singleness—a welcome addition to a Christian book on marriage. After giving biblical reasons for a Christian marrying only another Christian, he explains the terrible consequences of marrying an unbeliever. You lose transparency before your spouse concerning Christ and the gospel; you will talk about Jesus less, becoming inauthentic. You may even move Christ out of your conscious thoughts entirely.

Keller also argues against cohabiting before marriage on both biblical and surprising empirical grounds. Living together before marriage actually increases the likelihood of divorce, rather than helping you avoid it.

Keller's book is useful and provocative. This reviewer was drawn to examine his own selfishness and the glorious freedom of laying down his life for his partner, to which one is liberated by our Lord's grace and example.