

NEW HORIZONS

— in the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

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Christ at Christmas //
by Charles R. Biggs

DECEMBER 2014

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MEET SOME YOUNG MILLENNIALS IN THE OPC



by Judith Dinsmore



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in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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The Presbytery of the Dakotas met on September 23-24 at the new building of Reformation OPC in Elizabeth, Colorado. The stated clerk, Archibald A. Allison, is the ninth from the right. The moderator, Matthew Kingsbury, is the fifth from the right. The Presbytery conducted a public worship service on September 23, which was also a service of thanksgiving for the Lord's provision of this new building.



MEET SOME YOUNG MILLENNIALS IN THE OPC



JUDITH DINSMORE // To believe, and to know what you believe, is not the trend among young millennials. A full one-third of Americans aged 18–22 believe in “nothing in particular,” according to the Pew Research Center, and that number is growing at a rapid pace.

But some Orthodox Presbyterian young adults are defying these statistics. They not only know what they believe, but are living it out with passion, perseverance, and usually a solid sense of humor. Here are profiles of four such individuals from Orthodox Presbyterian churches across the United States.

Nathanael Woldegebriel *Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.*

Nathanael Woldegebriel thought he had it all figured out. After high school, he majored in architecture, studied abroad, travelled Europe, and got his degree from Temple University. But the smooth track stopped there.

“I graduated, and I thought, now what?” Woldegebriel remembered.

The school loans were starting to kick in, but nobody in architecture was hiring. He took a graveyard shift at a gas station for several months. “I was in a rut,” he said. “I thought, I’m going to be working at a gas station for the rest of my life!”

So he made a decision—perhaps unglamorous, but also courageous.

He decided to be an active part of his church and get involved in its various ministries. “I had time. I was just sitting at a gas station,” he said. The church was starting a Pioneer Club, so he sat

on the committee. When the club was off and running, Woldegebriel needed something else. He started typing phrases into Google. “I put in ‘Christian architecture student looking for



Nathanael Woldegebriel in Guatemala

internship,” he said. The first or second link that popped up was to Engineering Ministries International (EMI), a Christian nonprofit that devotes its skills to impoverished communities around the world. “I thought, that’s exactly what I want!” he remembered.

He had only a month to raise the necessary support for his trip to Guatemala with EMI, but he made the goal and even had a surplus, thanks to his church and family. He joked that as he was leaving, he knew his church better than ever before. After returning from an incredible experience with the growing Guatemalan school Colegio Juan Wesley, Woldegebriel said he had the same uncertainty that he had after graduating from college. But his commitment remained constant.

“I still will not give up going to church and actively being a member. In twenty or thirty years, that’s going to be something I know will be there. I’ll actively be seeking out Christians around me,” he said.

And he encourages other young students and graduates to do the same. Woldegebriel shared from experience that although it is easy to think that reading your Bible every morning in your dorm room is enough, it’s not really. “Worship is really beneficial,” he explained. “You need that support group.”

That is true even if worshipping requires something as difficult, yet simple, as going to bed at a reasonable time on Saturday instead of hanging out with friends. “Most people may think that what you’re doing is weird or unimportant, but that doesn’t mean it’s not important.... No matter what kind of pressures you get, hold onto your faith.”



Hannah Keller in Scotland

**Hannah Keller
Christ Covenant Church
in Dallas, Tex.**

Hannah Keller is happiest on the road. She has travelled on mission trips or study abroad trips to Uganda, to Scotland, to Romania, and twice to Berlin. “I love meeting new people and interacting with their cultures,” Keller said.

After graduating from high school, Keller was undecided about life goals. So she took a few gap years and traveled instead of heading to college—and she couldn’t be happier with that decision. “Traveling really opens your eyes to the world,” she said. “There’s really so much of God’s creation out there waiting for you to visit.” Once she did head to the University of Ar-

lington for a double major in anthropology and German, Keller knew exactly why she was there: “I went to college not necessarily to get a degree, but to learn about something I’m really passionate about.” She hopes to have a master’s degree within five years in forensic anthropology, an application of anthropology to a legal setting that professionally identifies an individual’s roots.

For Keller, being a Christian inevitably comes back to knowing people as people, wherever they are. “I like listening to people’s stories—where

they’ve been and what they’ve done and who they hope to become,” Keller explained. “I think that’s what Christians should be doing: reaching across borders and connecting with people and telling them about the gospel.... You’re not limited in sharing Christ just because you don’t have a theology degree.”

She told about meeting a couple on a train in Europe—he was Hungarian, she was Romanian, they communicated with each other in Italian, and they talked with Hannah in English. That is an example, Keller said, of people re-



Zac English in the greenhouse

lating across borders. She encouraged Americans to broaden their experience and learn another language, which offers “innumerable advantages.”

But of all the places she’s travelled, Keller said Uganda still “holds a special place in my heart.” She is hoping to return to Uganda next year as a missionary associate with the OPC Mission in Karamoja.

Zachariah English

Matthews OPC in Matthews, N.C.

On his tenth birthday, Zac English wasn’t asking for Lego sets or video games. Instead, he wanted a homebrewing kit for root beer. By his fifteenth birthday, English was making wine from fruits and juices—“Not because I like wine,” he quickly explained, “but because you can do it from home.” And a few years later, even though he didn’t actually like coffee, that same hankering for hands-on learning led him to start a coffee-roasting business, operating out of a converted gas grill.

He sells the coffee both by word of mouth and at a farmer’s market, and he’s not afraid of training on the spot. “I just feel like if I can learn something without having to pay a teacher, then maybe I should just take that route,” he explained. So instead of getting a business degree from a college or university, he took some books out of the library, honed Internet research skills, and started selling coffee.

English purchases his green coffee beans from a direct trade provider in Bolivia. “Direct trade” means that there’s only one middleman between the farmer and English, which ensures both fairness to the farmers and fresh coffee for English. “That’s the biggest thing you can have with coffee—that it’s fresh. It doesn’t matter so much where it came from or whether it’s organic; if it’s not fresh, it won’t taste good,” he said. The next project for English might be a coffee shop in Charlotte that directly supports third world farmers. “I think God can use something like that; it could be a really cool opportunity,” he said. On the other hand, he has worked

at a restaurant for years and knows how difficult it can be to make money from a small café.

So he is also considering becoming part of a subsistence farm partnership. He would live there and work part-time, producing enough meat, dairy, and grains to feed everyone on the farm while leaving time for other hobbies, businesses, and ministries. English believes that our culture is too oblivious to food’s origin. “I’d like to combat that,” he said. “I might not enjoy shooting a pig that I’ve raised for two years, but if you want to eat, you have to realize that something has to die in order for someone to live.” And that is a biblical truth that English wants to demonstrate, not just articulate.

“I want ministry to be a large part of what I do,” he concluded.

Lindsay Anne Dransfield

Columbia Presbyterian Church in Columbia, Md.

Lindsay Anne Dransfield is also an entrepreneur, but with a camera instead of a cookbook. After taking senior pictures for friends in high school, Dransfield started her own business: L.A. Birdie Photography. Armed with a Canon 6D and a growing clientele, Dransfield works in the Annapolis and D.C. areas.

However, the business of taking pictures is never predictable. “This is a very good career for exercising trust in God,” she explained with a laugh. “You never know for sure whether there will be enough ... but I’ve always had just what I need when I need it.” Dransfield’s artistic ministry also gives customers just what they need: honest



Lindsay Anne Dransfield

beauty. Her business’s tagline is “capturing ordinary magic,” which she describes as a fancy way of saying that she likes taking candid shots. “I like to help people feel beautiful because I really believe everyone is beautiful, even if they don’t feel that way—but I also like to be honest.”

Her penchant for realistic shots found its way into a class project when she photographed her church meeting together on a Sunday for worship and fellowship. “I wanted to show my class [that] my church is just a normal group of people,” Dransfield explained.

In an age of hyper-edited photos and sleek new self-identifying on social media, Dransfield also wants clients to know that she is just a normal person, too. She purposefully meets face-to-face with clients prior to meeting for a shoot. Dransfield isn’t interested in perpetuating a picture-perfect idea of life; when her fiancé’s mother was diagnosed with cancer, Dransfield used her skills to create a portfolio of pictures over three years, in a documentary style, portraying the fight with cancer as it happened with both its joys and its sorrows. Now the pictures are a “really special memory,” Dransfield explained.

“That is my hope with all the pictures I take,” she concluded. □

Judith Dinsmore, also a young millennial, is a member of Bethel OPC in Carson, N.D.

BEHOLDING THE GLORY OF CHRIST AT CHRISTMAS— WHAT DID SIMEON SEE?



CHARLES R. BIGGS // I have a favorite hill in my little town of Round Hill, Virginia, which I enjoy ascending at a particular time of morning in the summer months. The light has already dawned by the time I start climbing to the summit. The light helps me on my way up the hill, but I don't see the full glory of the sun until it

comes up over the mount.

This is descriptive of Simeon's place in redemptive history. He was living at the first light of the dawn of the last days. The light had dawned with the coming of Jesus in his incarnation, but Simeon did not behold the beautiful glory of the Son until his mother and father brought him into the temple. Although Simeon had believed God's promises and had lived righteously in the strength of them, he had yet to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus as he would.

Simeon was a righteous and devout man, full of faith, who eagerly anticipated the fulfillment of God's promises. He went by the Spirit's guidance into the temple one morning, and on that special day beheld the unfathomable love of God the Father, the wonderful Savior of the world, the light to the Gentiles, the glory of Israel, and the embodiment and realization of all of God's promises (Luke 2:25–32). Simeon beheld the

light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6). He rejoiced, saying, "My eyes have seen your salvation!" (Luke 2:30).

But What Did Simeon See?

Simeon saw a child who would have looked like any other—nothing extraordinary to outward appearances. There was no glow, no halo around baby Jesus' holy head. He was clothed in our humanity, in the likeness of sinful flesh, born in the likeness of men, and the glory that he had enjoyed as the eternal Son before the foundation of the world was cloaked (Isa. 53:2; John 17:5; Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:7).

But Simeon saw something special because the Holy Spirit showed it to him by giving him eyes of faith (as emphasized in Luke 2:25, 26, 27). We are told specifically that Simeon "came in the Spirit into the temple" (2:27). Simeon then received into his arms his blessed Savior-King (2:28), the very

revelation of God's salvation to sinners.

It is similar with us today. The Holy Spirit is still leading believers to behold the glory of Jesus. In order to behold who Christ is, and what this means for us, the Holy Spirit must make our dead hearts alive (Eph. 2:1–5). We need to be enabled to behold him with eyes of faith, having the eyes of our hearts enlightened by the power and grace of God (Eph. 1:17–19; 2 Cor. 4:6).

Do You See Him, Too?

Do you see just a child, merely a baby, or do you see the living God in human flesh to live and die for sinners, to be raised for our vindication and righteous declaration before a holy God, to ascend to God's right hand as the King of kings and Lord of lords? If you see this, then it is God who has worked in your life, and you are an heir of all his wonderful "Yes" promises in Christ! (2 Cor. 1:20). Can you rejoice that even though your physical eyes

may be dimmed by sin's doubts, and you may grow weary as a pilgrim on the way, your eyes of faith can still see and can still be strengthened as you gaze upon your glorious King? Do you pray to see this more clearly? (Eph. 1:18).

As God's people living between the first and second comings of Jesus Christ, we are taught to look on and behold the glory of Jesus Christ. We are taught that as we behold this glory, we are transformed by the Spirit from one degree of glory to the next (2 Cor. 3:18). One of the rich benefits of living on this side of the resurrection, as recipients of God's Spirit, is that we can behold the image of God in the face of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:6). The Old Testament saints beheld Christ's glory in shadow and type (Luke 24:24-27; John 5:39), but we behold the true image of God as he is fully revealed in the time of fulfillment. Have you received him? Have you embraced this glorious King as he is held out to you in the gospel? Do you have "the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6)? Embrace him now. Take up the blessed Jesus in your arms of faith and receive him as your beloved King!

Beloved, rejoice that the glory of God in Christ has appeared! This salvation has been clearly revealed to all (Titus 2:11-14). We still await the full revelation of this glory, but let's get in practice for it. John Owen wrote in his magnificent treatise *Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ*, "If our future blessedness shall consist in being where he is, and beholding of his glory, what better preparation can there be for it than in a constant previous contemplation of that glory in the revelation that is made in the Gospel, unto this very end, that by a view of it we may be gradually transformed into the same glory?" (*Works of John Owen*, 1:275).

The Scriptures tell us to practice beholding this glory by eagerly anticipating Christ's appearing and sober-mindedly being watchful for it (Titus 2:13; 1 Peter 4:7). We are to love his appearing (2 Tim. 4:8), just as Simeon, our forefather in the faith, did. Do you ea-

gerly await him? This provides real food for your faith and clarity for your heart and mind. Seek to behold him through the Scriptures.

Simeon received a special promise: that the final chapter of God's redemption would dawn with the coming of the Messiah before he died (Luke 2:26). And once he laid eyes on the glorious Savior, clothed in his own flesh—the eternal Son permanently united to his human nature—Simeon's heart soared in exultation, joy, and praise. His soul was flooded with the peace that only God in Christ can give! (Rom. 5:1-11). He was ready to die. Are you ready to die? Can you say today, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21)?

What a glorious privilege it is for us, too, as those who live in the last days, on this side of the resurrection, at the end of the ages, at the close of history, and at the end of the world as we know it, to live anticipating the fact that we will see Jesus Christ face-to-face—not as an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, but as the King adorned with power, majesty, and glory (Isa. 6:1ff.; 33:17; John 12:41; Rev. 4:9-11; 5:9-14). The apostle John says that we will very soon "see him as he is" (1 John 3:2-3), which is an answer to the Lord Jesus' prayer for his own on the night of his death (John 17:24). We will behold the King in his full majesty, glory, and beauty! "Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty" (Isa. 33:17; cf. Ps. 45). Hallelujah!

Are you eagerly awaiting his appearing? Like Simeon, our forefather, are you waiting for the full revelation of the comfort and consolation that God will bring in the salvation and restoration of all things at the return of Jesus Christ? (Luke 2:25-26; Titus 2:13)? Are you full of joy that is "inexpressible and full of glory" because of this (1 Peter 1:8)? Are you being led regularly by the Holy Spirit to behold him in God's Word?

As God's people, recipients of his Spirit and his promises, let us behold Jesus in his holy Word, looking daily at his graciousness, compassion, gentle-

ness, judgment, and zeal for holiness, as he is displayed and revealed to us in his person, promises, offices, and grace! Behold, God's salvation—and the only hope for sinners! Let this encourage us to be eager in our anticipation of his return on our pilgrimage in the present age.

Let us await the awesome moment when we shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Previously we could have beheld Christ only in the flesh, but on that day we will behold him face-to-face with eyes of incorruptible and eternal glory, and we will be changed! (1 Cor. 15:50-53). What a reason that is to serve him! Our eyes, too, by faith, have seen the Lord's salvation, but we haven't seen anything yet! Nothing can compare with what we will see (Rom. 8:18-21; 1 Cor. 2:9; 13:12; 2 Cor. 4:18). That is our great hope—live joyfully in it.

Do You See What Simeon Sees?

Have you beheld the Savior of the world as your only hope? Have you beheld the Savior to make you strong in grace? Have you beheld the Savior to encourage you on your pilgrimage and strengthen your faith? Have you beheld the Savior; do you anticipate seeing him better? Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit!

On my favorite hill, I can enjoy the light and see the beauty and glory of the sun, but I cannot dwell there. I cannot live there. Time goes on, the sun rises and sets, and it is night again. But one day, the night will be over and the full day will be here (Rom. 13:12; Rev. 22:5).

One day soon, I won't run to see glory and capture moments of the beauty and glory; rather, it will consume me. Let that cause your hearts to soar with exultation and the praise of God this Christmas; let your souls be filled with God's sweet peace as you, too, say with Simeon: "My eyes have seen your salvation!" □

The author is pastor of Ketocoin Covenant Presbyterian Church in Purcellville, Va.

PRIDE OR SERVICE?



CHAD D. MULLINIX // The congregation that I pastor recently enjoyed the privilege of a visit from Short-Term Missions and Disaster Response Coordinator David Nakhla. Knowing that Mr. Nakhla was scheduled to report on opportunities for service in the OPC prompted me to reflect upon obstacles we might encounter

to serving the body of Christ. What excuses come to mind personally or corporately, for example, when presented with the opportunity for disaster response or a short-term missions trip? What keeps us as individual Christians or as congregations from “rolling up our sleeves” in service?

Some of the excuses that come to your mind may be similar to those that came to mine, such as: lack of time due to your already brimming schedule, lack of “manpower” because you are part of a church plant or “smallish” congregation like the one that I serve, and lack of finances in these troubled economic times. I have no doubt that your own circumstances may bring additional challenges to mind.

Although we certainly cannot afford to ignore these real-life barriers, the apostle Paul reminds us of a deeper, more fundamental obstacle to Christian service in Romans 12:3–8. More impeding to Christian service than a full calendar, empty pews, or limited resources is the obstacle of pride. Shortly before urging the Christians in Rome to use their various gifts in service (Rom. 12:6–8), Paul says, “For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment” (v. 3). This exhortation to humility also follows on the heels of his call to “present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service” (v. 1 NKJV). Sandwiched between two appeals for Christian service, in other words, the apostle focuses on our need for humility.

So the question is this: how can the hurdle of pride and its resulting misstep of indolence be overcome? The apostle Paul shows us how to do so in verses 4–6 of this passage, where he says that we who are one body in Christ are to humbly serve the body as God gifts us.

An Analogy

After issuing his call to humility (v. 3), Paul introduces an analogy to prepare his readers for the path of humble service: “For as in one body we have many members” (v. 4). The analogy draws our attention to a single human body with many parts. In each human body there are eyes, a nose, feet, a mouth, ears, hands, etc.

Even though these varied members are wonderfully joined together in one body, they “do not all have the same function” (v. 4). We see with our eyes, smell with our nose, walk with our feet, speak with our mouth, listen with our ears, and perform a host of other tasks with our hands. The diverse functions of all these parts are carried out within just one human body. How fearfully and wonderfully God has made us (Ps. 139:14)!

At this point, we may be wondering, why the anatomy lesson? What does the human body and its numerous parts have to do with humility or service in the church? Notice how Paul immediately proceeds—with the words “so we” (Rom. 12:5)—to show that this anatomical analogy sheds light on the identity of the church.

Our Identity

The beginning of verse 5 says, “So we, though many, are one body in Christ.” Apparently this letter was written to and about a *group* of people. And by using the pronoun “we,” Paul (who was likely across the Ionian Sea in the vicinity of Corinth when he penned these words), even includes himself with the geographically distant Roman Christians.

And what does Paul say to this group of believers, with whom he includes himself? He indicates that though we are many, we are simultaneously “one body.” That was no small claim. Like many large cities today, Rome was a melting pot. The church in Rome consisted of both Jews (Rom. 2:17–29; 16:3 with Acts 18:2) and Gentiles (Rom. 11:13, 19–31; 15:8–29), and Paul’s statement effectively erased centuries of social, cultural, and religious barriers.

Now Paul’s analogy of a single human body with its varied parts begins

to make sense. He applies this analogy to the church in order to remind us of our unity in diversity. In other words, some of us are the eyes, some are the feet, some are the mouth, some are the hands, etc. While various members of the church body are genuinely different in form and functions, we are still one, unified body.

Furthermore, Paul emphatically states, “We ... ARE one body” (v. 5). This must not be misunderstood as a command (e.g. “try to be” or “make it your aim”), as if this unity could be achieved through our common social bonds, denominational connections, or some human effort. To the contrary, this unity has already been achieved by Christ and is presently true of those “in Christ.” This declaration, in other words, tells us our *Christian* identity as those collectively united by faith with the one Savior, Jesus Christ.

Is that how we typically view our identity as the church? Or, more often, do we see ourselves as fractured? Are we disheartened by so many denominations, even within the Reformed community? Do we develop a case of “out of sight, out of mind” with congregations in the OPC dispersed among other states, presbyteries, and even countries? Do we allow annoyances, disagreements, or oversights to give us a dismembered view of our very own congregations? Paul tells us that that is not who we are in Christ—we are one body!

The Necessity

This analogy that reminds us of our Christian identity brings into view the necessity of humbly serving the body of Christ.



Members of nearby OP churches helping people at our Kentwood, Mich., church reach out to their community during their local July 4 parade

When we are part of the same body, we cannot help but serve the other parts, just as the various parts of our physical body help the rest of our body. For example, our eyes help us see where to place our feet and send our hands. Our ears give us a sense of balance. Our hands and arms assist our mouth and stomach to receive nourishment. Our teeth, lips, and hands keep bugs from entering our mouth (a serious problem where I live in the South Florida swamps). The analogy Paul uses makes his point wonderfully! If we are members of the same body, we will—we must—serve the other parts!

As we truly understand our Christian identity (various members joined into one body), humble service will necessarily replace proud idleness. “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you’” (1 Cor. 12:21).



The Presbytery of Southern California’s Team Haiti with Haitians who received catechetical instruction in Creole with the assistance of translators

“For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body” (Eph. 5:29–30).

Furthermore, Paul stresses the necessity of humility, because any capability we have for service is a gift from God. “Having gifts that differ according to the

grace given to us, let us use them” (Rom. 12:6). Any good that we may be to the body of Christ comes only from God’s grace—there is no place for pride.

Conclusion

What keeps us from serving the body of Christ? What barriers hold us back from eagerly volunteering for disaster response, short-term missions trips, or other opportunities for service? Paul does not focus on our busy schedules, limited personnel, or lack of resources. Instead, he addresses our need for humility. When I am filled with thoughts about myself—my job, my comforts, my hobbies, my vacation—humbly giving toward, praying for, or even taking a trip to serve other parts of Christ’s body will likely get crowded out.

Paul’s solution to our proud lack of service is found *in Christ*. If we are joined to Jesus’ body by faith, our identity will necessarily conform to Christ, who “made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant” (Phil. 2:7). The choice between pride and service cannot be reduced to anything less than the choice between pride and Christ. □

The author is pastor of Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

OUR MINISTRY IN MBALE, UGANDA

// ERIC W. TUINGA



Eric Tuininga leading Saturday morning men's Bible study in Mbale, Uganda

What is your goal in life? What are you living for? If your goal is to glorify God and enjoy him, then here is an opportunity: glorify God with me for what he is doing in Uganda.

One hundred and fifty years ago, Uganda was a land of spiritual darkness. No one knew Jesus Christ. No one was forgiven. No one had hope of everlasting life. But God the Father has loved the tribes of Uganda, and in deep love and mercy, he has sent his gospel. Beginning in the late 1800s, many people from many tribes turned to Jesus Christ as their Savior. Many passed from death to life and from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God. However, by the 1930s the church was in danger of falling into a cultural Christianity, as has happened in so many other nations.

But in God's grace, in the 1950s a large revival swept across much of Uganda—a revival that emphasized repentance, forgiveness in the blood of Christ, and living a holy life. The effects of this revival continue today. For example, when you meet a Christian, a common question is “Are you born again?” For many people, a non-born-again Christian is one who belongs to a church but is not seriously following Jesus Christ. A born-again Christian is one who has truly repented and is committed to following Jesus. Today in Uganda, there are millions of people in both groups, as well as millions of Muslims.

In this spiritual dynamic, we have the immense privilege of ministering the good news of Jesus Christ! The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is working in two areas of Eastern Uganda: Mbale and Karamoja. In this article, I will be describing some of the work in Mbale. Mbale is a fast-growing city of about 100,000 souls, with hundreds of thousands more in the rural areas around the town. Our main focus of ministry here is on leadership training—especially training pastors. In many churches, pastors have little to no training. There is a

great danger of sincere zeal without knowledge, and pastors are aware of this. They have an eagerness to receive theological training and a hunger to know God's Word. It is such a privilege to train pastors in this context!

The OPC training center here is Knox Theological College (KTC). We teach courses in theology, biblical studies, and practical ministry. Currently there are about twenty-five students, half of whom are Presbyterian, from denominations such as the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Africa, the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Uganda, and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Uganda. Others come from evangelical or Pentecostal churches with colorful names such as Renewal Spiritual Center of God and Christ Focus Church. Although they come from different churches and different tribes (at least six different tribes are represented), these brothers have a number of things in common: an openness to being taught from God's Word, a hunger for solid theology, and a zeal to honor Christ in their ministries. Christ is bringing reformation to various churches, giving pastors the knowledge to resist common false teachings such as the prosperity gospel. Please pray that Christ would bless this effort at KTC to advance his kingdom and build his church in Uganda!

Another aspect of the ministry in Mbale is a special relationship we have with a small denomination called the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Uganda (OPCU). I regularly preach in their pulpits, help with evangelism, attend presbytery meetings, and provide counsel and encouragement to these brothers and sisters. There are eleven congregations and church plants from three different tribes, with plans to expand to a twelfth location soon. Most of these congregations worship with dirt floors, wooden benches or mats on the floor, mud walls, and no instruments. They see pictures of churches in America (in movies, on Facebook, etc.) and marvel, “Is that luxurious building a church?” The church in Mbale meets for worship outdoors—about one hundred people together under the shade trees. One area of praise in the OPCU is how Christ

is raising up godly leaders. Two years ago, there were only four ordained pastors to serve these churches. Last year another brother was ordained, and recently four brothers completed their theological training and are now moving toward ordination.

A number of these congregations have started Christian schools. There are four small Christian schools teaching nursery (kindergarten) and some P1 and P2 (first and second grade). It was a privilege recently to hear children from one school reciting the Children's Catechism!

Would young men in America go to seminary if they knew that upon graduation no church could pay them a salary? Perhaps a man might find a tent-making job, but what if the unemployment rate were over 50 percent? Perhaps he could operate his own business, but men gifted to be pastors are not always gifted in running a business, and to run a business well demands so much time that there is little time left for the church. This is the difficult situation in many congregations in Uganda. Pray for the churches to grow and thrive, both spiritually and financially, so they will be able to provide enough for their pastors to be free from worldly care and employment. Also, praise God for pastors who sacrifice earthly wealth for the sake of Christ and his church! So many times when I visit pastors and other believers here in Uganda, I think of what Jesus said: "The first will be last, and the last will be first." These believers, who have so little and struggle so much, will surely be rewarded by Christ on the final day!

A dynamic of life in Mbale is the presence of Islam. It has been a great honor to meet believers who have come from a Muslim background; they endure persecution and opposition from their families, yet cling to Christ. Recently I was assisting with membership interviews in a church plant, and a twelve-year-old girl desired to be baptized, although she knew that her father would be very angry. She gave a good testimony of her faith in Christ. Her mother was too afraid to permit her to be baptized at this time, since their entire clan is Muslim. Please pray for these sisters!

One verse that continually comes to my mind is "Love as brothers" (1 Peter 3:8 NIV). Sometimes, when I meet Ugandans who have a nice house, or who are able to afford medical care, I ask them where they find their money. Often the answer is that they have a brother or uncle who lives in the United Kingdom or America and sends money to support the extended family back in Uganda. They can invest that money and improve their standard of living. This is how family members love each other, even among unbelievers. One of the



Eric Tuininga leading worship in Mbale, Uganda

amazing fruits of the gospel is that, as Christians, we become brothers and sisters with one another, a brotherhood that is far deeper than language, tribe, or nationality. Christ was not ashamed to call us brothers, and he gave up his wealth so that we might be raised up to glory. What would you do if your brother or sister were living in a small, one-room apartment with four children—or if they were living with a dirt floor and had no access to decent medical care and became very sick? The

OPC seeks to show some of this "love as brothers" through an arrangement with a local Christian medical clinic where OPCU members can receive treatment.

Please join with us in praising God for his work in Uganda. He is great and awesome! He is worthy of praise! We are not worthy of the great privilege of serving God in this place, but God is able to use us to help our brothers and sisters to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Satan's attacks are continual, as he tries to seduce the church here through materialism, worldliness, paganism, Islam, nominal Christianity, and cults such as Mormonism. But God is at work building his church, gathering in his elect, and doing glorious things. Truly the harvest is plentiful and the workers few.

What's New

// Comings/Goings

Dr. and Mrs. James D. (Jenny) Knox welcomed their first child, a son named Eoin (pronounced YO-in) Daniel, into the world on July 16, 2014. Following a short leave of absence in the U.S. for Eoin's birth, the Knoxes returned to their medical labors in Nakaale, Karamoja, Uganda, at the beginning of October.

Rev. and Mrs. Raymond E. (Michele) Call III and their seven children arrived in Montevideo, Uruguay, on October 17. Mr. Call, a PCA minister, is laboring with the OPC Uruguay Mission under a cooperative agreement between the Committee on Foreign Missions (OPC) and Mission to the World (PCA).

Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Brian T. (Dorothy) Wingard are concluding their time of furlough in the U.S. later this month and plan to return to their labors at Mukhanyo Theological College in KwaMhlanga, South Africa, in mid-January.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

THE TIMOTHY CONFERENCE: LOOKING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD

// DAVID WINSLOW



Frisbee break at the 2014 Timothy Conference (l. to r.): Ethan Mattson, Ian Brackbill, Seth Davies, Chris Robison, Ken Nace, Thomas Roof, Matthew Stanley, Josh Bootsma, Micah Keliikupakako

The CCE's Subcommittee on Ministerial Training is already looking forward to the 2015 Timothy Conference to be held in the Philadelphia area March 18–21, even as the 2014 conference fades in the rearview mirror. We look back at past conferences to gauge what we should do in the future.

At the 2014 conference, Matthews OPC in Matthews, North Carolina, and Greenville Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina, hosted eighteen young men from OP churches as far away as Hawaii and as close as Matthews itself. Greenville students shared a meal with the conferees and welcomed them into their seminary classes, including a senior class on Missions, during which Dr. Tony Curto actively engaged his guests in the class discussion. On the last evening, Pastor Nathan Trice introduced the group to Southern cuisine, courtesy of Mrs. Ashley Trice, as the men enjoyed fellowship and discussion with the conference speakers in the Trice home. These flavors of love and consideration for the men sent by their sessions in order to be challenged to consider gospel ministry are part of what makes the Timothy Conference a special event in the lives of those who attend.

Of course, the main course was delivered by the six lecturers at the heart of the conference. Pastor Stephen Oharek chauffeured three men up from Florida and spoke during the conference about the importance of the ministerial office and the work of a pastor. That labor can apparently include being a taxi driver. Pastor Boyd Miller, as part of his lecture on the internal and external aspects of God's call, shared how the Lord called him into the ministry. Pastor Trice gave ten concrete and prioritized pieces of advice on preparing to serve the Lord, from being deeply embedded in the life of the church to the importance of marrying well.

Having noticed that the Timothy Conference has attracted quite a few young men who are new to the denomination, Danny Olinger and Dave VanDrunen decided to add

some historical context to the conference format this year. The OPC's church historian, ruling elder John Muether, delivered a lively lecture filled with humor and insight into the Lord's guiding and shaping of our church.

Looking Ahead

As the Timothy Conference returns in 2015 to the birthplace of the OPC and American Presbyterianism, plans are being laid for elders Darryl Hart and John Muether to combine their talents in a Presbyterian history tour of Philadelphia and an OPC history lecture. Imparting an appreciation of how the Lord led our forefathers in the faith and of the spiritual battles they fought for the sake of fidelity to God's Word and the Westminster Standards is part of passing the gospel baton from one generation to the next.

We also look forward to the possibility of Calvary OPC, across the street from Westminster Seminary in Glenside, hosting the 2015 conference with local pastors Mark Sallade (Glenside) and Larry Westerveld (Hatboro) joining Danny Olinger and Dave VanDrunen as lecturers. The conference will be open to young men (aged 16–21) nominated by their sessions. If the past seven years are any indication, applying by the January 15 deadline will be essential for pastors and sessions interested in seeing one of their young men attend. Information and application forms are posted on OPC.org.

What can a young man expect to receive from the Timothy Conference in 2015? Comments from some of those who attended in 2014 are instructive:

Ben Wagner wrote that he took home "an increased appreciation for my pastor and a clearer understanding of what he invested to make himself worthy of leading a church through the grace of God." The conference showed him "how high the Lord sets" the standards of personal integrity, "and how I need to be making strides through Christ to show myself a workman who will not be ashamed."

Ben Ward said, "The Timothy Conference encouraged

me, as one who has had a desire for the ministry, in the conviction that the Lord might be calling me to serve in gospel ministry.”

David Carnes commented, “One of my favorite parts of the Timothy Conference was the time spent fellowshiping with the speakers and other students. All of the speakers were very accessible and willing to answer any questions we had.”

Joel Stanton remarked, “To any young men who are even faintly considering pursuing the ministry within the OPC, I would highly recommend you approach your local church session about attending this conference. Your time will be well spent, and you will glean godly wisdom from men who are passionate about the future of Christ’s church.”

MTIOPC 2015 COURSES

The Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC offers four courses for a 2015 Spring semester.

Ecclesiology, taught by Craig Troxel, *Form of Government*, instructed by Alan Strange, and *Reformed Worship*, with new teacher Glen Clary, will hold their Intensive Training session May 12–14 in the Chicago area. No student taking these courses may also enroll in the Homiletics class.

Homiletics, with William Shishko and Douglas Clawson, will hold its Intensive Training session May 12–15 at the OPC of Franklin Square, New York. Enrollment is limited to eight.

Students would typically travel on May 11 and return home on the final day of class. Travel scholarships are available to qualified students.

The classes entail online reading and writing assignments for the weeks prior to Intensive Training, when the students are taught in a classroom setting. The courses are designed for OP ministers, men licensed to preach, those under care of a presbytery, and elders. Qualified non-OP men may participate if space allows.

All prospective students must register and send in their registration fee, if any (\$50 for OP elders and \$100 for non-OP men, per course), by *January 23, 2015*. The registration fee is fully refundable upon successful completion of the class.

For more information and application forms, look on the OPC.org website under Worldwide Outreach, then Christian Education, then MTIOPC. Classes begin February 2, 2015.

Questions? Contact Pat Clawson, MTIOPC coordinator, at ccesec@opc.org or 215-830-0900, ext. 3903.

☆ Congratulations

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

- **Lindsay Taylor**, *Providence OPC, Temecula, CA*
- **Daniel Taylor**, *Providence OPC, Temecula, CA*
- **Melinda Schumaker**, *Harvest OPC, Wyoming, MI*

ABCs of PRESBYTERIANISM

Be Quick to Listen

Larry Wilson

Since our Lord Jesus himself runs his church by his Spirit speaking through his Word, we ought to be quick to listen to that Word! We ought to be eager to keep letting it take deep root in our hearts! God the Father has planned the salvation of his people. God the Son has secured it. Now God the Holy Spirit is applying it. And the main tool that the Holy Spirit uses is God’s Word.

Accordingly, James 1:19 commands us to “be quick to listen” (NIV). Listen to what? Notice the context. The immediately preceding verse says, “Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth.” Immediately afterwards it says, “Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls” (Jas. 1:18, 21 esv). The whole context emphasizes God’s Word. To what, then, should we be “quick to listen”? God’s Word.

Notice that this passage emphasizes listening, or hearing (esv). Hearing takes place through the ears. It is important to read God’s Word, but it is even more important to hear God’s Word. Why? Because God has ordained preaching as the main way he ordinarily applies his Word and delivers his free and full salvation to his people (1 Cor. 1:18–2:5; Rom. 10:13–17).

This is why the Larger Catechism says, “*How is the Word made effectual to salvation?*” The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the Word, an effectual means” (Q/A 155).

Every believer in every congregation should commit himself to keep on hearing God’s Word in faith. Why? Because God’s Word is the scepter by which King Jesus runs his church. Because God’s Word is the sword by which the Holy Spirit mediates the presence and saving rule of the exalted Christ. Because hearing God’s Word in faith is the way believers and churches are “holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God” (Col. 2:19 esv).

● Out of the Mouth . . .

I was explaining to my seven-year-old grandson, Maxx, how wonderful the new heaven and the new earth will be, with all kinds of incredible things to do and see. He was thoughtful for a moment and then asked, “Will everything be within walking distance?”

—Mary Brown
Lawrenceville, Ga.

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

THE ABCs OF SHORT-TERM MISSIONS IN NEW YORK

// SEAN D. GREGG



The short-term missions team from Cedar Church in Hudsonville, Mich., visiting Manhattan in New York City

Steve Igo, pastor of Cedar Church in Hudsonville, Michigan, has been on dozens of short-term missions trips to various places and with various ministries, leading about half of them. Several years ago he decided to organize short-term missions trips to benefit Orthodox Presbyterian church plants. In July, he took a team of about twenty-five students and chaperones to Queens, New York, to help out Reformation OPC, of which Jon Shishko is the pastor. “Every trip is different,” Igo said, “and not all of them work out, but this one was special.”

A successful trip involves planning, and Igo says the best trips are led by students as much as possible. This group helped pick the location. “We had gone north, south, and west, so the kids said, ‘Let’s go east.’” They also prayed for the trip and helped to plan logistics. Pastor Shishko called the group “unbelievably prepared,” adding that they were careful to make sure they knew exactly what they needed to accomplish their goals. Team members also raised money to cover the costs of the trip, holding an “Ides of March” fund-raising dinner and other events.

There was work for Jon Shishko to do too. He purchased supplies that the group would need for their main outreach project. He also made sure to get the necessary permits for holding the events. To keep costs down, Jon and Lauryn Shishko and Jon’s parents, Rev. Bill and Margaret Shishko, housed the team. Meals were eaten in Jon and Lauryn’s backyard under a 10-by-20-foot tent.

Excitement in the local congregation is also important. Igo contacted several congregations in the East about the team possibly coming to their church, and while all were happy for the opportunity, Shishko was immediately excited. “Jon and Reformation OPC reached out through email and pulled us in,” said Igo. By Christmas, the group knew they were headed to the Big Apple.

Shishko said planning far in advance was vital to the success of the week. The group had each day scheduled before they arrived, though they had to be flexible to deal with bad weather.

Servant Evangelism

Igo’s goal for the week was to have 1,500 evangelistic contacts. Statistics suggest that would mean two or three families visiting worship, but how do a bunch of kids from the Midwest start conversations with that many New Yorkers? Igo looks for ways that missions teams can practice “servant evangelism,” an idea he got from reading books by Steve Sjogren. The idea is to do something kind, something out of the ordinary, that will make people ask why you are doing what you’re doing.

“We were there for one week, but we wanted our work to have an impact over the next several months,” Igo said. So he worked with Shishko to tie their efforts to things Reformation was already doing. Each summer, Reformation hosts BBQ&A, a time when the congregation “takes Sunday outside.” They invite visitors to enjoy food, fellowship, preaching, and an interactive question-and-answer session in New York’s Cunningham Park. The decision was made to station the team at the park and invite as many people as possible to BBQ&A.

So on several late July days in Cunningham Park, servant evangelism meant handing out snow cones—about three hundred of them each day. When people asked why they were receiving free snow cones, it was easy for team members and folks from Reformation to invite them to BBQ&A held in the same area. They also invited people to Reformation’s other outreach events and Bible studies—and, of course, to worship.

Igo said that the students found that conversations came easily. People opened up while enjoying the snow cones, and the kids ate up their stories. One woman was so appreciative of the work being done that she ordered food for the team and had it delivered to them in the park.

When it rained one day, everyone quickly switched gears



Young people from Cedar Church in Hudsonville, Mich., handing out free snow cones in New York

and created a mailing assembly line in the living room, where they filled about one thousand envelopes with information about Reformation and its outreach events, to be mailed to the people in the neighborhood. Rather than letting the weather get them down, the students sang as they stuffed, labeled, stamped, and sealed the envelopes.

Shishko hasn't identified any visitors to worship who have come as a result of the team's work yet, but he estimates that up to one hundred people came to at least one of the BBQ&A events held the first three Sundays in August, and some came to all three.

The people at Reformation were thrilled to have the team come. Young people in the congregation enjoyed connecting with the visitors, and the congregation as a whole is happy for the reminder that they are part of a larger body of believers. Shishko hopes to host another group in the future—as soon as next summer, if possible.

Igo sees great benefit for the students who go on the trips. "It stretches them," he said, "and helps them to mature." Relationships deepen during the trip. Igo is also pleased that they see the power of the gospel away from home. "It helps them see that Jesus is not just a tribal deity." The trip also encourages



the congregation by giving them new ideas, and helps them to realize that they can do some of the same things on their own. In this case, Reformation was encouraged by the large number of visitors who wouldn't have come to BBQ&A without the snow cone outreach.

Planning a Trip

Igo suggests starting preparations months before leaving on a short-term missions trip. Having students involved in every step gives them ownership of the trip. Make sure the congregation you'll be working with is planning too. Bonds of fellowship will be strengthened as hosts and visitors work side by side, so plan at least one event when most of the host church will be available to help.

To help the group prepare for the trip, get together in January and continue meeting a couple of times a month for Bible study, prayer, and planning. Igo says that having students raise money for the trip will further increase their investment in the project. Working on fund-raisers can also strengthen the bonds between participants before leaving for the destination.

If your phone rings, be ready. It could be Steve Igo, asking if your church would like to host a group of kids who are ready to invite people to your church. And if you would like to lead a trip to New York, talk to Jon Shishko. Igo says Shishko has a creative mind, and he'll think of something good for you to do.

Other church planters would be happy for the help also. A good place to begin your search for a suitable trip is www.opcstm.org, which lists

short-term missions opportunities in the United States and around the world.



Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org.
New editions: December 3, 17, 31.

CHARITY AND ITS ROOTS

// JOHN D. VAN MEERBEKE

The biblical word “steward” refers to one who manages the affairs of his master (Gen. 15:2; 39:4–5; 44:1, 4) and gradually comes to be known as “any person in a position of trust, accountable to someone” (Fee, *First Corinthians*, p. 159, n. 7). When Paul refers to himself as “steward of the mysteries of God,” he presents himself in terms of his ministry of explaining the unfolding revelation of God’s gospel entrusted to him and the other apostles to preach (Fee, p. 160). While not every Christian is called to preach, he or she *is* called to love God and to love others. Clearly Jesus taught this:

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And [Jesus] said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matt. 22:36–40)

To love God and to love others are twin graces. Our giving to God in the service of others and our giving to others in the service of God are so closely tied together that they sometimes can barely be distinguished, like the generosity and thanksgiving of 2 Corinthians 9:11–12. The privilege of giving to the needs of others is itself both an act of worship and a gift of God. “Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!” (2 Cor. 9:15).

Giving of ourselves for others in Jesus’ name is heart work—a sacrifice that is not a burden (2 Cor. 9:7; see also 1 John 5:3). It is not a burden because our union with Christ gives us both the will and the ability to give as we have received (Phil. 2:13; Matt. 10:8). This

is the apostle’s theme in 1 Corinthians 13. Jonathan Edwards wrote:

Such was the love of Christ to us, that he did, as it were, *spend himself for our sakes*. His love did not rest in mere feeling, nor in light efforts and small sacrifices, but though we were enemies, yet he so loved us that he had a heart to deny himself... And not only so, but he shed his own blood for us, and offered himself a sacrifice to God’s justice, that we might be forgiven, accepted, and saved! (*Charity and Its Fruits* [Banner of Truth edition], p. 179)

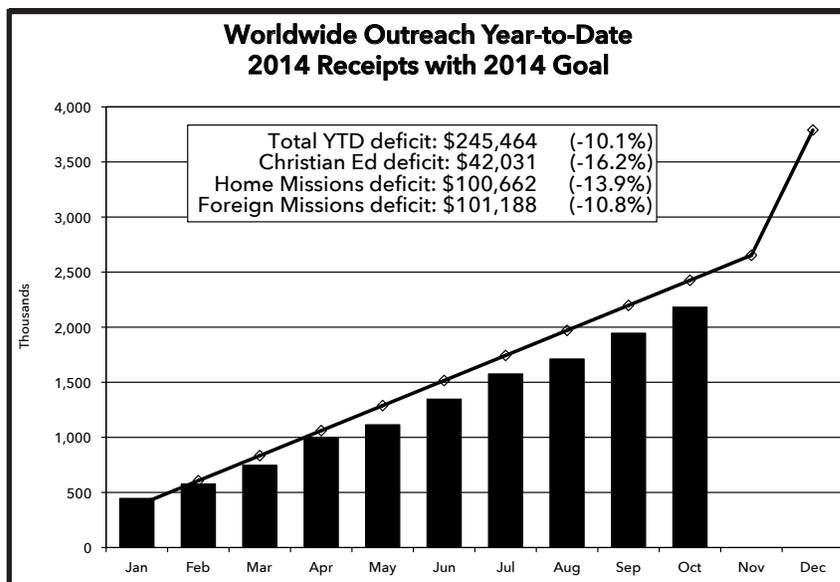
Therefore, it may be said that Jesus loved his neighbor as himself in the service and love of his Father. A key principle of loving others in this way is self-denial, about which John Calvin wrote:

There cannot be imagined a more certain rule, or a more powerful exhortation to the observance of it, than when we are taught, all the blessings we enjoy are Divine deposits, committed to our trust on this condition, that they should be dispensed for the benefit of our neighbors.

We should remember, that we must not reflect on the wickedness of men, but contemplate the Divine image in them; which, concealing and obliterating their faults, by its beauty and dignity allures us to embrace them in the arms of our love. (Hugh Kerr, ed., *A Compendium of the Institutes* ... by John Calvin, pp. 101–2)

This love toward others will be no burden if its obedience is rooted in the love of Christ.

The author is the pastor of Living Hope OPC in Gettysburg, Pa.



DECEMBER

1. **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Haiti. Pray for Eric as he teaches in Port-au-Prince this week. / **Sacha and Martina Walicord**, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Pray for wisdom for those who are considering joining Knox Presbyterian Church. / **James Jordan**, yearlong intern at Church of the Covenant in Hackettstown, N.J.
2. Pray for Home Missions associate general secretary **Dick Gerber**, who retires at the end of the month. / **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for those who assist in the teaching ministries at St-Marc Reformed Church. / Pray for **the Subcommittee for Internet Ministries** as it oversees OPC.org.
3. Pray for missionary associate **Jennifer Nelson**, Quebec, Canada, as she assists in a number of St-Marc Church's outreach activities. / **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. (downtown). Pray that God would bring new people to Gospel Life Presbyterian Church. / Part-time staff accountant **Doug Watson**.
4. **Jim and Tricia Stevenson**, Tulsa, Okla. Pray for the men in officer training at Providence OPC. / **Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa (on furlough). Pray for Brian as he speaks at the eighth annual Foreign Missions Conference in Willow Grove, Pa., tomorrow. / **Jeff (and Diane) Downs**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Orland Park, Ill.
5. **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia (on furlough). Pray that Mr. M. will give a clear vision for missions as he speaks at the Foreign Missions Conference today. / **Christopher and Della Chelpka**, Tucson, Ariz. Pray for unity and fellowship among the people of Covenant OPC. / **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the finance director.
6. **Ken and Cressid Golden**, Davenport, Iowa. Pray that the Lord would send mature Christian families to Sovereign Grace OPC. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that Karimojong believers will be faithful to Christ amidst cultural pressures. / **Pat Clawson**, editorial assistant and CCE secretary.
7. **James and Jenny Knox**, M.D. and R.N., Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the clinic staff as they deliver high-quality medical care in Karamoja. / Pray for **David Crum**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California, as he does exploratory work. / **Diane Olinger**, *Ordained Servant* proofreader.
8. **Tom and Martha Albaugh**, Pittsburgh, Pa. Pray that God would bless Redeemer OPC Mission with new families. / Pray for missionary associates **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they witness to the Karimojong people. / **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
9. **Al and Laurie Tricarico**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for additional gifted interpreters to assist the Mission. / **Joshua and Jessica Lyon**, Carson, Calif. Pray that God would save local families and bring them to worship at Grace OPC. / **Louis (and Lizette) Cloete**, yearlong intern at Redeemer OPC Mission in Pittsburgh, Pa.
10. **Kent and Laurie Harding**, Doniphan, Mo. Pray that God would continue to bless Sovereign Grace OPC as they adjust to being a particular congregation. / Missionary associate teachers **Erika Bulthuis**, **Taryn Dieckmann**, and **Catherine Mill**, Uganda. / Alan Strange, chairman of **the Psalter-Hymnal Committee**.
11. Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he reports to the Executive Committee tomorrow. / **Robert and Christy Arendale**, Houston, Tex. Pray that recent visitors to Cornerstone OPC will become more involved in the congregation. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.
12. **Jeremiah and Elizabeth Montgomery**, State College, Pa. Pray that God would build connections between Resurrection OPC and students at Penn State University. / Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson**. / **Jeffrey (and Maryfrances) Carter**, yearlong intern at Calvary OPC in Glenside, Pa.
13. **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray that people whose lives they touch will see Christ through their words and deeds. / **Greg and Stella Hoadley**, Fargo, N.Dak. Pray that visitors to Grace OPC will desire to join in communicant fellowship. / **B. A. Snider**, marketing coordinator at Great Commission Publications.
14. **Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, Ky. Pray for God's Spirit to direct and empower the gospel witness of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church. / **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda, are thankful for the committed staff at the Mission's thriving preschool. / *New Horizons* managing editor **Jim Scott**.
15. Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic. Pray that many will attend holiday programs planned with English classes and after-school clubs. / Home Missions staff administrator **Sean Gregg**. / **Matthew (and Melinda) Cole**, yearlong intern at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Bellmawr, N.J.



Douglas and Pat Clawson

- 16. Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray that God would bless San Antonio Reformed Church with additional families. / **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for the health and safety of our missionaries as they labor in foreign lands. / **Greg Reynolds**, *Ordained Servant* editor.
- 17.** Pray for missionary associate **Allison Zylstra**, Montevideo, Uruguay, as she begins her time of service. / **Mike and Katy Myers**, Hartwell, Ga. Pray that the Lord would bless Heritage Presbyterian Church with open doors for the gospel to go out and take root in people's lives. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund administrator.
- 18. Christopher and Ann Malamisuro**, Cincinnati, Ohio. Pray that God would bless Good Shepherd OPC's officer training class. / **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for the family as they vacation in the U.S. this month. / Pray for **Danny Olinger**, Christian Education general secretary, as he serves as director of the Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC.
- 19. Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for the care and development of the church in Port-au-Prince. / **Brandon and Laurie Wilkins**, Crystal Lake, Ill. Pray that the Lord would bless Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church's evangelism efforts and add new families. / Army chaplain **Graham (and Carla) Harbman**.
- 20. Carlos and Diana Cruz**, Ponce, P.R. Pray for the discipleship and ministry of Mission de Ponce, OPC. / Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray that the gospel will take root in the hearts of seekers to whom Tav ministers. / **Andrew (and Samantha) Fortenberry**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.
- 21. Cal and Edie Cummings**, Sendai, Japan. Pray for the outreach activities of the holiday season. / **Brian and Sara Chang**, Cottonwood, Ariz. Pray that the Lord would grow and strengthen Verde Valley Reformed Chapel. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
- 22. Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray that the Lord would bring more people to Keys Presbyterian Church. / **Kaz and Katie Yaegashi**, Yamagata, Japan. Pray that God would bless those attending the English and Japanese Bible studies they lead. / Pray for wisdom for **churches who are considering having an intern** for 2015.
- 23.** Pray for missionary associates **Amanda McCrina** and **Akiko Oshimizu**, Sendai, Japan, as they share the gospel through teaching opportunities. / Home Missions



Brandon and Laurie Wilkins

general secretary **John Shaw**. / Committee for Diaconal Ministries administrator **David Nakhla**. Pray that the presbytery diaconal representatives who gathered at the D17 Summit last month will be able to implement what they learned.

- 24. Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Andover, Minn. Pray for new visitors to come to Immanuel OPC and for opportunities to reach the lost. / **Woody and Laurie Lauer**, Numazu, Japan. Pray that the preaching of the Word will bear much fruit in Japan. / **Robert (and Adelinda) Canode**, yearlong intern at Providence Presbyterian Church in Pflugerville, Tex.
- 25.** Retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Greet Rietkerk, Young and Mary Lou Son**, and **Fumi Uomoto**. Pray for patience for those dealing with age-related problems. / **Joseph and Carla Fowler**, Gastonia, N.C. Pray that God's elect will be brought into Reformation OPC.
- 26. Ron and Carol Beabout**, Gaithersburg, Md. Pray that the people of Trinity Reformed Church will continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. / Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Abigail Yates**. / Navy chaplain **Tim (and Janine) Power**.
- 27. Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for continued spiritual growth and maturity in the church in L'viv. / **Jonathan and Kristin Moersch**, Capistrano Beach, Calif. Pray that God would provide a suitable facility where Trinity Presbyterian Church can meet throughout the week. / **Sarah Pederson**, *New Horizons* proofreader.
- 28. Kim and Barbara Kuhfuss**, Eau Claire, Wis. Pray that new visitors will come to Providence Reformed Church. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray that God would bring new students to the Bible studies, and that their hearts would be open to the Word. / **Matthew (and Trina) Patton**, yearlong intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Ill.
- 29.** Missionary associates **C. B., T. DeJ., and T. D.**, Asia. / **Tony and Mica Garbarino**, Morgan Hill, Calif. Pray that God would provide opportunities for outreach for Providence Presbyterian Church and bless the congregation with growth. / **Chris Tobias**, *New Horizons* cover designer.
- 30.** Pray for **Steve Doe**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic, as he assists church plants in the region. / Tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia. Pray for outreach activities held during the university's winter term break. / Pray for General Assembly stated clerk **Ross Graham** as he begins preparations for the 82nd Assembly in June 2015.
- 31.** Pray for open doors as missionary associates **J. B.** and **H. L.**, Asia, make contacts and share the gospel. / **Phil Strong**, Lander, Wyo. Pray that the people of Grace Reformed Fellowship will continue to grow in their love for the Lord and for each other. / Navy chaplain **John (and Linda) Carter**.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

JOINT OPC-PCA PRESBYTERY MEETING

Alan Flowers, Doug Bylsma, and John Ritzema

On September 19–20, a joint presbytery meeting was held in Gowen, Michigan, between the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario of the OPC and the Great Lakes Presbytery of the PCA. Pastors and ruling elders gathered from Michigan, Ontario, Indiana, and Ohio for this event. On the first day, each presbytery met separately to conduct their business, but they gathered that evening to hear Nelson Kloosterman, ethics consultant for Worldview Resources International, speak on the “Two Kingdom” idea. Committees with similar concerns met together for encouragement and better cooperation.

On the second day, the two presbyteries met in a joint session, in which the committees that had met together gave their reports to the whole body. The committees welcomed questions and feedback. Also during day two, a candidate for the PCA presented a devotional sermon and had his oral licensure exam. Later, an OPC licentiate had his oral theology exam for ordination. Good conversation was had by all around shared meals.



Presbyters attending the joint meeting of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario (OPC) and the Great Lakes Presbytery (PCA)

Dave Sarafolean, pastor of Christ Covenant Church (PCA) in Midland, Michigan, writes what he thought of the meeting:

Our joint presbytery meeting was a wonderful time to fellowship together and learn from one another. Personally, it was a good time to renew relationships with OPC pastors that I have interacted with in various settings. Members of both presbyteries expressed a desire to find ways to continue this dialog, which could include planning

retreats and conferences together and informing one another of events that would be of mutual interest.

HOADLEY INSTALLED

Gregory P. Hoadley was installed on October 24 as an evangelist to serve as organizing pastor of Grace OPC in Fargo, North Dakota. Dick Gerber preached a sermon on 1 Peter 5:1–14 entitled “Who Cares?” Bruce Prentice presided over the meeting and delivered the charge to the congregation. Jim Hoekstra delivered the charge to the pastor.



At the installation of Curtis Eggleston as pastor of Berean Presbyterian Church in Ogden, Utah, on October 14: John Harris, Archibald Allison, Philip Strong, Linda and Curtis Eggleston, Leonard Coppes, Jason Wallace, Frank Meads, and Don King



Participants in the installation service for Greg Hoadley: Revs. Dick Gerber, Greg Hoadley, and Jim Hoekstra, ruling elders Patrick Diehl and Chris Campbell, and Rev. Bruce Prentice



Women at the Midwest Presbyterian meeting

MIDWEST WOMEN'S PRESBYTERIAL

Carmen McKenna

This year fifty-six ladies attended the Women's Presbyterian of the Midwest to enjoy fellowship around the Word of God, exploring Ecclesiastes 3.

Taking place at Momence OPC in Momence, Illinois, on September 27, the meeting focused on "To Everything a Season," as morning speaker Sue Hollister from New Covenant Community Church in Joliet, Illinois, shared Scripture and rich lessons in life that the Lord has given her and others.

The study of the seasons of life continued into the afternoon breakout sessions, as women delved into God's Word on "A Time to Laugh," "A Time to Heal," and "A Time to Mourn." Those attending were encouraged and blessed in fellowship with one another in Christ.

IN MEMORIAM GRACE HANEY

Mary Haney Underwood

On October 1, 2014, the Lord called home to glory his servant Grace Haney, 86. Grace was residing at Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community at the time of her death. She had been a member of Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pennsylvania, for over thirty-five years. At Trinity she was known for her welcoming of newcomers, her hospitality, her

work ethic at church workdays well into her eighties, and the organization of the group of senior ladies known as Love and Stitches.

Grace was the wife of the late Reverend George E. Haney, Jr., who, before his death in 1999, was pastor to several OP churches and General Secretary of the Committee on Home Missions. Grace was a volunteer for Crossroads Ministries, sharing her faith through countless letters to prisoners. She found a mission field in her home, using her Bible to teach English to people from other countries. She wrote many letters to overseas missionaries. She also wrote weekly letters to her grandchildren away from home at college and in the military, and "adopted" many other "grandchildren" from her church who might need a letter of encouragement.

She is survived by her four children and their spouses, along with nine grandchildren. She will be remembered for her



George and Grace Haney

love of Scripture and her love of singing praise to the Lord. The last song on her lips before the Lord took her home was "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," her testimony from beginning to end.

IN MEMORIAM POLLY EDWARDS

Lucy Milojevich

Pauline McKinley Edwards, 88, of Medford, Oregon, passed away peacefully in her home on October 9, 2014. She was married to Albert G. Edwards III for 62 years. He was a pastor in the OPC for over forty years, and preceded her in death. Al and Polly served OP churches in New Jersey, Oregon, and Montana.



Polly Edwards

An elder in their Billings, Montana, church commented, "Polly was a dear friend, always looking out for us. Psalm 116:15 came to mind, 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' Yes, Polly was precious.... Polly was a lifelong builder; she was always building others up.... Over a lifetime of ministry, the hospitality extended from her home was to thousands.... What a heritage she leaves her family and friends, to follow her example as she so faithfully served the Lord!"

Polly's avid quilting also bonded friendships both near and far. Her vibrant faith and hope in Jesus sustained her all through life. Her survivors include her children—Lucy (Jay) Milojevich, Cathy Percich, Peggy (Steve) Hubley, and Tad (Mary) Edwards—a sister, five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

UPDATE

CHURCHES

- **Bethany OPC** in Oxford, Pa., voted on June 22 for the second and final time to withdraw from the OPC in order to realign with the PCA.
- **Cornerstone OPC** in Houston, Tex., was organized as a separate congregation of the OPC by the Presbytery of the Southwest on October 17.
- **Resurrection OPC** in State College, Pa., was organized as a separate congregation of the OPC by the Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania on October 3.

MINISTERS

- **Robert S. Arendale**, formerly the organizing pastor, was installed as pastor of Cornerstone OPC in Houston, Tex., on October 17.
- **Ronald L. Beabout**, formerly pastor of Calvary OPC in Cedar Grove, Wis., was installed as an evangelist of the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic to serve as organizing pastor of Trinity Reformed Church in Gaithersburg, Md., on October 17.
- **James J. Cassidy**, formerly pastor of Calvary Church of Amwell in Ringoes, N.J., was installed as associate pastor of Providence Presbyterian Church in Pflugerville, Tex., on July 18.
- **Curtis A. Eggleston**, formerly the stated supply, was installed as pastor of Berean Presbyterian Church in Ogden, Utah, on October 14.
- **Gregory P. Hoadley** was installed as an evangelist of the Presbytery of the Dakotas to serve as organizing pastor of Grace OPC in Fargo, N.Dak. on October 24.

Corrections

In the November issue, p. 21, the name Melkonian should have been so spelled; in the photo caption, Levon Melkonian's wife should have been named Ellen, as in the article. These errors were not the author's.

• **Matthew A. Judd**, formerly pastor of Memorial OPC in Rochester, N.Y., was installed as pastor of Covenant OPC in Mansfield, Ohio, on October 3.

• **David W. Landow** was ordained and installed as associate pastor of Emmanuel OPC in Wilmington, Del., on October 11.

• **Jeremiah W. Montgomery**, formerly an evangelist of Westminster OPC in Hollidaysburg, Pa., was installed as pastor of Resurrection OPC in State College, Pa., on October 3.

• **Karl E. Thompson**, formerly pastor of Old Stockbridge OPC in Morgan Siding, Wis., and Menominee OPC in Zoar, Wis., was installed as pastor of Faith OPC in Grants Pass, Ore., on September 26.

• The pastoral relationship between **Christopher H. Wisdom** and Grace OPC in San Antonio, Tex., was dissolved on June 30, the date of his retirement from the military.

MILESTONES

• **Polly Edwards**, 88, the widow of OP pastor Al Edwards, died on October 9.

REVIEWS

Why Christ Came: 31 Meditations on the Incarnation, by Joel R. Beeke and William Boekestein. Reformation Heritage Books, 2013. Paperback, 108 pages, list price \$12.00. Reviewed by retired OP minister Donald M. Poundstone.

Even believers who avoid any observance of Jesus' birth in December will appreciate—and somehow ought to make use of—this little book.

Two Reformed pastors have written a collection of nearly three dozen brief meditations (three short pages each) on the reasons why the eternal Son of God became a man.

When Christmas lights brighten big-city streets in Japan (a land barely 1 percent Christian) and even most *unbeliev-*

ers in North America exchange year-end holiday gifts and greetings, you can be sure there's a lot of ignorance about the real meaning and importance of Christ's birth.

Why Christ Came beautifully reflects on many aspects of the meaning and purpose of the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity—why the Word of God became human flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). These devotions cover ground familiar to mature Christians. They will refresh the minds and warm the hearts of adults, and also offer essential spiritual instruction to our children.

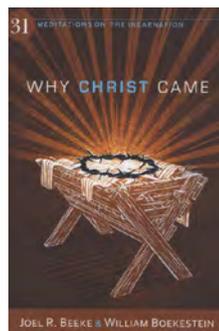
To whet your appetite, here are just a few of the topics covered. According to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). He came to do the will of God the Father (John 6:38), to bear witness to the truth (John 18:37), to destroy the devil and all his works (1 John 3:8), to bring great joy to the earth as well as divine judgment (Luke 2:10; John 9:39–41), and to preach the gospel (Luke 4:18, 43).

In addition, he came to earth in order to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45), to die (John 12:24–25, 27), to fulfill the law and the prophets, that is, the Old Testament (Matt. 5:17), to reveal God's love for the world (John 3:16), and to bring peace (Eph. 2:14–18)—and much more beside!

The title of this slim volume presupposes the Savior's preexistence and the reality of God's purpose in sending his one and only Son. Our Lord existed from all eternity in loving communion with the Father and the Holy Spirit. His birth, life, death, and resurrection fulfilled God's eternal purpose for our redemption. This is sublime truth to dwell upon and cherish.

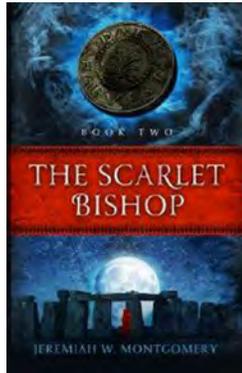
My only reservation—one remarked upon by other reviewers—is a small one: the practice of the authors and publisher to quote exclusively from the King James Version.

But parents can read more accessible modern translations for use with young children. The contents of the book deserve wide distribution.



***The Scarlet Bishop*, by Jeremiah W. Montgomery. P&R, 2013. Paperback, 299 pages, list price \$14.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Arthur J. Fox.**

It is difficult for an author to invent a world and make it seem real to the reader. Tolkien and Lewis did it well. But if you also want to add geography and



history, it becomes very difficult. But Jeremiah Montgomery has now done it over the course of two books in a projected trilogy. The first book, *The Dark Faith*, introduced us to an ancient world where a religion something like historic Christianity was being threatened, along with its devotees, by a mystical aberration of that faith. The adherents of the dark faith will do anything to conquer the world with its heresies and gain political power in the bargain. The monk Morumus has set out to translate the sacred writings of his faith into another language, and along the way a heroic apostate from the dark faith has been converted, and she has been helping with the translation.

In this second book, *The Scarlet Bishop*, a king has been murdered by his own son, and more death is on the horizon. Along the way, it would appear that Morumus himself has been murdered with others. But Montgomery is a crafty author and adept at misleading his readers. He takes you deeper and deeper into this violent and dark story until you are left sitting on the edge of your seat and loving every moment of the book. The last page before the epilogue will leave you gasping for more. The epilogue itself will leave your heart in your throat as you see a new convert face-to-face in danger from her own brother.

It is difficult to write a review of such a book without giving away the secrets that would spoil the mysteries of the story, so I close with some information. Montgomery has given help to the reader as he or she seeks to follow the story. There

is a glossary of names and places and also a detailed map in the book. As you read, you will recognize allusions to the Reformed faith, Jesus, and even a thinly veiled ongoing reference to the Roman Catholic Church and any other church that has ever used unscrupulous means to undermine orthodoxy. This is a fun read and comes highly recommended.

***Mark by the Book: A New Multidirectional Method for Understanding the Synoptic Gospels*, by Peter W. Smuts. P&R, 2013. Paperback, 260 pages, list price \$17.99. Reviewed by OP minister Roger W. Schmurr.**

Allen Curry remarked once that in his travels among OP congregations, he noticed that church members were more familiar with the New Testament epistles than with the Gospels. Peter Smuts wants church members to be familiar with the Gospels, so that they will understand the epistles.

“The point is that the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament revelation represent two different periods in redemptive history. . . . [T]he interpreter of the Gospels cannot insist on a simple and straightforward application of the Gospels in the church age; the progress of redemptive history may have brought changes or introduced elements of discontinuity” (p. xx), Smuts explains.

The author explores the gospel of Mark to demonstrate a four-step approach for properly understanding any of the Synoptic Gospels. Start with a downward reading of the gospel. That is, explore what the immediate text says and any information Mark includes around it. Does the theme show up elsewhere in the gospel? Is Mark including accounts that prove his opening statement that Jesus is “the Son of God”? Do you see a progression of this theme in this gospel?

Move to a sideways reading of Mark’s gospel, a close examination of what details he includes that the other gospel writers

don’t. Note, for instance, how Mark alone refers to the woman requesting healing for her daughter: not generically as a Canaanite, but as “a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth.” Only Mark notes that the daughter is her “child,” a not-too-subtle reference to the children who have a right to the table of the Lord’s mercy (7:27–30). Mark is building his case that the gospel is for Gentiles too.

Your eyes are glazing over by now, since you already employ these two interpretive steps in some ways. But now Smuts offers you the theological equivalent of Starbucks’ vanilla blond-roast coffee with a backward reading of the text, a stimulat-

ing exploration of the Old Testament background to what Mark is writing. In one case, the author uses five pages to point out the many parallels between Jesus’ transfiguration and the events at Mount Sinai. Rich material here.

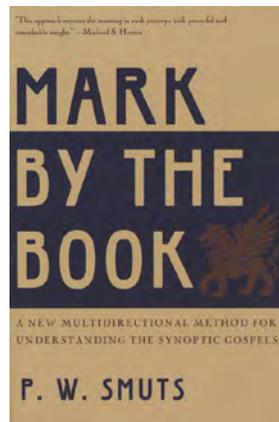
Rich, too, was the man who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Smuts uses this account to illustrate his last step, the forward read-

ing. See how the rest of the New Testament develops gospel themes. Jesus told the inquirer to sell everything he had and give the proceeds to the poor. But Jesus’ command is never repeated in the Bible beyond the Gospels. Instead of universalizing Jesus’ command, the apostle Paul instructs the rich to be generous and willing to share what they have, so that they provide a firm foundation for the age to come (1 Tim. 6:17–19).

Smuts even uses his four-step approach to argue for the shorter ending to Mark’s gospel. This is not a full commentary, but it offers more than most commentaries do on the sixteen passages it handles.

***Finishing Our Course with Joy*, by J. I. Packer. Crossway, 2014. Paperback, 106 pages, list price \$9.99. Reviewed by OP minister Allen Curry.**

In an earlier review, I wondered why the editor asked a retired grandfather to



review a book on pop culture. I have no doubts about why he asked me to review *Finishing Our Course with Joy*. Note the subtitle: *Guidance from God for Engaging with Our Aging*.

Packer begins by suggesting three things that should characterize aging: living for God one day at a time, living in the present moment, and living ready to go when Christ calls.

He contrasts his outlook with that of contemporary culture. The world “prescribes self-indulgence and irresponsibility as the goal of one’s declining years” (p. 29). This “agenda as a whole turns out to be a recipe for isolating oneself and trivializing one’s life, with apathetic boredom becoming one’s default mood day after day” (p. 30).

Packer recognizes the decline in physical functions. As the body ages, it becomes the source of pain and discouragement, which leads seniors to see the body as the opponent of well-being.

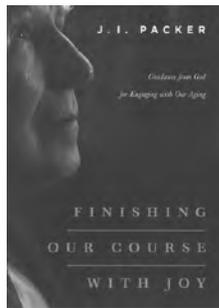
As a corrective to this view, the author explains briefly the Bible’s view that we are “psychophysical units, embodied souls who are also ensouled bodies” (p. 38).

Originally, body and soul were united forever, but sin came into the world with death as a consequence. As a result, physical decline is a given that sinful pride refuses to accept.

Packer argues that Satan convinces seniors that secular retirement should prevail in the church. He counters that seniors “behave as though spiritual gifts and ministry skills wither with age. But they don’t; what happens, rather, is that they atrophy with disuse” (p. 64).

The apostle Paul requires us to run the race set before us (1 Cor. 9:24–27). The author calls for seniors to rediscover Christian hope as a way to keep on the course God has set for us—“recovering and reappropriating this hope is a prime task for us who are aging today” (p. 84).

One could wish that the author gave more explicit directions on how the church can assist individuals in avoiding being sucked into the cultural vortex of self-centeredness. The book is long on analysis and calls for change, but short on



ideas about what seniors can and should do.

I can add my personal testimony to the deep joy and satisfaction that comes to a retired professor whom God has allowed to serve in a number of interim pastorates. My energy level is not what it was when I was twenty-five, but I’m glad

I’m not consigned to my rocking chair or golf four days a week. To Packer’s thesis I can offer a hearty amen.

***From Bondage to Liberty: The Gospel According to Moses*, by Anthony T. Selvaggio. P&R, 2014. Paperback, 170 pages, list price \$14.99. Reviewed by Pastor Matthew E. Cotta.**

No doubt many readers of *New Horizons* are already aware of, and have been greatly blessed by, other volumes in the Gospel According to the Old Testament series (edited by Iain Duguid). This series is designed to help and encourage pastors and laypeople to read the Old Testament as the Spirit intended it to be read: in the light of the glory of Jesus Christ. The contribution of Anthony Selvaggio, a visiting professor at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, to this series serves that purpose very well.

This book is really an explanation of the significance of Moses in the history of redemption as set forth in the book of Exodus. In writing it, Selvaggio demonstrates exegetical skill and a pastor’s heart as, following his Lord’s lead and beginning with Moses, he opens up to us many of the things that were written concerning Christ in this pivotal portion of God’s Word.

Some of the highlights of this book for

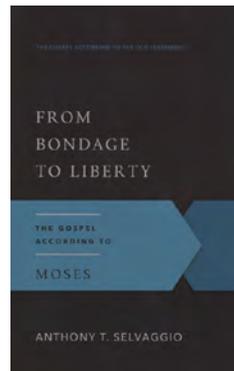
me were the helpful discussion of the significance of the covenant name of God in chapter 4, the connection between God’s word and his deed revelation in chapter 5, the nature of human responsibility and God’s sovereignty in chapter 6, and the symbolism inherent in the Passover celebration (particularly in the unleavened bread) in chapter 7.

Again, these were just highlights. As a whole, the book was edifying, reinforcing and clarifying themes that I had already cherished, as well as opening up new vistas for my understanding. I did find myself, however, in less than full agreement with his take on the early life of Moses.

Selvaggio argues that Moses’ killing of the Egyptian and subsequent flight from Egypt stemmed from sinful motives, such

as selfish ambition, autonomy, and pride, all of which needed to be purged out by forty years in the wilderness if he was one day to serve as a true type of Christ. While I admit the appeal of such a reading, I’m not sure it fits the inspired take of the author of Hebrews on this period of Moses’ life (cf. Heb. 11:24–27).

There were only a couple of editorial mistakes that I ran across: (1) The Scripture passage on page 12 ought to be Hebrews 3:1–6 rather than 3:11–6. (2) On page 78, in the second full



Positions Available

Professor: Westminster Seminary California seeks to fill a tenure-track position in New Testament and Greek, beginning July 1, 2015. Required qualifications: earned doctorate (or ABD), ordination (or pursuing ordination) as a Presbyterian/Reformed minister, pastoral experience, subscription to Westminster Standards and Three Forms of Unity. Send Inquiries and curriculum vitae by January 2, 2015, to J. V. Fesko, Academic Dean, Westminster Seminary California, 1725 Bear Valley Parkway, Escondido, California, 92027; fax: 760.480.0252; e-mail: academicdean@wscal.edu.

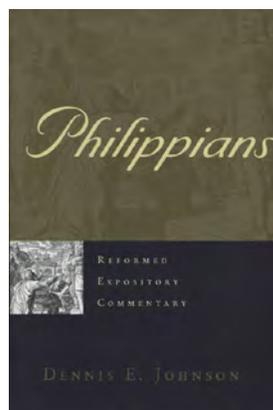
paragraph, the sentence beginning “He hardened” ought to read “He hardened his heart,” rather than “He hardened his hard.”

Overall, this book is self-consciously Reformed and Christ-centered, and I definitely recommend it to our readers. It is particularly well suited for group studies, and study leaders will be greatly served by the questions for reflection given at the end of each chapter. Whether one agrees with all of Selvaggio’s conclusions or not, the way Scripture is handled, the well-written and direct style, and its pastoral tone commend it highly.

***Philippians (Reformed Expository Commentary)*, by Dennis E. Johnson. P&R, 2013. Hardback, 384 pages, list price \$29.99. Reviewed by OP pastor Chad Bond.**

From Dennis Johnson, the church has received a valuable biblical exposition, in addition to his earlier volumes on Acts and Revelation. This volume, on Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians, belongs to the Reformed Expository Commentary series. As such, its style is more sermonic than an ordinary commentary, and it therefore reflects Johnson’s experience and expertise—not merely as an expositor of Scripture, but also as a seasoned pastor and a professor of practical theology at Westminster Seminary California.

For the minister who’s searching for good resources to fill his library, this volume is no substitute for



the standard academic commentaries on Philippians. But what a welcome supplement! Johnson has provided an admirable specimen that models the method he articulated in his helpful homiletic text, *Him We Proclaim*.

Johnson breaks the epistle down into eighteen sections, with each section containing about seventeen pages of exposition. The usual elements of traditional commentaries are not overlooked, such as grammatical details and historical background. Johnson masterfully handles such matters in appropriate measure.

But our expectations of a traditional commentary are exceeded by his pervasive integration of Reformed biblical-theological insights, as well as his generous inclusion of many engaging applications and anecdotes. Johnson succeeds, not only in bringing Paul’s inspired message to light, but also in bringing it to bear upon the hearts and lives of his



Short-Term Missions

Visit the OPC’s Short-Term Missions website at www.opcstm.org to review the reports, testimonials, and photo galleries from short-term missions trips that took place during the summer of 2014. Fifty-five OP churches were represented in eleven locations at home and abroad!



A happy camper and her counselor at the English for Kids Bible Camp at St-Marc Reformed Church in Quebec

Christian readers. As the publisher states, “Johnson shows how Paul, writing from imprisonment to a church close to his heart, uses his own experience and attitude as exemplars to show the Philippians the difference a Christ-formed mind makes to the way believers respond to adversity, rivalry, conflict, vanity, achievement, the ongoing pursuit of holiness, and the strategic deployment of our resources for the gospel.”

The format and style of this book also make it ideal for personal or group Bible study. Anyone seeking a better grasp of Philippians would do well to read it—and won’t be disappointed.