

# NEW HORIZONS

— *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

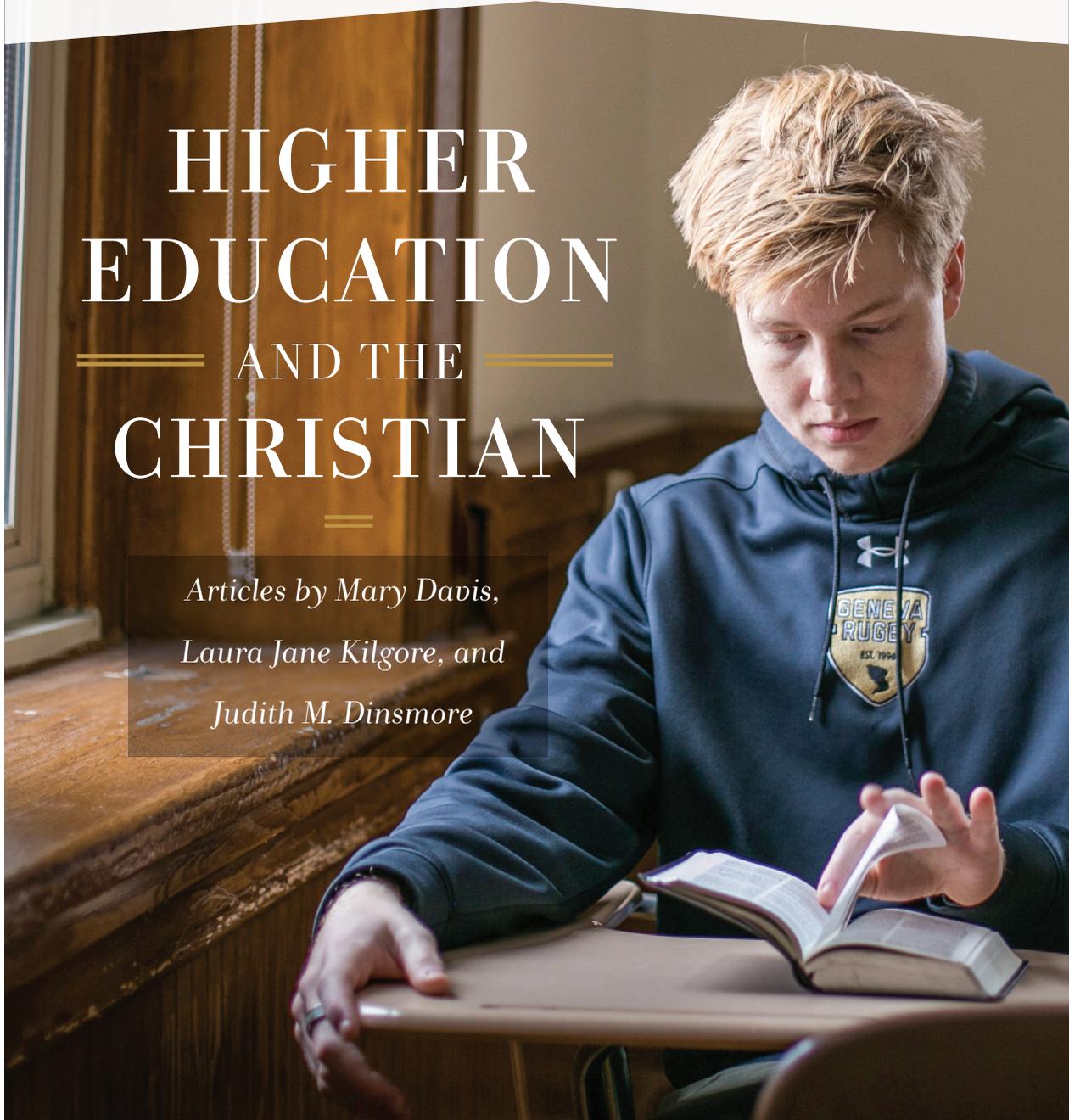
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## HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE CHRISTIAN

*Articles by Mary Davis,  
Laura Jane Kilgore, and  
Judith M. Dinsmore*



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Cover photo by Christianna Martin, courtesy of Geneva College

## New Horizons in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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**New Horizons** (ISSN: 0199-3518) is published monthly except for a combined issue, usually August-September, by the Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 607 N. Easton Road, Bldg. E, Willow Grove, PA 19090-2539; tel. 215-830-0900; fax 215-830-0350.

Letters to the editor are welcome. They should deal with an issue the magazine has recently addressed. Their language should be temperate, and they may not charge anyone with an offense. They should be brief, and they may be condensed by the editor.

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Send address changes to [CCEsecretary@opc.org](mailto:CCEsecretary@opc.org). Allow six weeks for address changes.

The digital edition (PDF, ePub, mobi) and an archive of previous issues are available at [www.opc.org](http://www.opc.org).

Views expressed by our writers are not necessarily those of the editors or official positions of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Copies are distributed free to members and friends of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Nonmembers are asked to donate \$20.00 for an annual subscription (USD \$30.00 if sent to addresses in Canada; \$40.00 elsewhere abroad). A free e-mail PDF subscription is also available. Requests for a subscription should be sent to [CCEsecretary@opc.org](mailto:CCEsecretary@opc.org) or the address below.

Periodicals postage is paid at Willow Grove, PA, and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *New Horizons in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, 607 N. Easton Road, Bldg. E, Willow Grove, PA 19090-2539.

At the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension Readiness for Ministry Seminar held April 20 on the campus of Reformed Theological Seminary in Oviedo, Florida, five OPC Timothy Conference alumni participated. From left to right, Isaac Fox (Calvary OPC, Middletown, PA), David Carnes (Lake Sherwood OPC, Lake Sherwood, FL), Chris Barnard (Calvary OPC, Tallahassee, FL), Greg Gale (Reformation OPC, Oviedo, FL) and Ben Ward (Covenant OPC, St. Augustine, FL). (For more on ten years of the Timothy Conference, see page 10.)



# GRAPPLING WITH THE COLLEGE DECISION



**MARY DAVIS //** From kindergarten to twelfth grade, year after year, there's a numbered step that tells students what to do next. But after high-school graduation, they are suddenly faced with one of the biggest decisions of their lives: where do they go from here?

College price tags, family expectations, and high-school experience all play large roles in what a Reformed student may decide. But more deeply, their perspective on the role of education will shape their decision. As four OP members look back on their varying post-high-school paths, they come to some similar conclusions.

## **Education: Life's Ongoing Instruction**

Paige Vanderwey, a member of Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Michigan, graduated high school in 2015 and took a non-traditional path. Although her parents were college graduates, they didn't see college as the only route for their children. Instead, Vanderwey explains, they taught her and her siblings to value ongoing learning in whatever form it took in their lives.

"My mom didn't homeschool me to prepare me for college, she homeschooled me to prepare me for life," said Vanderwey. "If I was just going to high school to get ready for college, that was not the right attitude."

After only one semester of classes at a university, Vanderwey had the opportunity to travel to the OP mission in Uganda. Upon returning, Vanderwey felt the Lord leading her to the mission field, but had no immediate opportunity to return. Deciding not to go back to the university, she found herself at a crossroads and eventually decided to enroll at Gillespie Academy, a one-year post-secondary program in Ontario,

Canada, that is focused on theology, philosophy, and communication.

"Some people tell me I wasted a year of my life, because it wasn't the normal route. I think it changed my life," Vanderwey said. "I committed a year to studying the one whom I worship and glorify. Eternally, that is of great value."

She found a stark difference between the classroom cultures at the university and Gillespie. At the university,



*Paige Vanderwey in Uganda with a few of her students*

every class had a row of kids in the back who were sleeping. They didn't want to be there. But Gillespie had a different vibe. "It was an atmosphere of kids that wanted to learn, wanted to know more, and were striving to know the Lord in very specific and focused, serious time," she said.

The time at Gillespie was transformative for Vanderwey. "I see things differently, I think differently," she said. Currently laboring again in Uganda, Vanderwey uses there the critical thinking skills and principles she learned at Gillespie. Both in the States and now in Uganda, Vanderwey sees a lack of the "art of discussion." And it has consequences. "If you don't know how to discuss, how to ask questions, you can't share what you believe, and ultimately, you can't even know what it is that you believe," she said.

On the other hand, the ability to be a lifelong learner, always asking questions and thinking critically, is both a spiritual and a practical help.

"We are learning every day of our lives no matter where we are,"

she concluded. "Ultimately, education is to know God and make him known—that's our goal and our purpose throughout all of life, including education."

### Education: Not an End in Itself

Kyle Will believes that although education and college don't always go hand in hand, college is often assumed to be the only choice for the high-schooler—or, at least, the only right choice. A member of Cornerstone OPC in Houston, Texas, Will felt pressured as a high-school senior to just follow the crowd and go to college. "It was the thing you were supposed to do if you were going to be successful," he said.

But that pressure isn't helpful, he argues. In high school, Will thought he wanted to attend college for a degree in information technology (IT) and web development—until a high-school internship convinced him that IT was not what he wanted to spend the rest of his life doing. He decided instead to open a business with an experienced partner in something that had always been a hobby: automotive performance.

Will recently sold his half of that company to open a truck and SUV dealership, a switch that allows him to spend time with his growing family. During the switch, the pressure from others to go to college returned, despite the fact that he transitioned into a job he enjoys.

He admits that being self-employed is not without its challenges. "I've learned to trust God a lot more because there is no guarantee a paycheck is coming in two weeks. It certainly makes you consider that God is faithful, and he will provide," he said.

Instead of pressuring high-school students to attend college, Will would stress the fact that there is no one-size-fits-all path. "It's a good idea to explore your natural talents and abilities and figure out how you can best use them in a way that creates a good life for you, contributes to the world, and glorifies God in doing so."

When students see education as an end in itself, they might waste time, energy, and money on something of little value to them. They might only go to college because they think "that's what they're supposed to do, not because they need it."

After a close call with the wrong career path, Will is relieved that he didn't invest time and money into a degree that wasn't right for him. He urges high-school students to get experience in the fields in which they are interested before they graduate high school. "Whether it be shadowing, working part-time, or volunteering in several different fields, it's invaluable experience, because if you pick one path and invest in it and it doesn't work out, then you've lost a lot."

Explore your interests and propensities, he says, rather than just looking for a well-paying career.

### Honing Gifts for the Kingdom

A well-paying career was near the bottom of Madeline McLean's priorities. McLean, a member of Providence Presbyterian in Greensboro, North Carolina, spent her entire senior year of high school wondering what to do next. With an interest in someday being a "wife and mother [who's] home with my kids," she wasn't exactly mapping out career possibilities.

But, encouraged by her mother to evaluate her abilities and gifts, McLean decided to audition at Campbell University as a piano pedagogy major. "I knew the Lord had given me ability and inclination toward music, and so I thought this would be a good opportunity for me to study it in a much more disciplined environment."

McLean says the self-discipline



Kyle Will hard at work while his son, Jackson, looks on



*Madeline McLean honing her skills as a pianist at Campbell University*

her course of study gave her has been an unexpected and invaluable by-product of her higher-education experience. As the classes and lessons honed her natural gifts, the experience also showed her areas in which her character needed to grow and pushed her outside of her comfort zone.

She advises high-school students to “prayerfully consider the skills and the gifts God has given you.” Pointing to Paul’s emphasis on the varied gifts of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12, she thinks high-school students should evaluate where their gifts might lie. Then the education decision can be based on what would “grow the abilities and talents the Lord has given them [in order] to serve him, serve the community, and serve the church.”

As McLean graduates this year, she seeks to balance education as both a means to an end and an end in itself. “The problem with our culture is that people view [education] much more as a means to an end than anything else,” she concluded.

### **A Love of Learning for Its Own Sake**

Nathan Moelker agrees. A member of Grace OPC in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, and a junior at Geneva College studying both English and computer science, Moelker is bent on preserving the joy and wonder of education.

“Education has been dominated by utilitarianism,” he said. “What we need in education is a love of learning for its own sake and training for its own sake.”

Rather than asking how to get the job that pays the most, Moelker advises the graduating high-school student to “look at yourself and see what God has gifted you to do and pursue it in such a way that you don’t kill your own curiosity and desire to learn. Whether God is calling you to be a plumber or a pastor, the world he has made is a wonderful, complicated, confusing but amazing, beautiful thing.”

Although he believes that finding



*Old Main at Geneva College, where Nathan Moelker is class of 2019*

a job is important—Moelker hopes his double major will allow him to enter law school or seminary after graduation—he notes that there are many people attending college who do not want to be there, and who probably shouldn’t be. When in doubt about the future, students are encouraged to break down education into a money calculation—to their detriment. “People try to find themselves by asking, ‘What will make the most money? I’ll do that.’ And that is very spiritually unhelpful,” Moelker said.

He encourages high-school students to know their gifts rather than their financial bottom line. When they do, the “how” of learning will fall in line, too: “Delight in and learn about God and his world—that is how we use our gifts well.”

### **A Student’s Chief End**

Whether one leaves high school to attend college, learn a trade, raise a family, or start a business, a heart inclined to learning is a biblical attitude for Christians.

Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. (Psalm 119:97–99)

And certainly, as these men and women discovered, their decisions needed to include more than how much money they will make in five years and also more than what they feel will fulfill them.

Although discovering vocation or abiding passions is good and helpful, students’ goals as they graduate high school should not be primarily to discover who they are as a person, but who God is and how they can glorify and enjoy him. □

*The author is a writer and editor living in Louisiana with her husband and son, members of Grace Presbyterian Church PCA in Metairie, Louisiana.*

# OP MINISTRY TO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS



LAURA JANE KILGORE // **The traditional college ministry in the United States tends to promote student leadership, have little emphasis on accountability, and keep students within the university circle. While such ministries can provide a great service, they are not the equivalent of a local church.**

Instead of establishing this type of college ministry, OP churches around the country are treating college ministry as a bridge to connect students who are living and working inside the academic bubble to the larger, soul-feeding church family.

“I resist the idea that we have a college ministry,” explained Everett Henes, pastor of Hillsdale OPC in Hillsdale, Michigan, although 30 percent of the congregation are students at nearby Hillsdale College. In fact, the church was started in part by college students, and it will always have a college-student focus. Yet the students at Hillsdale OPC are not separated from the congregation for their fellowship or growth. Instead, Henes said, they are an integral part of the church itself.

At Hillsdale and other OP churches, integrating college and university students is done through outreach, hospitality, service, and discipleship.

## Outreach

With few resources for dynamic college outreach methods, many OP pastors are creating a type of college

evangelism that’s both creative and simple.

Located near Oregon State University, Westminster Presbyterian Church in Corvallis, Oregon, hosts a weekly on-campus international student luncheon along with several area churches. Because of the limited resources of their church, “it was clear to us that, if we wanted to have a presence on the campus, it would be best to partner with other churches or existing ministries,” Pastor Martin Emmrich said.

Charles Williams, associate pastor of Bethel Presbyterian in Wheaton, Illinois, noted that outreach to college students can be motivated by a “desire just to get fresh blood so that there’s a little more liveliness at the church,” but that true growth is marked by the individual relationships with students, not numeric success.

That’s why some pastors make themselves physically available for one-on-one conversations and outreach on campus. Some simply create a campus presence through weekly lunch gatherings or by just setting up shop at the central campus coffee shop.

Others take advantage of university-sponsored events, like church days or rush week, to set up a table on campus and pass out literature to students. These books, brochures, and pamphlets may come with free lunch if students are willing to meet with the pastor to discuss their readings.

## Hospitality

College students are certainly notorious for hunting down free food. But they’re often hungry for something more: community. “We live in a disconnected world, and students need connection,” Henes said. For freshmen, college can be unexpectedly lonely, and an open door can mean the world. It doesn’t have to be anything fancy, stressed Henes. “We give them food, because that’s what college students love, and they might wrestle with my kids...We have a lot of fond memories of students hanging out in our house.”

At Covenant OPC, which is just across Wolf Creek from Grove City College in Pennsylvania, individual families “adopt” student attendees for monthly dinners, Sunday lunch,



College lunch at Living Water OPC, Springfield, OH

or whenever the wind blows them in. Multiple families can also team up to care for groups of students at Covenant. The practice is so unifying, Pastor Jeremy Jones said, because “everyone loves to sit at table together.”

Hospitality can also be practiced on Sunday morning. Students are constantly surrounded by their peers and probably don’t need more of the same exclusive environment when they come to church. At Covenant, the students are integrated with the young adults, families, and elderly members of the congregation.

### Service

Churches may be tempted to expect little from college students, hovering as they are at the brink of adulthood and often absent from the church during summers and holidays. However, no group is so closely knit together as when they’re serving together, said Daniel Doleys, pastor of Living Water OPC in Springfield, Ohio. If college students are feeling disconnected from the body of Christ, then they should be involved in service.

Students from nearby Cedarville University assist in Sunday school classes and the nursery at Living Water. When the Doleys family moved into a new

house, students helped with renovations. For his part, Doleys holds “Theology Nights” and one-on-one discipleship.

Student service opportunities can look different for each church. Pastor Jones said that Covenant OPC is blessed and served by their college students’ “robust congregational singing” on Sunday mornings.

### Discipleship

With an emphasis on scriptural teaching and preaching, OP churches are usually strong on congregational exhortation. But college students also desperately need personal, one-on-one discipleship. They may be far away from family members and other solid, long-term relationships as well as being unwilling or uncertain about seeking new mentors. Whether they realize it or not, each student is looking for something that will answer the big questions of life. That’s where the church comes in.

With a background in ministry at both Wheaton College and Calvin College, Williams teaches the Bible to students as something that engages both the mind *and* the heart instead of a mere academic discipline. Students need a fruitful understanding of the

law of God as “something that drives us to Christ and serves as a guide for Christian living,” he said. Prayer, Bible reading, and church attendance are the three spiritual disciplines that Williams encourages his students to develop in their formative college years—as well as accepting the hospitality offered to them by members of the church.

### The Challenges of College Ministry

Universities are often hotspots of cultural change, which can pose significant challenges to local church ministry. Emmrich, a native of Germany, noted firsthand in Europe an increased hostility toward Christians, and believes the same thing is happening in the United States. “The general mood in this country is changing and the winds are blowing,” he said.

In response, Westminster Presbyterian is seeking to demonstrate to students that “Christianity is a thinking religion and not just a naive worldview.” At Wheaton College, Williams similarly believes that modern and postmodern philosophy is reshaping evangelical norms. “Rather than saying the moral law of God, the Decalogue, is the grid through which we view ethics,” he said, “the trifocal lens of race, class, and gender is becoming the new grid.”

These challenges are coupled with the transient nature of college ministry: even when students are receptive, they

usually move away in a few months or years.

Yet, the rewards of college ministry are vast and relationships sweet. “They’re really wonderful,” Emmrich said about the students at his church. “It’s just beautiful to see how they live out their faith.” □



College group at Covenant OPC, Grove City, PA

*The author is a writer, editor, and member of Trinity Presbyterian OPC in Waco, Texas.*

# A CASE FOR CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION



JUDITH M. DINSMORE // Back when Geneva professor and OP elder Dr. James Gidley was a student, student loans weren't a thing. Had he walked into a bank and asked for one, he said, "they would have laughed me out of the lobby!"

Nobody's laughing today. The Pew Research Center reports

that Americans "owed more than \$1.3 trillion in student loans at the end of June [2017], more than two and a half times what they owed a decade earlier." Students who graduate with a bachelor's degree owe a median of \$25,000; post-graduate degree holders are at \$43,000.

As debt-averse Calvinists, these numbers probably make us itchy. They don't sit well with Gidley, either. The cost of higher education has risen faster than inflation for years and contributes to what Gidley calls a vicious cycle: "As schools cost more, parents demand more of them, which then costs more money. The high expense, then, is driving the pragmatic view of school." Students think that if they're going to attend, it had better be worth their while in dollars.

## The High Cost of Non-Christian Education

But after looking at the price tag, many students opt out of Christian higher education. After all, if one has grown up with Christian training in home or school or both, how difficult

can it be to navigate a secularized student environment—especially if it's cheaper?

"I don't think that's good thinking," Geneva College president Calvin Troup said. "It's common thinking, but not good thinking."

It doesn't look closely at the cost of that secularized environment, he claimed. The general education courses at a secular school, where each student begins, are the courses most permeated with an anti-Christian bias. It may not be flashy or in your face, but it is "intellectually profound and pervasive," Troup said. He speaks from experience: in one case, he was teaching at a large public university and hanging out in the faculty lounge. The professors were swapping strategies on how to fix the big campus problem of "all these students from our state who

are too Christian and too conservative," Troup remembered.

A 2017 study done by the Gallup-



Geneva College president Calvin L. Troup

Knight Foundation backs him up. In its findings, college students were more likely to perceive that liberals are able to freely express their views on campus (92 percent) than conservatives are (69 percent).

One dad of a freshman told Troup about the message he heard from a state school during welcome week. "We see our job as unlearning everything you've

learned at home,” the college told its incoming students, “and re-teaching you to become a global citizen.” Secular higher education may not have chapel on Wednesday morning, but they are evangelizing nonetheless.

And counteracting their message is hard. “You will not have a *God Is Not Dead* experience,” Troup said. In that film, a Christian student disproves a hostile professor. In real life, Troup explained, non-Christian PhDs are not nearly that inept. “You might survive with your Christianity intact. But you’d get eaten alive intellectually. It’s not a fair fight.”

To flip it around, what students *won’t* encounter at a secular school is the “positive, Christ-centered, high-octane, Christian intellectual tradition of a biblically integrated core that you can get at a good Christian college,” he said.

### More Than a Data Download

Derek Halvorson, president of Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia, honed in on a different concern with secular higher education.

Historically, he explained, higher education has been intricately connected with spiritual formation. With the rise of the research university model in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, however, higher education “became all about the production of knowledge and the acquisition of knowledge for practical purposes.” The result, he says, is that most institutions have abandoned themselves to a shallow vision of education: giving oneself the skills necessary to get a job that makes money.

“There’s a very strong unspoken undercurrent in American education about helping you become successful—and they define that success by your economic status or your general happiness,” Halvorson observed.

In contrast, the goal of schools like Covenant is pretty obvious. “One of the great benefits of the Christian college is that their ‘hidden curriculum’ isn’t all that hidden,” Halvorson said. “We tend to be very forthright about what we’re

hoping to accomplish and what we’re hoping to see in the lives of our graduates.” Their goal as a college is not to “transition data from one brain to another brain,” but to make disciples.

“We’re not just trying to get people to understand certain facts; we’re also trying to teach people to love certain things, to long for certain things,” he said. “We view education as the formation of people intellectually and emotionally and spiritually.”

This holistic perspective should be old news. Reformation Bible College (RBC) in Sanford, Florida, sees itself as a direct inheritor of the rich tradition of liberal arts. “We are not in any way an innovator or unique in the twenty-first century,” its president, Dr. Stephen



*The campus of Reformation Bible College in Sanford, FL*

J. Nichols, said. “We see ourselves as meaningfully connected to our past and part of a tradition that we find has a great value of life in the present.”

At RBC, students take classes in the great works of art, literature, and music, as well as the Bible and theology. Nichols happily admits that it’s not a school for everyone—although it’s currently at capacity and expanding its facility—but also that it’s more than just a pre-seminary undergrad school.

“Being compelling communicators of the written word and of the spoken word are almost essential skills to success in whatever students do... The most timely education is a timeless education. We’re preparing students for careers that maybe don’t even exist yet.”

With this “timeless” education,

RBC is attempting to reclaim the *uni* in *university*—the “one-ness” of cohesive educational offerings. What’s offered in fragmented secular education may have great practical use but is disconnected from a larger moral or ethical framework—and often disconnected from a historical perspective as well, Nichols said.

### The Great Divide

This fragmentation, Gidley argues, goes deep. An inhabitant of academic worlds for forty years, Gidley has witnessed a widening gap between the “two sides” of a traditional campus: the humanities and the sciences. On the one side, humanities faculty in America in the last century have given over to relativism. “Any claim to truth they see as just a way to justify power,” Gidley said. The other side, the sciences, spends all their time hypothesizing, testing, and deducing—

“philosophically, they haven’t gotten past 1750.” One side is saying that there is no truth, the other side is constantly occupied in finding out

the truth via the scientific method.

Gidley uses as an example biological determinism versus transgender advocacy: a prominent biologist recently made the case that all social behavior is biologically determined, and yet simultaneously, transgender advocates routinely dismiss biological reality in favor of psychological conviction. There is a wide gulf between the claims, yet they coexist on college campuses. “The humanists and scientists get along by never talking to each other,” Gidley concluded.

But he cautions that Christians make the same mistake when they view the sciences as morally neutral. OP parents might break out in hives, for

*[Continued on page 19.]*

# TEN YEARS OF THE OPC TIMOTHY CONFERENCE

// DANNY E. OLINGER



*Nathan Moelker, Craig Troxel, Collin Vis, Caleb Frahm, and Noah Berry at the Oriental Institute*

On April 9, 2008, the day before the first OPC Timothy Conference, David Winslow and his wife, Susan, worked around the clock to make sure that the fourteen young men hoping to attend would not miss the event due to over one thousand cancelled airplane flights that day. On April 12 of this year, the Winslows were again working with airline representatives so that the twelve young men who had attended the 2018 conference would not be stranded in snowy Chicago.

These challenges were a wonderful symmetry of service to mark the Winslows' last conference before retirement. Attendee Jared Foy from Trinity OPC in Grants Pass, Oregon, expressed thankfulness for the "singular devotion" of the Winslows in assisting him and the rest of the 2018 attendees with all the logistical issues involved.

The Winslows' service has not been the only constant through the eleven Timothy Conferences. Another has been the Lord's grace in raising up a generation of men who love him and his church. When the Committee on Christian Education first announced in December 2007 that it was planning to hold a conference "to assist the OPC to be faithful in her calling to entrust the gospel to the next generation," they hoped for a total of ten young men willing to attend. Not only did thirty young men attend the first Timothy Conference (split into two sessions), but since its beginning a total of 173 men have come.

OPC ministers (over thirty in total) have instructed

these men on the ministerial office of the Word, the internal and external call to the ministry, seminary training, the process of becoming a minister in the OPC, and how to prepare spiritually for the ministry.

The sessions of ninety-seven OP churches have recommended young men later approved for the conference. Harvest in Wyoming, Michigan, has sent seven men, and Grace in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, has sent five. Churches that have sent four men include Covenant in Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania; Grace in Vienna, Virginia; Redeemer in Beavercreek, Ohio; and Grace in Columbus, Ohio. Churches in the presbyteries of the Midwest, Ohio, and Mid-Atlantic have sent the most participants with twenty-two, twenty-one, and sixteen men respectively.

Close to one-third of Timothy Conference attendees have been the sons or grandsons of OP officers. Just as many had individually come to the OPC while attending college or were from families that had been members of OP congregations for less than five years.



*Patrick Waggoner, Nathan Moelker, Micah Shaw, and Caleb Frahm taking notes at the conference*

Five Timothy Conference attendees have been ordained to gospel ministry in the OPC: Caleb Smith, associate pastor at Calvary in Glenside, Pennsylvania; Adrian Crum, associate pastor at Reformation Fellowship in Roseville, California; Jonathan Cruse, pastor at Community Presbyterian in Kalamazoo, Michigan; Zachary Simmons, pastor at Resurrection in State College, Pennsylvania; and Michael Spangler, associate pastor at Providence in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Alexander Patocs has been ordained and installed as a deacon at Calvin OPC in Phoenix, Arizona.

Timothy Conference alumni who are under care of a presbytery or are licensed and have served an OPC ministerial internship include Ben Gordon (2008), John Holloway (2008), Seth Dorman (2009), David Bonner (2010), Aijalon Church (2011), Elijah De Jong (2012), Jeremiah Dickinson (2012), Benjamin Woodring (2012), Tyler Detrick (2013), Zachary Siggins (2013), Benjamin Ward (2014), and David Carnes (2014).

In addition, some alumni are currently attending seminary or are enrolled for seminary classes in the upcoming school year, such as James Stafford (2010), Joseph Pollard (2010), Christopher Barnard (2012), and Lawrence Gale (2014). Other Timothy Conference participants such as Matthew Walker (2008), David Kuhfuss (2008), and Ethan Chong (2012) have served as missionary associates in the OPC.

Four seminaries have graciously opened their doors to host the conference: Westminster Seminary California, Mid-America Reformed Seminary, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and Westminster Theological Seminary.

Each year, local OP churches host the attendees, providing both meals and help with transportation. The list includes Harvest in San Marcos, California; Escondido in Escondido, California; Providence in Temecula, California; Matthews in Matthews, North Carolina; Calvary in Glenside, Pennsylvania; Covenant in Orland Park, Illinois; New Covenant Community in Joliet, Illinois; and Bethel in Wheaton, Illinois.

On the extracurricular day of the conference, attendees have surfed in the Pacific Ocean, toured historic Presbyterian landmarks in Philadelphia, and visited the Art Institute of Chicago. At the 2018 conference, the men received a specialized tour of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago led by Shawn Goodwin, a member at Bethel in Wheaton.

### In the Words of the Attendees

Many men who attend the Timothy Conference are not sure about God's calling in their lives but are excited to learn more about the Word of God and to have fellowship with others their age. Although ministry had crossed the mind of 2018 attendee Caleb Frahm (Covenant OPC, San Jose, California), he had never felt a strong calling to be pastor. At the conference, he said, "I found a group of individuals in the same position I found myself, curious about the calling God may have for my life....The conference convicted me to utilize the opportunities I have at church to serve, to seek mentorship from my pastors, and to learn Scripture and theology."

The best part about the Timothy Conference, according to Marius Du Plessis (Ketoctin Covenant Presbyterian, Purcellville, Virginia), is "being in the company of godly young and older men who love the Lord and are ready to serve him wherever that may be."

*The author is editor of New Horizons.*

## OUR MEMBERSHIP VOWS

### Dependence on the Holy Spirit

*Glen J. Clary*

The sin of Adam changed us in two ways. It changed our status and our nature. In terms of our status, it made us guilty and unrighteous law-breakers. In terms of our nature, it made us defiled and depraved. As a result of Adam's sin, we are born with a sinful nature, and until we are born again, we are corrupt in every part of our being—our mind, our will, our emotions, our desires, and so on.

The good news, however, is that God has promised to change our sinful nature by the power of his Holy Spirit. God said:

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. (Ezek. 36:25–27)

Only God can change our sinful nature. We cannot change ourselves. We are entirely dependent on the Spirit of God to change us.

This doctrine—often referred to as total depravity—crosses our pride. We want to think of ourselves as basically good people with a few flaws or imperfections. And we assume that we have the ability to change ourselves. We do not want to recognize that we are slaves of sin and powerless to free ourselves from that bondage.

But we must humble ourselves before God and admit that we are guilty and ruined by sin and that we are totally unable to change our nature without his saving power. That's what the third membership vow is asking you to do: "Do you confess that because of your sinfulness you abhor and humble yourself before God?"

## Out of the Mouth . . .

My boys were discussing heaven, and my twelve-year-old observed that, since John Wayne and Jimmy Stewart had been Presbyterians, "we might see them in the new heavens and the new earth." "Yeah," his seven-year-old brother mournfully replied, "but we probably won't be able to say anything to them because we'll be singing all the time!"

—Joel Ellis

Apache Junction, AZ

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

# THE WIND BLOWS WHERE IT WISHES

// HEERO E. C. HACQUEBORD



*The Lord has worked in and through the lives of Ira and Vova*

In the dark of night, a man named Nicodemus quietly moved through town to have a private conversation with that fascinating teacher and miracle-worker, Jesus of Nazareth. The things he heard about true faith and spiritual life were as shocking and unexpected as the person of Jesus himself. The haunting words rung in his ears: “You must be born again.” The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:7–8).

This article is the story of how the Spirit of God has similarly “blown” in the heart of a young woman named Iryna (“Ira”) and that of her husband, Volodymyr (“Vova”), here in Ukraine.

## Meeting Christ at Summer Camp

As is usually the case, their story includes the story of several others. First, let me introduce Sashko.

Even before I moved from Kiev to L’viv in 2007, Sashko contacted me and our L’viv team leader, Doug Shepherd. (Doug Shepherd and I are both a part of the PCA’s Mission to the World in L’viv.) Sashko was eager to meet the American Presbyterians who wanted to plant a new church in historic L’viv. Even though Sashko was still a teenager, he had already started his own English language ministry to high-school students in the city and was seeking to involve us in this significant work!

At this point, my wife, Anya, and I hadn’t even moved from Kiev to L’viv. But once we did, Sashko approached me about do-

ing a weeklong business English class at a local high school. Eager to get my feet wet in ministry and to develop more relationships in the city, I readily agreed—despite my complete lack of experience speaking “business English.” Thankfully, my wife was there to help! This extracurricular class for seniors about to graduate turned out to be a very enjoyable and fruitful time. At the end of the week, several of the students were interested in attending the summer English camp for high-schoolers offered by Sashko’s organization.

Through one of the students from that class, Olya, we also met a spunky ninth-grader named Ira. Her infectious smile and radiant eyes communicated her positive outlook on life and desire to learn. Ira wanted to go to the English camp as well, but by the time she found out about it, all the spots were already taken. When another acquaintance gave her place to Ira, though, her summer dream came true.

Doug and I visited that same camp to learn from Sashko’s experience. On the last evening, we witnessed many students’ emotional response to a call given by the American team to surrender their lives to Christ. We recognized several students from the business English class who now had tears streaming down their cheeks. It was something to behold! Notwithstanding such a moving experience, their lives did not begin to change significantly right away. In Ira’s case specifically, although her tears were certainly heartfelt, it would take many more months for her to come to true faith in Jesus of Nazareth.

Olya and Ira began to attend weekly activities organized by Sashko’s team. They were not ready to attend the Protestant church plant Sashko was a part of since they were culturally still con-



*Ira at the Hacquebords’ first English camp in 2008*

nected to the Greek Catholic church (the predominant church of Western Ukraine). Yet they became increasingly involved with it. When Sashko helped us with our first English camp for college students in 2008, Ira became an eager translator for it. She continued to attend Sashko's camps, meeting her future husband, Vova, at camp in 2009.

Eventually, Ira and Vova began to attend the Protestant church plant. Ira's parents did not mind her involvement with the Protestant group. Her mother was from a Greek Catholic background and her father was a self-proclaimed atheist, but they could see positive changes in her life taking place during her involvement with the Protestants. When Ira decided to be baptized in this new church, however, alarm bells went off in her parents' heads.

Engaging his youngest daughter in a rare heart-to-heart talk, Ira's dad eagerly tried to convince her that all this religious stuff was for the birds. When that approach rolled off Ira like water from a duck's back, her mom stepped in: "You know, Ira, how religious your grandmother is. If you get baptized in this church, then she will not take it well at all. It might even cause her death!" But Ira had made her choice. She loved Jesus Christ and wanted to live for him, even if her family did not support or understand her. She and Vova entered university, got married, and remained active in their church.

### Growing in Faith in Poland

Meanwhile, Sashko was on his own personal and spiritual journey that led him first to be a member of our church-planting team that established L'viv's only (but not first) Reformed and Presbyterian church, and then later to be instrumental in ministry in Krakow, Poland. The work in Krakow eventually became a Presbyterian church plant led by Sashko and supported by many others—including Presbyterians from Northern Ireland and our church in L'viv.

Needing a strong church-planting team, Sashko asked several of his friends from L'viv to consider joining him in Krakow. In time, Olya, Ira, and Vova all picked up and moved to Poland and became integral parts of this ministry to the people of Krakow.

Under Sashko's leadership, the church's core group met weekly to study the Heidelberg Catechism together. Vova and Ira realized that there was something significantly different in what they were hearing compared to the teaching of their former church, yet it agreed with everything that they had read in Scripture.

In the beginning of 2017, their formative time in Krakow was cut short. Vova was not able to find a new job in time to

renew his Polish visa, and he and Ira returned to Ukraine.

Back in L'viv, Vova and Ira continued to attend their previous church. Yet Vova kept thinking and reading books on Reformed theology. He and Ira finally realized that, although they loved the people in their church, they just didn't agree with the church's teaching and direction. It was then that—on Sashko's recommendation—they began attending our church regularly.

### Life in L'viv

And so, for the past several months, we have been overjoyed to renew our acquaintance with Ira and to get to know Vova. As a matter of fact, they just finished our latest new members' class and anticipate being officially accepted into our church in the coming weeks. We praise God for the addition of this young couple to our

community and look forward to seeing his continuing work in their lives.

As the Spirit of God moves and blows among us, he does amazing things. He touches people's lives, changing them forever, and uses all of his church in the process. It's wonderful to witness his work—even if we only see a small part of it!

*The author is an OP missionary to Ukraine. Please pray that the Holy Spirit may continue to work in the hearts of many students during the summer camp this month.*



New members' class in L'viv

## What's New

### // Comings/Goings

After completing four terms of missionary service, **Rev. and Mrs. David A. Okken** are returning to the United States with their children, Megan, Jacob, and Caleb, in mid-July from Karamoja, Uganda, where David has served as a missionary evangelist since 2001. David has accepted a call to labor as a pastor at Shiloh Presbyterian Church, OPC, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

**Miss Kathleen Y. Winslow** (Westminster OPC, Westminster, CA) concluded her two-year term as a missionary associate in the Czech Republic at the end of June.

**Miss Ashley F. Cunningham** (Covenant Presbyterian Church, OPC, Buford, GA) has postponed her service as a missionary associate in Karamoja, Uganda, until a later date.

# MINISTRY IN THE "CROWN OF THE VALLEY"

// MATTHEW E. COTTA



*New members being received into Pasadena OPC*

Set off from the hustle and bustle of Los Angeles, the city of Pasadena, California, has a life, culture, and character of its own. You might know about the city through its nationally televised Rose Bowl and Rose Parade or from the 1964 Jan and Dean hit, "The Little Old Lady from Pasadena."

Not nearly as fast-paced as L.A. (except for the Little Old Lady), Pasadena is also quieter, more relaxed, and definitely more floral. Situated in the beautiful San Gabriel Valley at the foot the San Gabriel Mountain range, it is, as its Chippewa name translates, the "crown of the valley."

## A New Church for Pasadena

Pasadena OPC began around three years ago when a small group of committed believers, led by Pastor Chris Hartshorn, a church planter in Anaheim Hills, began a home Bible study close to Providence Christian College. The nearest OPC being more than forty minutes away on the infamous L.A. freeways, this group began to meet in hope that it might one day be an OP church plant.

At the time, the Presbytery of Southern California and its Missions Committee were already stretched thin and working with several other church plants throughout the region, so the group in Pasadena waited patiently. In 2017, the Presbytery determined that it had sufficient time and resources to turn its attention to the group in Pasadena and called me, Matthew Cotta, as church planter.

When I was contacted by the Presbytery of Southern

California, I was in my fourteenth year of service as pastor of Grace OPC in Hanover Park, Illinois. Grace OPC has a long history of pastors whose service at Grace prepared them for other ministries in the OPC, including Douglas Clawson, David Cummings, and Jim Bosgraf. It seemed that the Lord had so prepared me as well, and, as I was unable to deny the inward call, my family and I agreed to leave our beloved church family in Hanover Park, as well as our friends, schools, and newly purchased house, and move out to California.

We arrived in July 2017, and I began leading the Bible study comprised of around eighteen people. Pasadena OPC held its first worship service on September 17, 2017—a joyous occasion. Currently our average worship attendance is in the upper forties. We've already enjoyed the reception of a number of new members, and several others are in the process.

## Searching for Stability

The greater Los Angeles area, including Pasadena, is church-saturated. But what the folks in the initial Bible study understood, and what we also came to see, is that regardless of their name or non-denominational status, most of these churches are direct heirs of modernism, pentecostalism, charismatic churches, fundamental Baptist traditions, or broadly evangelical churches. Not only that, but in these parts, no matter their heritage, churches routinely reinvent themselves to keep in step with the culture. Scarce were stable churches that faithfully taught the whole counsel of God in all its depth and riches.

We've seen people coming to us with incredibly mixed church backgrounds, starving for lack of solid food and genuine fellowship in Christ. They come into our worship service and rejoice in its self-consciously God-directed and Christ-centered worship and teaching. "Where have you guys been all our lives?" is a not uncommon sentiment.

One of our early attendees, now a member, relayed to me the long story of her relationship with numerous churches in the area. At nearly every church she has attended or held

## Home Missions Today

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

membership in up to this point, the church dissolved or split due to scandal, division in the leadership, or, in one case, an attempt to transform the church into a personality cult. In addition, as a widow, her concerns and needs were routinely ignored. She has expressed thanksgiving to the Lord that she now belongs to a stable church family that truly cares for her.

Another early attendee, now a member, had been a longtime member of a church that began well but, over time, toned down its commitment to God-centered worship and became more and more man-centered in the interests of staying relevant and appealing to young people. A trained musician and a lover of Scripture, he made numerous appeals to the leadership but was dismissed. He, too, has found a home at Pasadena OPC and is attending our officers training class.

### A DNA of Fellowship

Thanks to the wonderful diversity of the people in Southern California, Pasadena OPC is made up of and ministers to people of many ethnicities. We rejoice in that diversity, reflective as it is of the universal church gathered around the throne of God in glory. Should I add that this makes our fellowship luncheons especially delicious?

We also believe that this diversity will help our church continue to grow as we reach out to others in the community. Indeed, we are striving to ingrain in our very DNA a culture of outreach and fellowship. Fellowship, especially, can be hard to come by in our society, and all the more in commuter cultures like the Los Angeles area. But the Lord has already given our growing congregation a sweet fellowship in the Spirit that we hope to continue to nourish and share with others.

Our goal is to become a stable church family for many and to be a lighthouse of the gospel in Pasadena, one that eventually plants other churches in the region. There are millions of people in the greater Los Angeles area, yet northern Los Angeles county has precious few Reformed and Presbyterian churches and only one OPC. The fields are ripe for harvest.

Given the diversity of our neighborhood, our outreach efforts will be multifaceted. An ESL program directed toward the thousands of Chinese immigrants coming into the area is in the planning stages. Outreach Bible studies using *Christianity Explored* and *Life Explored* are going to be launched soon. We are planning on serving at local women's shelters.

I also like to use meetup.com to set up studies and meet new people. One of these has been especially fruitful, a meet-up called "Holy Rollers" where I instruct those who come in both Brazilian jiu-jitsu (BJJ) and the Bible (not simultaneously). I love BJJ and have been training in it for more than five years. As I thought of ways I could reach out to and connect with people in the community, it occurred to me that I might as well start an outreach group where I'm able to combine two of my passions.

From that group, we've already seen people visit our church, and one non-believer seems to be coming close, very close, to the kingdom of God. This man came to the first meet-up with little knowledge of who Jesus Christ is according to Scripture. In the beginning, he expressed his view that Jesus may well have been an alien from another planet who came to help humanity. As of our last meeting, he confessed that he is becoming more and more convinced that Jesus is the Son of God.

### Standing Invitation to Worship

We've also been greatly encouraged by the outpouring of encouragement and prayers on our behalf from OP members throughout the nation. We've enjoyed the OP members who, in California for business or on vacation, worked out their schedules so they could worship with us. Thank you all! In all of this, we have seen God's mighty hand and tender mercy, and we are without doubt that God wants and will have an OPC in Pasadena.

*The author is pastor of Pasadena OPC in Pasadena, CA.*



*The congregation of Pasadena OPC (Matthew and Lois Cotta are center right)*

# THE SACRIFICE OF DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN

// W. REID HANKINS

When we think about stewardship, we tend to focus on finances. 2 Samuel 23:13–17 calls us to consider a different kind of stewardship. These verses are an account of the valor of three men who brought David water from the well at Bethlehem at the peril of their own lives. Situated in a list of honor of David's thirty mighty men, this account shows us how God gifted and used these men in support of their king and kingdom.

These were challenging times for God's people. God had made David his anointed one, inaugurating his reign over Israel. However, David hadn't yet come into the glory of that kingdom. At this point, he was likely in exile in the cave of Adullam while King Saul sought his life (1 Sam. 22:1). Furthermore, Israel was under Philistine affliction as seen by the fact that the Philistines controlled Bethlehem—David's hometown. When David longed for water from Bethlehem (2 Sam. 23:15), surely his desire was more than to quench his thirst, but for Bethlehem to be liberated.

All this reflects how David's kingdom was not fully established; there were yet enemies foreign and at home. However, during this time of David's waiting, God didn't leave him without help. When David expressed his longing for some water from Bethlehem in verse 15, he wasn't asking his men to go behind enemy lines. But three of his mighty men bravely went and secured some of that Bethlehem water. They were eager to please their king, even if it meant jeopardizing their lives. Yet David couldn't accept their gift, saying that he was unworthy of such honor because that water was purchased at the cost of the risk of his men's lives. Instead, David poured it out,

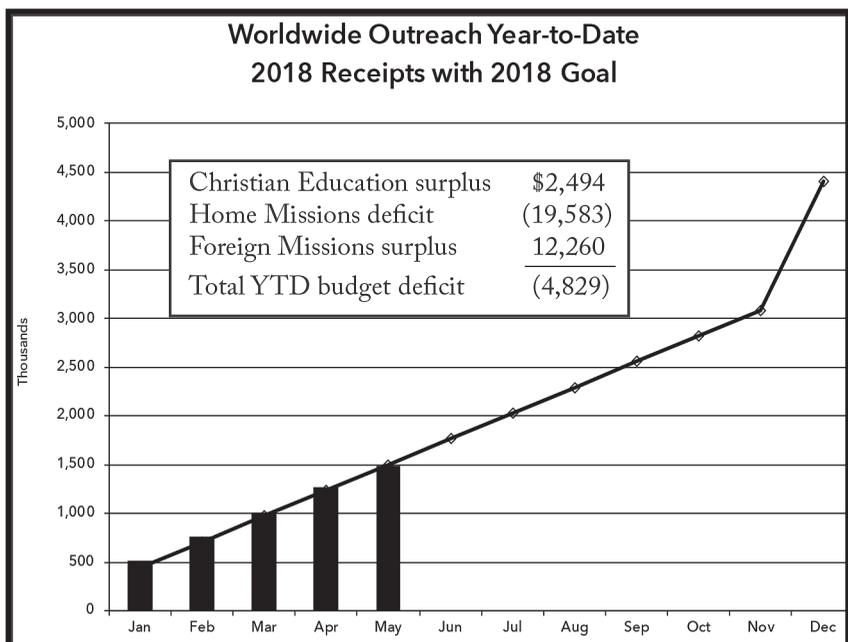
not to waste it, but to give it as an offering to God, implying that God alone is worthy of such sacrifice. As David poured it out to the Lord, he equated the water with the men's blood in sacrament-like language. David essentially said he was not worthy to drink the lifeblood of these men (see Gen. 9:4–5).

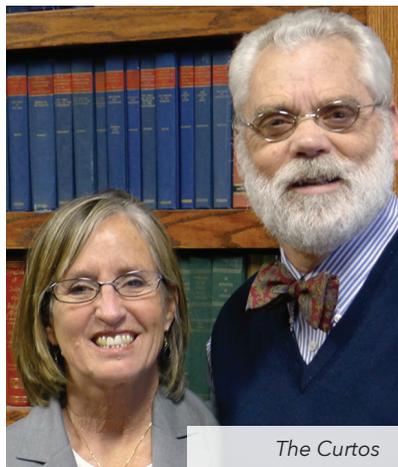
If these three were so eager to serve King David at risk to their own lives, how much more should we be eager to serve King Jesus? David was not deserving of these men's blood, but Jesus is fully deserving of ours—especially because he has already given his blood to us.

Jesus even gave us a sacrament to remind us of this fact. The cup which we drink, is it not the blood of Christ? When we partake of the cup of the Supper, we are sacramentally drinking the lifeblood of Christ which was shed for the remission of our sins. David's unworthiness to drink the blood of his men reminds us of how unworthy we are to drink Christ's blood, but the gospel declares that Christ has nonetheless given it to us.

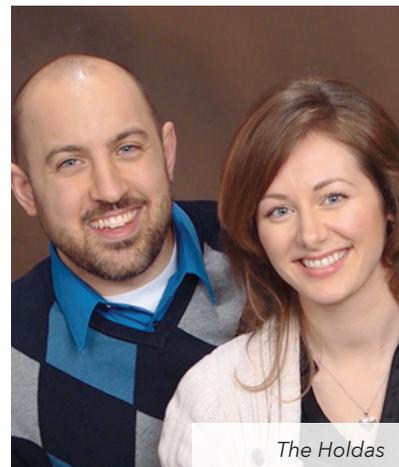
David, the Lord's anointed, was right when he said he was not worthy to drink the lifeblood of his mighty men. But we serve the greater anointed of the Lord, Jesus Christ, who is worthy to receive our entire lives as an offering. We are not all mighty men in the sense of the thirty listed in 2 Samuel 23, yet we each have different God-given gifts to be used in service of king and kingdom. Whether it be giving of our strength, of our wealth, or of something else, let us see that no gift is too great to give to King Jesus.

*The author is pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Novato, California.*





The Curtos



The Holdas

**1 ETHIOPIAN REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.** Pray that the church leaders may be encouraged by Tony Curto's ministry to them last week. / Pray for **MENTORING PASTORS** who work with summer and yearlong interns.

**2 LARRY AND KALYNN OLDAKER,** Huron, OH. Pray for four new families to join Grace Fellowship in 2018. / Pray for **DAVID NAKHLA**, Short-Term Missions coordinator, with many ministry teams active in the summer.

**3** Pray for **MARK AND JENI RICHLINE, RAY AND MICHELE CALL**, and missionary associates **MARKUS AND SHARON JEROMIN**, Montevideo, Uruguay. / Home Missions associate general secretary **AL TRICARICO**.

**4 BILL (AND MARGARET) SHISHKO**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Connecticut and Southern New York. / **DAVID HANEY**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.

**5** Affiliated missionaries **JERRY AND MARILYN FARNIK**, Prague, Czech Republic, during their two-month furlough in the US. / **NATHAN (AND ANNE) STROM**, church-planting intern, Andover, MN.

**6 MR. AND MRS. F.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. F. as he trains candidates for the office of elder at the local church. / **DAVID AND REBEKAH GRAVES**, Coeur d'Alene, ID. Pray for a new facility to accommodate Coeur d'Alene Reformed Church.

**7 HEATHER COSSAR** in production and **B.A. SNIDER** in marketing at Great Commission Publications. / **MR. AND MRS. K.**, Asia. Pray for fruitfulness as Mr. K. follows up with those attending his mid-week Bible study.

**8 CHRIS AND GRACE ANN CASHEN**, Clarkston, GA. Pray that the church would be the brilliant light of Christ to refugees in Clarkston. / **JAN GREGSON**, assistant to the finance director, and **CHARLENE TIPTON**, database administrator.

**9** Summer interns: **KEN (MANDY) KRUCHKOW**, Oakland Hills Community Church, Farmington Hills, MI; **TYLER (NATALIE) DETRICK**, Emmanuel OPC, Wilmington, DE. / **MR. AND MRS. M. M.**, Asia. Pray for peace and safety for the churches.

**10** Missionary associates **E. C., E. K.,** and **M. S.**, Asia. Pray for a harvest through their Bible studies and community English classes. / **ANDREW AND BILLIE MOODY**, San Antonio, TX. Pray that those at San Antonio Reformed Church would love their neighbors.

**11 BOB AND GRACE HOLDA**, Oshkosh, WI. Pray that God's Word would strengthen evangelistic zeal at Resurrection Presbyterian. / **ARCHIBALD ALLISON**, chairman of the CCE's Subcommittee on Internet Ministries.

**12 MR. AND MRS. J. M.**, Asia. Pray for wisdom in parenting their children in a cross-cultural context. / *New Horizons* managing editor **JUDITH DINSMORE** and editorial assistant **DIANE OLINGER**.

**13** Tentmaking missionary **T. D.**, Asia. Pray for respiratory health in challenging environmental conditions. / **DANIEL AND AMBER DOLEYS**, Springfield, OH. Praise for Living Water OPC's building purchase.

**14** Pray for Home Missions general secretary **JOHN SHAW**. / Yearlong interns: **ZACH (SANDRA) SIGGINS**, Calvary OPC, Glenside, PA; **DHANANJAY (CORRIE) KHANDA**, Hope OPC, Grayslake, IL. **BEN AND MELANIE WESTERVELD** and

**15** missionary associate **JANINE EYGENRAAM**, Quebec, Canada, as they invite unchurched youth to worship. / **D. G. HART**, chairman of the CCE's Subcommittee on Serial Publications.



The Robbins family

**16 DAVID AND RASHEL ROBBINS**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for David's work with the churches as they seek to train new officers. / **JOSH AND KRISTEN MCKAMY**, Chambersburg, PA. Pray for the outreach efforts of Covenant.

**17 JASON AND AMANDA KIRKLIN**, Waco, TX. Pray for the families of Trinity OPC as many travel during the summer. / The Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on **CHAPLAINS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL**.

**18** Pray for **DR. FLIP AND ANNE LOES BAARDMAN**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they balance clinic duties with being new parents. / Pray for **MARK STUMPF**, Loan Fund administrator and **KATHY BUBE**, document specialist.

**19 MARK AND CARLA VAN ESSENDELFT**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they learn the Karimojong language. / **BILL AND SESSIE WELZIEN**, Key West, FL. Pray that Keys Presbyterian would grow in holiness and in numbers.

**20 JEREMY AND GWEN BAKER**, Yuma, AZ. Pray for more outreach and evangelism opportunities for Yuma OPC. / Yearlong intern **ERIC (VIVIANE) CUER DE ANDRADE**, Harvest OPC, Wyoming, MI.

**21** Pray for missionary associates **LEAH HOPP**, and **CHRISTOPHER AND CHLOE VERDICK**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they serve children suffering from poor health or extreme poverty. / Part-time staff accountant **DOUG WATSON**.

**22 DAVE (AND ELIZABETH) HOLMLUND**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Philadelphia. / **DAVID AND SUNSHINE OKKEN**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for a good transition as they complete their field service.

**23 LOWELL AND MAE IVEY**, Virginia Beach, VA. Pray that the Lord would prepare men to be officers. / **JANET BIRKMANN**, communications coordinator for STM as she promotes and reports on summer activities.

**24 ERIC AND DIANNA TUININGA**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for health and safe travels on Sundays to serve at the village churches. / Pray for *New Horizons* cover designer **CHRIS TOBIAS** and proofreader **JESSICA JOHNSON**.

**25** Summer interns: **TRAVIS (LAURA) LEWIS**, Reformation OPC, Oviedo, FL; **KIRK (MELISSA) GIBBONS**, Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod, West Barnstable, MA. / Home Missions administrative assistant **KATIE STUMPF**.

**26 CHARLES AND CONNIE JACKSON**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for the students at Knox School of Theology. / **ERIC AND DONNA HAUSLER**, Naples, FL. Pray for wisdom for Christ the King in reaching their community.



Angela Voskuil and students

**27** Missionary associates **SCHYLIE LA BELLE**, **PAIGE VANDERWEY**, and **ANGELA VOSKUIL**, Uganda. / Pray for stated clerk **ROSS GRAHAM** as he completes the minutes and yearbook of the 85<sup>th</sup> (2018) General Assembly.

**28 KEVIN AND RACHEL MEDCALF**, Cumming, GA. Pray for the ministry of Providence Presbyterian Church. / **BEN AND HEATHER HOPP**, and associate missionaries **OCTAVIUS AND MARIE DELFILS**, Haiti.

**29 RYAN AND ROCHELLE CAVANAUGH**, Merrillville, IN. / Summer interns: **DAVID BONNER**, Tyler Presbyterian Church, Tyler, TX; **ELIJAH (GRETA) DE JONG**, New Covenant Community Church, Joliet, IL.

**30** Retired missionaries **BETTY ANDREWS**, **CAL AND EDIE CUMMINGS**, **GREET RIETKERK**, **YOUNG AND MARY LOUSON**, and **BRIAN AND DOROTHY WINGARD**. / *Ordained Servant* editor **GREGORY REYNOLDS**.

**31** Pray for the labors of affiliated missionaries **MARK AND LAURA AMBROSE**, Cambodia. / **BRADNEY AND EILEEN LOPEZ**, Arroyo, PR. Pray for endurance for those taking the membership class.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

[Continued from page 9]

example, if their child attends a secular university for gender studies—but without a qualm ship them off to the same school to pursue a biology or engineering major. Although the Enlightenment-era philosophy of a system of statements from which one deduces other truths is somewhat compatible with Christian doctrine, an Enlightenment-influenced Christianity runs the great risk of “reducing faith to an ideology,” Gidley explained.

As Troup said, a lack of coherence costs.

The conversation between the humanities and the sciences does take place at some institutions, Gidley said, some—but not all—of which are Christian colleges. “These are the places to receive a true education,” he advised.

### Building Up Rather than Tearing Down

Halfway through our interview in Dr. Troup’s office, his assistant knocked on the door. A campus tour was in the hallway. Troup jumped up, grabbed a stack of booklets from his desk, and went out to address the touring students. This happens frequently, I was told. Troup will pause whatever he’s doing to chat with tours and give them each a copy of the “Foundational Concepts of Christian Education,” a fifty-year-old document that is the philosophical basis of the school. One portion reads, “The goal of Christian education is the development of mature students who, as individuals, have well-integrated personalities; and who, as well-oriented members of society, are building the kingdom of God in the family, the church, the nation and the world.”

In a previous academic role, Troup would point students looking for research advice to a constructive hermeneutic. “Don’t stand back and critique evangelicalism—it’s so easy!” he would tell them. “We’re a mess! What you write will not help anyone. Much better to do some kind of constructive work.”

The gifts that we have as Christians, academic and otherwise, Troup argues, must be used for the building up of the church. Criticizing family, church, nation, and world is the easy way out. Actually building the kingdom of God is far more difficult.

In a recent survey of Covenant alumni, 96 percent of respondents reported that they remained committed to the Christian faith and 95 percent that they are regular members or attenders of a local church. Contrast that with the 40 percent of churched high-schoolers that Barna Group reports as still being in the faith after college.

“Not only are [our students] being well-equipped for their vocations after college, but they’re also having their commitment to the local church, the body of Christ, reinforced and encouraged through their experience on our campuses,” Halvorson said. “Our graduates are inclined, when they leave Lookout Mountain, to stay in the local body... and to do so from a thoughtful and biblically informed perspective.”

There’s plenty for the church to lose if it loses Christian higher education, he considered.

If students decide to attend a Christian col-

lege, it will certainly take their time, and money, and energy. But it might be more than worth their while. And worth the church’s, too.



Covenant College president  
Derek Halvorson

There’s been a lot of research done, Halvorson said, about how to build a unified vision that hangs together: “The best way to do it is to put people into a residential learning community where they read texts together and talk about ideas together and watch examples of others in the community [so that] their lives rub up

against one another—and, well, that’s not the cheapest way to do diploma delivery!” □

The author is managing editor of *New Horizons*.

### Challenges Ahead

Two challenges facing Christian colleges and universities are affecting their policies and positions: low enrollment and Title IX extension.

College enrollment nationwide is declining and has been for six years. The trend is widely perceived to be the result of a stronger economy, since more students are entering the job force instead of pursuing further education. Also, lower birthrates result in a smaller college-age population.

Title IX, passed in 1972, banned sex discrimination in educational programs that receive federal funding. Post *Obergefell*, the Department of Education, responsible for enforcing Title IX, informed all higher education institutions that the protections of Title IX should be applied to sexual orientation and gender identity. The immediate application was to locker rooms and dormitories. Many Christian colleges successfully filed for exemption from these rules, especially colleges run by church denominations, including Geneva and Covenant.

For now, these rules have been rescinded. However, their reinstatement could lead to determinations that Christian colleges are non-compliant, jeopardizing their eligibility for federal funding, including student loans. Schools that do not rely on government funding, like RBC and Grove City, are not as affected by Title IX.

# NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

## FORTENBERRY INSTALLED

On Friday, April 20, 2018, Andrew Fortenberry was ordained and installed as pastor of Grace OPC in Hanover Park, Illinois. Larry Westerveld (Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pennsylvania) preached, Robert Tarullo (Westminster OPC in Indian Head Park, Illinois) gave the charge to the congregation, and Chris Thomas (Redeemer PCA in Amarillo, Texas) gave the charge to Fortenberry.

Fortenberry grew up in Amarillo, Texas, and returned to the city to teach Bible at the high-school and college levels after receiving a master's from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. During this time, he met his wife, Samantha, and together they moved to Philadelphia to attend Westminster Theological Seminary where Andrew earned an MAR with an emphasis in systematic theology and Samantha earned an MA in counseling.

After serving two yearlong internships, first at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pennsylvania and then at Redeemer PCA in Amarillo, Fortenberry was called to the pastorate of Grace OPC.

## CURRIE TO WESTMINSTER SEMINARY

John Currie was installed as a Teacher of the Word of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario on May 18, 2018, at Redeemer OPC in Ada, Michigan. After five years of service as Redeemer's lead pastor, Currie has joined the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary as professor of practical theology.

"I would not be leaving Redeemer Presbyterian church if another church had called me. I would not be leaving if another seminary had called me,"



*John Currie has joined the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary*



*(front) Jerry Miller, John Hilbelink, Ben Snodgrass, Larry Westerveld, Iain Wright, Robert Tarullo, Camden Bucey, Chris Thomas, Charles Williams, Craig Troxel, Dan Adams, Jim Megchelsen; (back) Steve Schmidt, Lendall Smith, Paul Burke, Mark deRu, Christian McShaffrey, Andrew Fortenberry, Kevin Baldwin, Lars Johnson, John Fry, Daniel Moore, John Baldwin, Brett Mahlen*

Currie said to his congregation at the installation. "My desire is to see an army of Christ-centered, Spirit-filled, gospel-preaching, mission-driven heralds raised up and sent to our nation and to the nations. I would ask that you would pray for us as a seminary, that God would make us fervent, faithful, and fruitful."

Dr. Harry Reeder, pastor of Briarwood Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Birmingham, Alabama, preached at the installa-

tion, and Reverend Dale Van Dyke, pastor of Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Michigan, gave the charge to Currie.

## 50 YEARS AT SPENCER MILLS

Spencer Mills OPC in Gowen, Michigan, celebrated its fiftieth year as part of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church on the weekend of April 21–22.

On Saturday, the church held a catered dinner and a program including the unveiling of a commemorative cornerstone. Cal Cummings, a former member and elder of Spencer Mills and OP missionary to Japan for decades, was the keynote speaker. Former pastors Hank Belfield and Frank Marsh, along with current pastor Alan Flowers, gave brief testimonies.

On Sunday, Hank Belfield brought the Word at the morning service, and a video presentation on the history of the church was

shown during the Sunday school hour. After a fellowship dinner, Frank Marsh preached for the afternoon service.

The members praise God for the many years he has blessed the ministry of Spencer Mills OPC.



(top) Elders David Raih and Terry Moore at the corner stone unveiling at Spencer Mills; (bottom) Hank Belfield, Frank Marsh, Alan Flowers, and Cal Cummings

## UPDATE

### CHURCHES

- On May 5, the Presbytery of Philadelphia removed **Grace OPC** in southwest Philadelphia, PA, from its roles.

### MINISTERS

- On April 27, the Presbytery of the Southeast granted the request of **Brenton C. Ferry** to demit the ministry.

- On May 18, **John Currie** was installed as Teacher of the Word of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario to serve as a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary. Mr. Currie's pastoral relationship to Redeemer OPC in Ada, MI, was dissolved.

- The ministerial relationship of **Scott E. Churnock** with Christ Presbyterian Church in St. Charles, MO, was dissolved by the Presbytery of the Midwest upon his retirement, effective May 31.

- On April 30, the pastoral relationship between **Larry E. Wilson** and Redeemer OPC in Airdrie, Alberta, Canada, was dissolved by action of the Presbytery of the Northwest, upon Rev. Wilson's retirement.

- On June 1, **Kevin L. Medcalf**, formerly the pastor of New Hope OPC in Hanford, CA, was installed as an associate minister of Covenant OPC in Buford, GA, to work as an evangelist with Providence Presbyterian Church, a mission work in Cumming, GA.

The revelation central to the argument ("the topic of revelation does indeed run like a backbone throughout," 39) concerns the visible display of things that are otherwise invisible. God through various supra-human powers—the power of God, of the Law, and of sin—reveals what is hidden.

In Romans 1:16, Paul asserts that the gospel is God's power unto salvation for all who believe, both Jew and Greek. Verse 17 describes a present state of affairs in which God's righteousness is now revealed through what he has previously done in and through Christ. "Romans 1:17 describes the revelation of God's righteousness in that which was pre-promised and now has been fulfilled through the redemptive career of God's Son" (97). This revelation is not reducible to the themes of justification by faith, God's saving activity or power, or other themes that are often focused upon, although each is an indispensable part of the gospel.

According to Mininger, this pattern of showing what is or is not revealed by God drives Paul's argumentation. Romans 1:18 puts forth the revelation of God's wrath from heaven upon an unrighteous portion of humanity. Romans 1:19–32 tells how God's wrath comes to visible expression upon these truth-suppressors. Paul is not saying in these verses that unrighteousness deserves or leads to judgment, but that God's handing some over is followed by an outpouring of human unrighteousness. Mininger notes that this was the case in Psalm 106. Israel exchanged the glory of God (Ps. 106:20; compare Rom. 1:23) and was handed over by God in wrath (Ps. 106:40–41; compare Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).

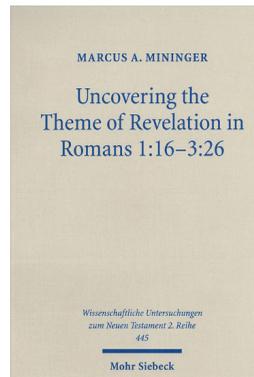
In Romans 2:15–16, the Law is shown inadequate to be the power of God unto salvation because what is revealed in it cannot affect salvation. This argument continues in Romans 3:9–20. All flesh will not be justified through the works of the Law. That which is invisible, the effects of sin's power, is seen in the Law's domain. "In short, if the situation in the Law looks essentially the same as the

## REVIEWS

*Uncovering the Theme of Revelation in Romans 1:16–3:26*, by **Marcus A. Mininger**. Mohr Siebeck, 2017. Paperback, 410 pages, \$118.99 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP minister **Danny Olinger**.

Orthodox Presbyterian minister and Mid-America Reformed Seminary professor Marcus Mininger has contributed an important monograph to the exegetical understanding of Romans 1:16–3:26. Mininger maintains that both the traditional soteriological and revisionist

social understandings do not recognize properly the theme of revelation as the key leitmotif of the passage. That's not to say that Paul is indifferent to soteriological or social issues. Rather, Paul's claims about revelation lead to conclusions about soteriology, which has social implications.



situation outside the Law, then the Law is no basis for eschatological distinction and every mouth is indeed shut” (318).

In this reviewer’s judgment, Mininger’s redemptive-historical reading of the text provides answers that have troubled exegetes, while still affirming key gospel insights. There are a few reservations for the ordinary reader. First, a knowledge of Greek is highly recommended. Second, the cost may be prohibitive.

***God’s Timeline: The Big Book of Church History*, by Linda Finlayson. Christian Focus, 2018. Hardback, 80 pages, \$12.91 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP elder Thomas Sorkness.**

Linda Finlayson has written a wonderful overview of the history of the church. Even as I write this, it is my understanding that the book has gone into second printing. I can understand why. What she has produced is something quite unique and tremendously helpful.

Whether one is a school-age child or an adult who knows very little about the history of the church, but wants to learn, this is the perfect book. The amount of information packed into the pages is impressive. Data has been carefully selected to present a meaningful, understandable timeline. Information is succinctly worded, providing a basic yet helpful introduction to whatever is being presented including events, personalities, creeds, and councils. The thematic approach which parallels this is helpful for putting the material into comprehensible frames. She does the work of the historian well. It is scholarly.

As a longtime history teacher, I appreciate a resource like this. When I teach US history to my eleventh-grade students at a Christian school, I always begin the year with an overview of the breadth of the country’s past, covering all the major eras, themes, events, concepts, and people.

This approach provides a contextual road map for the student. As we move through the year, studying various time periods, a foundation like this provides familiar signposts, enabling the student to dig deeper. Linda Finlayson’s book does just that. It’s the perfect introduction. Although some historians may take exception to the occasional personal perspectives on truth and error as well as heroes and villains interspersed in the material, it is helpful for young people, especially, to be given perspective in regard to truth.

In addition to the basic information, the visual presentation of the book is stunning. It keeps one turning the page to see what’s next. From timelines to charts to images to maps, the material is reinforced in a variety of ways. This is especially helpful for people who learn differently. People who are visual learners are not

overwhelmed by verbiage. All can comprehend and master the basic timeline of church history.

In reviewing a book, I would feel remiss if I didn’t take exception to a couple of things. In

going through the work initially, I found myself sometimes losing sight of the forest for the trees. The reader has to get used to the format and stick with it. As a matter of personal taste, there are some things that I would like to see a little more emphasized, such as the creeds, since they placed the church along particular paths. The outlay of the general timeline that runs through the book takes a little getting used to.

These are all minor criticisms—ones of personal preference which are far outweighed by the overall presentation of the work. This is a great resource. Get a copy for yourself and a lot more for gifts. No one will be disappointed. Linda has done a great service for the church.

***Come to the Waters: Daily Bible Devotions for Spiritual Refreshment*, by James Montgomery Boice. P&R, 2017. Hard-**

**cover, 400 pages, \$17.00. Reviewed by OP minister Dennis L. Disselkoen.**

Dr. James Montgomery Boice was the pastor of historic Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia for over thirty years. His devotional, *Come to the Waters*, was compiled by D. Marion Clark, who served as executive minister at that church. Material was drawn from Boice’s published, unpublished, and unpreached sermons, his articles, and his commentaries. The devotional follows the order of the books of the Bible, giving the reader a sense of the unfolding of revelation. Rather than offer a few verses as a springboard for devotional reflection, Boice’s thoughts are tied to longer passages, providing a context for his comments.

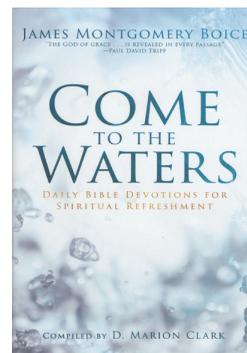
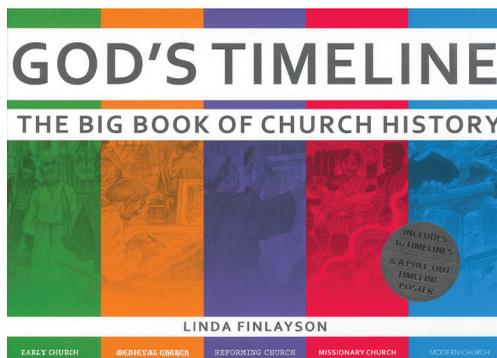
Boice uses his knowledge of biblical languages and the finer points of grammar to draw out the desired truth, for example, the meaning of Jacob’s name change (1/23); and he points out the exegetical significance of the absence of a definite article in Greek to drive home a theological point (11/4). He is aware of textual variants (7/20). The ESV is used generally, but the KJV and the NIV are cited as well. Boice offers his own translation of Jeremiah 31:18 (7/3).

He displays a rich knowledge of church history and uses little-known stories of the saints to illustrate his points (7/25, 10/18). He cites and contrasts secular philosophy with Bible doctrine and

brings that contrast to bear on the applications of the truths he is teaching (9/26). He mentions the work of Shakespeare (8/17); quotes from Greek and Egyptian mythology (8/18,

1/25); and reveals his knowledge of hymnology (5/29).

Though his scholarship is apparent, so is his pastor’s heart. Boice leads his readers, as he led his hearers, to Christ. His exhortations reflect Paul’s words to Timothy: Scripture is profitable for



teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. “Head knowledge is not enough (10/13).” He emphasizes that Christians are in a spiritual battle and should be on alert against Satan (9/20).

His remarks throughout lead to a personal call and challenge. *Routinely*, the reader will meet with an appeal to turn to Christ and will not read far before confronting a summons to repent and believe the good news. The reader is directed to actions that conform to biblical thought. There is a constant call to self-examination in light of God’s holy Word. At some points, Boice simply provides straightforward advice. His reflections are seasoned with personal anecdotes (11/12) that make familiar passages refreshingly new.

There are fifty-two devotionals on the Psalms, fifty-five on the Synoptics, and thirty-eight on John’s Gospel alone, with twenty-one on the book of Romans. There is one devotional on Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and 1 Timothy, and surprisingly, only four on Isaiah, but six on Hosea. Omitted are comments on some very well-known Scriptures.

Endnotes for each day’s devotional identify the source material used. An index is also included.

Dr. Boice composed a song to which he gave the same title as the book. It is based upon Christ’s invitation to come and to drink the water of life freely. The song appears at the conclusion of the daily readings.

I found these devotional readings inspiring, refreshing, and enjoyable. They are valuable also as starting points for preparing studies, sermons, or talks. I would like to have seen a suggested prayer at the end of each day’s devotional; devotional thoughts should move one to worship. That aside, I recommend this volume without reservation.

***The Spirit of the Age: The 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Debate Over the Holy Spirit and the Westminster Confession*, by J. V. Fesko. Reformation Heritage, 2017. Paperback, 144 pages, \$14.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Joel D. Fick.**

I went to seminary a Pentecostal and came out a Presbyterian. Somewhere



## Are You Moving to the Twin Cities?

Are you moving to Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Minnesota? Do you have family or friends who are already there? Mission Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Saint Paul, Minnesota, is currently going through a revitalization process. If you are interested in learning more about Mission OPC, or would like to provide potential contacts, please contact Rev. David King (supply pastor) via e-mail at [king.1@opc.org](mailto:king.1@opc.org) or by calling 651-771-0125.

along the way, I discovered that in 1903 the PCUSA had revised the Westminster Confession of Faith to include a chapter on the Holy Spirit and one on the love of God. I was a little suspicious of these new chapters, because although I didn’t know much, I knew that neither the PCA (of which I had become a part) nor the OPC (in which I hoped to one day serve) had adopted this revised version of the confession. But given my Pentecostal background, I was especially interested in the chapter on the Holy Spirit, and when I read it, I remember thinking “Well, that doesn’t seem so bad. What’s the big deal?” Why had both the OPC and the PCA rejected these confessional revisions?

In his most recent book, *The Spirit of the Age: The 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Debate Over the Holy Spirit and the Westminster Confession*, J. V. Fesko shows us what the “big deal” is. He does this by examining these confessional revisions in light of the historical context (“the spirit of the age”) and the progressive philosophical impulses that were driving them. The resulting revisions “take on a different meaning depending on who reads them. In the hands of Warfield,” who opposed the revisions, “the new chapter on the Holy Spirit largely repeats doctrine already present in the confession. But in the hands of someone like Briggs or Schaff ... the chapter on the Holy Spirit can be read in a different manner,” (96) one that is consistent with their evolutionary view of history.

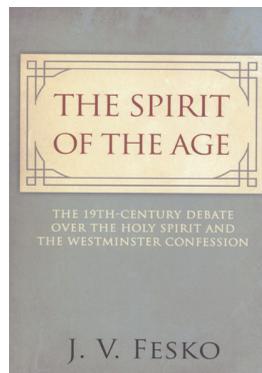
Over against these post-Enlightenment revisions, Fesko demonstrates the catholicity of the confession by locating it in “the best theology of the church, whether from the church fathers, or theologians of the middle ages” (49).

But while Fesko’s sketch of the historical context is well-researched, interesting, and useful, even more useful is his sketch of the confession’s thoroughgoing pneumatology with special attention given to its connection with Christology. He ably defends the confession against

the charge that the absence of a separate chapter on the Holy Spirit betrays a pneumatological deficiency. Rather:

Far from absent, the Westminster Confession presents a richly biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit, one from which we have much to learn and would do well to make our own. (115)

Then, in a wonderful effort to help us make the confession’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit “our own,” Fesko includes



## Corrections

On page 19 of the May issue, the year in which Bethel OPC was looking for a pastor was 2011, not 2009. On page 8 of the June issue, the year of the five-hundredth birthday of John Calvin should have been 2009, not 2010.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS *Continued*

an appendix entitled “The Holy Spirit in the Westminster Standards.” In this eminently useful harmony of the standards, Fesko systematically works through the confession, listing every reference to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, to-

gether with the Scripture proofs and parallel references in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. The appendix itself is worth the price of the book!

So if you’ve ever read the 1903 revisions to the Westminster Confession and

found yourself asking “What’s the big deal?” pick up this book by theologian and professor J. V. Fesko and discover that “one of the biggest mirages in the theological wilderness is the idea of progress” (71).

## 2018 Short-Term Mission Trips



For photos and testimonials from this summer’s short-term missionaries, visit [OPCSTM.org](http://OPCSTM.org).