

# Orthodox Presbyterian Summer Institute

## June 19–21, 2012

Report of the Director  
October 2, 2012

### **Purpose**

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

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

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

### **Participants and Location**

Six students applied, were accepted, and were able to attend. Of these we had four seminarians: one from Mid-America; one from Reformed in Orlando, and two from Westminster in California; and two college students, one from Hillsdale, and one from West Virginia University.

On Monday, June 18 the instructors arrived to make preparations for the arrival of the students the following day. Our location in the White Mountains made travel arrangements a lot simpler, due to the proximity of Manchester Boston Regional and Logan airports.

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

## **Instruction**

Each of the four instructors gave a two hour talk interspersed with discussion and then two separate two hour periods to discuss pre-assigned readings. This year we were joined again by Stephen Tracey from the Lakeview OPC church.

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

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

## **2012 Assessment**

Having completed its third year, the positive feedback from students indicates that the Institute is achieving its stated purpose. One adjustment that was made in 2012 (in light of previous feedback) was slightly reducing the reading in advance of the Institute (and distributing the reading in a more timely fashion). In response, almost every student thought the reading was appropriate. Although the facilities were modest, food, accommodations, and meeting space continued to score well in student evaluations. All of the instructors were rated highly, and students appreciated the balance of free time and fellowship time. All of them agreed that the Institute was benefit for their ministerial preparation, and all indicated that they would recommend the Institute to other ministerial candidates. “I loved the Summer Institute,” wrote one student. “A great couple of days,” wrote another. The only negative criticism was the desire, expressed by two respondents, to extend the Institute to an additional day: “it was very profitable, but it ended somewhat quickly.”

The variety of seminaries and colleges represented continued to enhance the atmosphere of the Institute and the interaction among students. For the first time this year we had two college students.

Special thanks to Elder Jim Graves from Amoskeag OPC for assisting in transporting students.



Shiloh Lodge



View from Shiloh Lodge



View from Shiloh Lodge



OP Summer Institute students and instructors



OP Summer Institute dining



OP Summer Institute lecture