

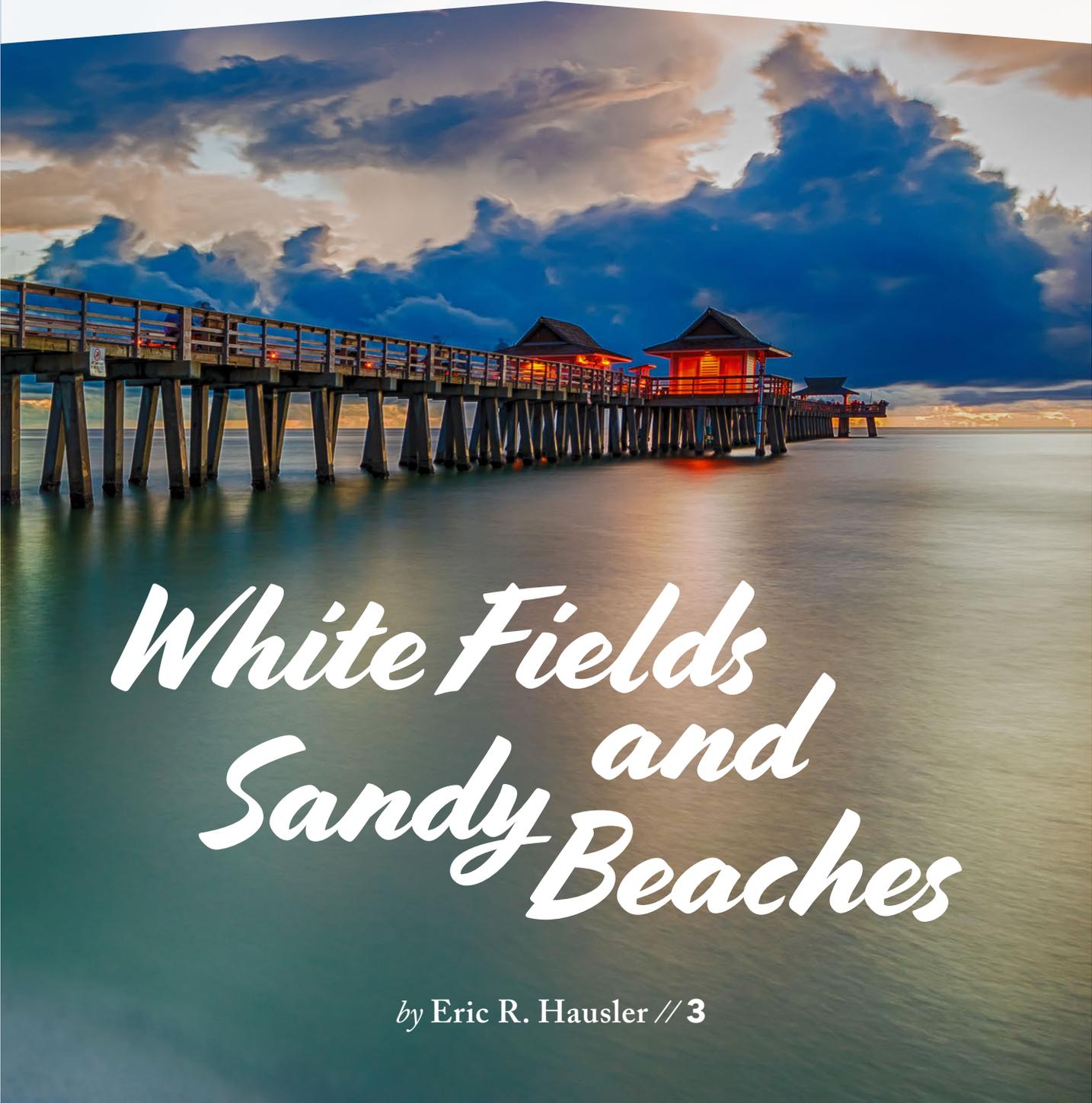
NEW HORIZONS

— *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

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by Judith M. Dinsmore

MARCH 2020

23 Review: Denhollander's
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New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Editor: Danny E. Olinger
Managing Editor: Judith M. Dinsmore
Editorial Assistant: Diane L. Olinger
Proofreader: Sarah Pederson
Cover Designer: Christopher Tobias
Editorial Board: The Committee on Christian Education's Subcommittee on Serial Publications

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Covenant Presbyterian in Barre, Vermont, hosted their third annual Youth Winter Weekend January 3-5 with about forty young people from First Church of Merrimack, Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod, Immanuel Chapel, Jaffrey Presbyterian, and Église Chrétienne Réformée de Beauce ERQ. The guest speaker was Damon Young. (From left) Max Kowal, Samuel Kowal, Emma Zimmermann, Ian Longfellow, and Madi Zimmermann cross-country skiing at the Winter Weekend.



WHITE FIELDS AND SANDY BEACHES



ERIC R. HAUSLER // “When he saw the crowds, [Jesus] had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest’” (Matt. 9:36–38).

Crowds? Crowds, we have here in Naples, Florida. But laborers? Laborers, we need.

For about four months every year, the population of our fair city triples—or even quadruples. Snowbirds from the north, vacationers from around the world, seasonal workers to staff the hospitality industry, and hopeful investors descend on Naples for winter and part of the spring. The influx is obvious everywhere you turn: in the traffic, parking lots, restaurants, checkout lines, and even churches. This past Sunday (as I pen this article), Christ the King Presbyterian Church saw nearly a fourfold increase in our attendance from just a few months ago.

Seven Years in the Making

On a gorgeous midwestern summer day in 2013, Donna and I said goodbye, after fifteen years, to a wonderful church, a sweet life, and a charming old farm house in Ada, Michigan, to head south

to plant an Orthodox Presbyterian church in Naples, along the west coast of Florida and about as far south as one can go in Florida along the Gulf of Mexico. We arrived with no “core group” to welcome us, just a few local contacts and the white fields (and white sandy beaches) of Naples.

With generous support from the Presbytery of the South and the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, along with the presbytery’s call to serve as an evangelist in this growing city, we set our hand to the

plow and began spreading the word about a new church beginning in southeast Naples, a part of town where there was no Reformed church.

This target zone was not what typically comes to mind when people think of Naples. Our area has a diverse blend of neighborhoods, from low-income apartment complexes, mobile home parks, and Habitat for Humanity projects, to lovely gated communities of homes and condominiums. East Naples also has a wide variety of businesses and services, including the county jail and courthouse, a tarmac full of Lear jets at the Naples Airport, several exotic car dealerships, and even a homeless shelter and an addiction recovery program headquarters.

People have moved to Naples from literally all over the world. Most have come from the midwestern and northeastern states, but in our neighborhood alone I’ve met people from Australia, Bahamas, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Germany, Haiti, Holland, India, Jamaica, Poland,



Eric and Donna Hausler on Naples Pier

Russia, and the United Kingdom. On any given evening out on the famous Naples Pier, you can hear more than a half dozen languages being spoken by tourists. Once they come for a visit and leave with sand in their shoes, many decide they want to return and make Naples their home.

"I Will Build My Church..."

Four months after our arrival in Naples, with faith in the promises of God, we signed a contract on a small conference room in the local Holiday Inn Express to serve as our first meeting place. Just before our first worship service, the hotel informed us that they had double-booked the room and it would not be available. To accommodate us, they offered the hotel's pool deck for two Sundays! When the conference room became available, it served as our meeting place for over a year. In early 2015, the Lord provided a 3,000-square-foot facility on a busy corner in a plaza that includes a Honduran restaurant, a Cuban salon, a Dominican-Puerto Rican barber shop, a Caribbean money transfer office, a Haitian used car dealer, and Jet's Pizza.

The location has turned out to be



Here Pastor Hausler is leading worship from the piano. At Christ the King, you'll find joyfully reverent worship using piano and other instruments to assist in the praise of the triune God.

a wonderful place for us as we continue to proclaim the gospel and establish a growing church in this fascinating city. One young mother visiting recently from Atlanta marveled with tears in her eyes at the beautiful diversity found in our gathering that morning—all glory to God for bringing the nations to us!

By the grace of God, the Lord Jesus gradually built this church, and, in April 2018, it was organized as a new Orthodox Presbyterian congregation with two ruling elders and one deacon to serve alongside me as the organiz-

ing pastor in this unique and exciting ministry setting that we now call home.

In the coming year, we hope to break ground on the first phase of a building project on a five-acre parcel strategically located along a traffic corridor booming with the growth of new housing developments. Our prayer is that from the midst of a growing year-round population and numerous seasonal visitors, the Lord would be pleased to use us to reap a plentiful harvest for the kingdom of God from amongst the crowds of Naples.



Nathan Tracey, a thirteen-year-old self-taught pianist, playing for worship



Donna Hausler singing with Jordan, a Haitian-American



Wil Cerisiers, a Haitian-American student-athlete, playing for worship

What Brings the Crowds to Naples?

From a purely secular viewpoint, Naples is very attractive. It is famous for its beautiful white sandy beaches, boasting seventeen miles of shoreline along the Gulf of Mexico in Collier County. This past summer, [WalletHub](#) ranked Naples as the top beach town out of 146 cities in America along an oceanfront.

Another reason Naples attracts so many people is that it has a very low crime rate, especially compared to the large urban cities in the state of Florida. Naples ranks safer than 80 percent of cities located in Florida. Because tourism is the flagship of our economy, local law enforcement agencies diligently work day and night to keep our residents and tourists safe.

The crowds also flock here for a full range of outdoor activities that can be enjoyed year-round: bike trails, golf courses, boating, fishing, and exploring nature preserves filled with tropical birds and wildlife. And Naples has been named “Pickleball Capital of the World,” with its “statehouse” as the East Naples Community Park.

Finally, our sunsets are some of the most stunning in the world. Every evening, crowds gather at the iconic Naples Pier and all along our coastline to watch the sun as it seems to fall into the Gulf of Mexico.

This combination of climate, beauty, and safety caused Naples residents’ sense of well-being to rank number one for the fourth year in a row in the 2019 Gallup National Health Index. “Residents have the lowest levels of stress in the country and eat healthy on a daily basis,” the report read.

With all these material blessings, however, there is a great spiritual poverty among the diverse crowds who visit this tropical paradise or who call Southwest Florida home. From the Word of God and from conversations with people from all walks of life, we know that all of the things that make Naples an attractive place can also easily become idols of the heart. When a



Sunday morning worship when Naples is “in season”

family falls apart, tragedy strikes close to home, or a cherished idol is seen to be powerless to bring comfort in the valley of the shadow of death, the Lord provides an open door for the hope of the gospel. When people recognize the spiritual poverty around them and begin to hunger and thirst for a better way, then the true value of Christ can be seen. How we pray that he might make known through us the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus! (See Ephesians 2:7.)

What Do We Need ?

The Lord has placed before us an opportunity, like the fields white for harvest in John 4:35. John Calvin wrote about the promises of the Lord Jesus concerning a field of souls and fruitful harvests, saying:

In order to stimulate his disciples the more powerfully to apply with diligence to their work, he declares that the harvest is abundant: and hence it follows, that their labor will not be fruitless, but that they will find, in abundance, opportunities of employment, and means of usefulness.

Amen! May it be so here!



Hausler picking up Haitian-American kids for worship



Tuesday morning men's breakfast and Bible study

As the crowds come here to Naples from all over the world, and as our population continues to grow, please join us in praying that the Lord of the harvest would strengthen our church and raise up more laborers to come to live among us—not just to enjoy our white sandy beaches, but to join us in reaping in the midst of the white fields of souls who need to hear the gospel. □

The author is an OPC pastor.

A PASTOR ACROSS THE PRESBYTERY



JUDITH M. DINSMORE // Regional home missionaries are bestowed with a three-word title. They're also funded jointly by the denomination and the presbytery, not by a congregation, and they spend an inordinate amount of time in their cars. But, at bottom, their role is still intensely pastoral. Just look at Lacy Andrews.

In his service for the Presbytery of the Southeast, Andrews meets with interested groups, shepherds new groups, encourages tired groups, and transitions mature groups. This means not only pulpit supply and leading Bible studies, but counseling sessions and sick visits. He is “pastor” to congregants stretched across the bounds of the presbytery. And, as a good friend chuckled, each congregation knows that it is his favorite.

First Impressions

Andrews's is the first voice, booming and southern, that you would hear if you contacted the presbytery about starting an OP church. As regional home missionary—one of only six in the denomination (see page 16)—Andrews meets with and presents the OPC to groups interested in joining.

Over twenty years ago, he was on the other side of the table. A pastor in the PCUS, Andrews was “the last vestige of those who were both conservative and Reformed.” After years of fighting for renewal and for the Confession, Andrews, along with seven families in

his congregation, was ready to consider leaving. His contact in the OPC was regional home missionary Jim Heemstra. “Jim was real,” Andrews remembered. “He told us the warts and all of joining the OPC, but he was encouraging.” A few months after Heemstra met with them, the congregation voted 55–2 to become a part of the OPC.

Just as Heemstra brought in their small church, so Andrews has brought in many more. In his eighteen years as regional home missionary, he has worked with twenty-four mission works, of which twelve are now organized churches and eight are active mission works.

The southern accent helps.

“An important reason why I'm the guy in the Presbytery of the Southeast is that I'm from the South. I grew up in Texas and went to seminary in Mississippi. All of my pastorates were in Tennessee and Virginia. I understand the southern culture,” he explained. That's not necessary in every locale: in a city on the beach, the population is a smorgasbord. But in a small southern

town, understanding the region is vital. “It doesn't mean that a man from another culture can't be a regional home missionary,” Andrews said. Heemstra, after all, was a Dutch guy from Michigan. “But that's a hurdle I don't have to jump over.”

There are hurdles enough when meeting with a new group. Not only must Andrews represent the OPC as accurately as possible and explain the steps of becoming a part of it, he must also read the room for any major red flags. Do they work together? Are they ready to roll up their sleeves? “There's a difference between people who will come to an OP church if it's there, and people who will help there be an OP church!” Andrews said.

Unhurried Focus

Kelvin and Mary-Katheryn Monteith weren't sure they were in the latter group. Friends with Lacy since the early nineties—Mary-Katheryn was a member of his church when it left the PCUS—the Monteiths lived in Gastonia, North Carolina, a city in which

Andrews was eager to plant a church.

“The OPC had wanted to come to the Gastonia area for many years,” Kelvin Monteith said. “And Lacy knew that we would make a good starting family. He asked me off and on, ‘are you ready?’” Monteith kept telling him no, that it just didn’t seem to be the time. What Monteith remembers clearly now is that Andrews never pushed it. “He just kept being a good friend, a good confidant, a good resource.” He didn’t pursue them in person, he pursued them in prayer.

Years later, in 2009, a work was begun; the Monteiths were one of three initial families, and Andrews preached almost every Sunday evening. In 2011, it was organized as a congregation. Now an elder, Monteith watches Andrews labor throughout the presbytery, mission work by mission work, with the same unhurried kingdom focus.

“He believes and practices a godly process. It’s step by step. It’s not rushed. He really relies on the Lord’s movement,” Monteith said.

When working inside a denomination the size of the OPC, one can feel an urgency to church-plant quickly and successfully and grow the presbytery. But Andrews doesn’t want to just expand one denomination, Monteith explained. “Lacy longs for true churches. He longs for salvation. He longs for that growth in godliness and holiness.” When the work began in Gastonia, Andrews would pray not just for it, but for the other churches in the area and for the other pastors preaching the Word.

Boundless Energy

Once a group has decided to join the OPC—a decision which requires everyone to be “all in,” according to

Monteith—the labor is hard. The few local congregants must faithfully arrive early to open the church building, stay late to close it, clean it during the week, maintain its heat and air conditioning, and warmly welcome visitors. Elders without a pastor must provide spiritual care, find pulpit supply, and teach.

“Sometimes, people are too tired, and you’ve gotta let them go,” Andrews said. “Sometimes, they just need reassurance. Encourage them in the gospel that the Lord rewards our labors. Remind them that Christ is at work, and Christ is using them. They’re not in this alone!”

Monteith used similar wording when he described Andrews’s work with the Gastonia group: “We never felt like we were by ourselves,” he said. “He was always there, even when he wasn’t there physically. He led us through the entire process. He communicated. He set the example of prayer. He set the example of energy.”

Andrews learned that energy early. When he was in seminary, he and his wife threw themselves into a work that was on the “cutting edge” of church planting in Clinton, Mississippi. “The two men there who became my pastors...had a zeal to reach the whole of the community, all ethnic and social strata. This was 1976 in the Deep South.

That was pretty radical thinking.” Andrews’s job was to teach five-day kids’ clubs in neighborhoods all over the Jackson area. One was in an apartment complex of a fellow student, who continued contact with the kids. “We started a worship center in that apartment complex. About thirty of us met there for Sunday morning worship,” Andrews remembered. That summer shaped him. “A taste for church planting, thinking biblically but out of the box, was really cemented in my heart before I graduated,” he said.

However, it wasn’t until he left

[Continued on page 22]



Lacy Andrews

PRESBYTERY OF THE SOUTHEAST

began with
10 churches
8 mission works

18

2000

When the Presbytery of the Southeast (PSE) was formed in 2000, there was an OPC witness in 18 locations. From the beginning, the PSE was zealous for planting churches, electing a six-man Home Missions committee instead of a four-man.

2002

= a “step of faith for a new presbytery”: Lacy Andrews was called as regional home missionary

“FOR THIS WE SHOULD GIVE GREAT PRAISE AND THANKS TO HIM”

The PSE has participated in gospel witness in a total of 44 locations during its twenty-year history. At its April 2020 meeting, there will be a witness in 32 locations.

2020

32

now,

23 churches
7 mission works
2 ministries

Statistics and quotations from Lacy Andrews

A SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE FOR CHURCHES



KERRI ANN CRUSE // It has been said, and rightly so, that the new front door of a church is its website and social media pages. Before setting foot inside a sanctuary, the majority of guests will first visit online, looking to see if this particular congregation meets their expectations of what makes a good church.

Having a lively social media or online presence should not be seen as distracting from the work or the mission of the church. In actuality, it complements it. I am not advocating that social media replace the necessary, in-person work of evangelism. Rather, view these platforms as tools in outreach. When properly utilized, they can help create contacts and connections where the gospel can then be shared.

With that in mind, here are some tips to help guide your church as it looks to participate in one or more of the major social networks.

Know Where to Be

The big three social media platforms are [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). You don't have to be on each one. Choose what is best for the demographic of your church and your church's outreach strategies, and do it well. If no one in your congregation is on Twitter, for example, then pick a different platform. Also take note of your social media volunteer's skill set. If graphic design and good photography

are not their strong suit, then perhaps stay away from Instagram as it relies exclusively on graphics.

Have Something to Say

Churches and small businesses often create a new social media page and then immediately invite people to like their page. Doing this before you post any content is like screaming for someone's attention and then having nothing to say. You've lost your audience's engagement before you've even begun. Post three to six times before you invite people to follow your page. These posts won't receive much response, but you are setting your next post up for success. Now, when people visit your new profile, they will have a feel for what to expect and can easily decide if they will want to follow your page.

Post Often

Now that you have the tool, use it. Posting often increases your reach to more people. As you increase your reach, you increase your opportunity for engagement. A page that's barely used

will lose followers and give a bad impression to future visitors.

Post Consistently

Pick set days and times of the week to post and do so consistently. This not only makes your job easier, it also helps followers know what to expect and shows visitors that you are attentive. For example, maybe every Wednesday you post a link to listen to the previous Sunday's sermon, and every Friday afternoon you share the bulletin for the upcoming Lord's Day.

Quality > Quantity

Don't post just to post. Make sure what you are posting is useful to your audiences (current members or future visitors). The more relevant your content, the more valuable engagement you will obtain. Poor quality posts or images do more harm than help. They distract and turn people away. The websites [Unsplash](#), [Pixabay](#), and [Pexels](#) offer high-quality, royalty-free photos free of charge or attribution. If your church doesn't have someone proficient

in graphic design, [Canva](#) is an easy-to-use website that allows one to design graphics for free.

Diversify Your Content

There are many different types of posts to keep your audience engaged and to reach out to different people. Here are a few suggestions:

- Blog posts and articles
- Photos from church events
- Theological videos (either shared from other pages or from the pastor)
- Church event reminders (mid-week Bible studies, youth events, fellowship meals, and so on)
- Audio of Sunday's sermon (from Sermon Audio or other platforms)
- Picture of a quote from Sunday's sermon
- Preparation for Sunday worship—sermon texts and hymns
- Devotionals
- Prayer calendar
- Ways to volunteer in the denomination, such as Short Term Missions or Disaster Relief
- Outreach events
- A short biography of the pastor or a staff member
- Stories/testimonies of members

Engage with Other OP Accounts

Engage with other OP accounts for ideas of what to post and to share their content when applicable. The denomination has a few social media accounts, including the official OPC Facebook page, Instagram page, and Twitter account. *New Horizons* also has a Facebook page, as does Short-Term Missions, Disaster Response, and Home Missions. Consider also engaging with the social media accounts of other NAPARC churches in the region or other churches in your presbytery.

Designate a Social Media Coordinator

Posting and managing your social media doesn't need to be the pastor's (or pastor's wife's) job, and perhaps shouldn't be. To make sure you are able

to post quality content consistently, assign someone to be your church's social media coordinator. There may be someone in your congregation who enjoys creating graphics, writing copy, and interacting on social media. This is a great opportunity for that person to serve the church! If desired, the coordinator could send all scheduled posts to someone in leadership at the church for review before posting.

Schedule Posts

Facebook has a built-in scheduler you can use to schedule your posts in advance. Social management platforms like [Hootsuite](#) allow you to schedule posts for free for up to three different social media accounts. This can save you time and energy. Instead of taking ten or so minutes every day to post something, you could spend thirty minutes one day a week to schedule all of your posts.

Analyze

Utilize the "Insight" section of your Facebook page, Twitter Analytics, and Instagram Insights. Take time every month to see how your posts are doing. Which type of posts is most interacted with: videos, photos, texts, quotes? What days and times is your audience online? Learn and adapt as you move forward.

Sample Facebook Post

To the right is an example of a post on the OPC Facebook page. Every Monday I post an inspirational quote on our denomination's social media accounts. This screen grab is from Facebook. Note that when I cross-

post this to Twitter or Instagram, I make sure to caption it with the hashtag [#MotivationalMonday](#)—this is already a popular hashtag for the day, which allows me to "jump on the bandwagon" for the day and gain more engagement. I have set fonts and colors for the OPC accounts, which makes creating new posts easy since there are guidelines to stick to. I recommend you create some similar style guide for your congregation and save yourself a lot of work in the future! I also make sure to include our logo in every post so that, no matter how the image is shared, people will know it originated from the OPC page.

With the many likes and shares this Facebook post received, this gospel-centered quote was seen by over 8,753 people. Praise God! ☐

The author is video and social media coordinator for the OPC.



CONNECTING WITH HOME MISSIONARIES IN A DIGITAL AGE

// ROBERT A. REITH



Bradney Lopez video-conferencing with Grace OPC during Sunday school

When I found myself in a Reformed and Presbyterian congregation after responding to the gospel of Christ in the 1970s, I saw firsthand how support for missions was ingrained in church and family life. Prayer meetings, weekly newsletters, the church bulletin, and, of course, morning and evening worship informed us about prayer needs from those serving the Lord on various mission fields. We often had conferences and retreats where missionaries spoke and hung out with the different groups in the congregation. What a blessing!

Fast forward to the present. Grace OPC in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, where I have served as elder, has been similarly intentional in promoting an involvement with missions. Missionaries on furlough are regularly invited to speak about the work they are doing whenever they are available. The Sunday school chooses a different mission project each year to support.

But Grace OPC also uses a new medium to engage with

our missionaries, one that was not even imaginable or practical just a few decades ago: video-conferencing online.

Live Updates in the Aftermath of Hurricane Harvey

In summer 2017, I became curious about the possibility of facilitating interest in missions through video-conferencing and discussed this idea with Al Tricarico, then just recently called as associate general secretary for Home Missions. Tricarico contacted Mark Sumpter, regional home missionary of the Presbytery of the Southwest, who was leading the church-planting efforts in Houston, Texas, and spreading the gospel in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. Sumpter immediately saw the advantages of sharing this work with the broader church community.

I was grateful to witness once again that people involved in missions, including home missions, are integrated, not only into their different cultures or communities, but with the wider church that Jesus Christ is building. We share a common gospel because we have the same Savior. The fellowship provided by my initial conversation with Sumpter, as well as the subsequent video-conferences, bore that out.

Sumpter and I explored the logistics of communication: when to connect, how to connect, and what connecting services to use. We agreed to meet on the first Sunday of every other month via video-conference from September 2017 through August 2018. I initially tested the connection with Sumpter and Miller Ansell—then a church-planting intern in Houston—through my home connection. We tried Skype, Zoom, and Google Meetup. Each service requires the creation of an account by the party initiating the video-conference. All are free (Zoom's free limit is forty minutes), and all can be accessed via a web browser or via an application downloaded from Android's Google Play or Apple's App store onto a mobile or tablet device.

Of the three, Zoom was the easiest and most functional for us to use. Zoom, like many teleconference applications,



Video-Conferencing Apps

Interested in video-conferencing with other laborers in Christ to unite your church's work with theirs? Three apps to consider are [Skype](#), [Zoom](#) (free calls must not exceed forty minutes), and [Google Hangouts Meet](#). All require the user to create an account, and all are available for free via web browser or download from Google Play and the App store.



also has features like allowing one to record the session for later use or archiving and allowing screen-sharing if one or the other party wants to show photos or other media during the call.

On Sunday mornings at church, five to ten minutes before the actual video-conference, I would send a text message to Sumpter or Ansell, depending on who was participating, to alert them to look for an email that contained the invitation link for the video-conference session. They would click the link and join the session. Each video-conference started at 9:45 a.m. sharp and ended no later than 10:05. During the session, we would open with prayer, hear an update on the work, ask questions posed by our members, and solicit specific prayer needs.

Live Updates from the Mission Work in Arroyo, Puerto Rico

In September 2018, the Sunday school explored what new missions project to support. We contacted Bradney Lopez, who has since come into the OPC as an evangelist in Arroyo, Puerto Rico. His congregation, Iglesia Presbiteriana Sola Escritura, is a home missions work of the Presbytery of New Jersey. We established a similar video-conference pattern with Bradney Lopez. He has video-conferenced with us using the computer in his home office but also using his iPhone in front of the church. In the latter, as we navigated through conversations, we were able to see the church building in the background and people arriving for worship. He also gave us a video tour of the area.

A year later, in September 2019, we had the joy of hearing from Lopez in person during Sunday school and then of having him bring the Word of God during the morning worship, which strengthened even more our bonds with the work in Arroyo.

The Blessings of Video-Conferencing

The blessings of using today's video-conferencing technology include:

1. Simplicity of Interface

Video-conferencing is simple and only requires a reliable internet connection. Zoom, Skype, and Google Hangouts Meet are free and viable options, but someone in your congregation may have access to paid services like GoToMeeting.

2. Audience Participation

At Grace OPC, an HDMI cable was used to connect an

iPad or laptop that was running the video-conference to a high-definition TV, which allowed everyone to see the presenter. We added a camera so that the person we are talking to can see us, too.

3. Encouraging the Use of Gifts

Most people have access to internet connections, cell phones, computers, tablets, and smart TVs. However, some congregational members, especially the younger people, may have extensive experience in getting the most out of these technologies. These skills may provide opportunities for service and participation in various endeavors to expand the reach of the gospel at home and beyond.



Bradney Lopez presenting in person at Grace OPC in Fair Lawn in September 2019

Further Applications

Applications abound for using this connectivity to bless our home missionaries. During a video-conference, ministry opportunities might be observed in the field—perhaps for evangelism or diaconal work. Presbyterials and missionary societies could connect personally with various missionaries or church planters, perhaps especially those they have committed to support in prayer. Some congregations may already stream their worship services live on Facebook or YouTube or post them later for viewing. Teachers might consider remote lecturing and examinations.

Of course, as with all technology, its uses, benefits, and caveats must be thoroughly examined in light of the Word of God. Our use of the internet, as with any gift, must be tested and prayed over, trusting that the Lord, the Lord of the harvest, will rule and perhaps overrule our use.

As we consider the advantages of using video-conferencing to help make missions come alive in our congregations, may the Lord guide us all as we seek to be stewards of the resources he has provided for kingdom use.

The author recently retired after thirty-three years as elder at Grace OPC in Fair Lawn, New Jersey.

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date news and prayer requests, receive our newsletter by emailing HomeMissionsToday@opc.org. New editions: March 4 & 18.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

STANDING FIRM IN A SLIPPERY LAND

// OCTAVIUS DELFILS



Sunday morning worship in Port-au-Prince

One of the popular sayings here is, “Haiti is a slippery land.” When I was a young child, I couldn’t understand what my mother meant when she told me to be careful because Haiti is a slippery land. I thought she was saying that the roads were slippery. “How can it be slippery when most of the time Haiti is dry?” I puzzled. “It doesn’t rain all the time; in fact, the rainy season is very short!” It took me years to see that she was telling me that Haiti is a dangerous land and that I needed to be most careful. My mother was warning me of the threats of voodoo killers and other wicked people who could be a real danger to us.

As pastor of the a Reformed presbyterian church in Port-au-Prince, I still see how slippery Haiti can be and how careful we need to be while serving the Lord in such a difficult country. It is a slippery land because of the corruption in its political system, the powerful natural catastrophes that hit the country very often, the danger of a pagan culture, and the consequences all these have on the economy and on our lives.

Lockdown

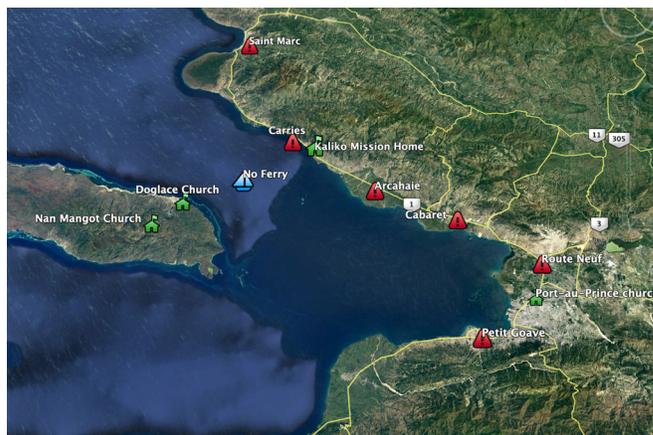
2019 was a very difficult year for Haiti. It may be the most “slippery” year I have seen in this country, although the past twenty years have all been full of difficulty. Since July 2018, the political opponents to the president have been trying to force him out of power. They have used every violent means to reach their goal; but instead of convincing or forcing the president to leave, the only result has been hard suffering for the poor people who the opponents claim to love and defend.

Every two or three months during 2019, the protesters blocked the roads and “locked” everyone in their homes for at least two weeks. In September, they decided on a non-stop lockdown. They controlled everyone’s freedom with road-blocks and armed gangs. As a consequence, the country was in a turmoil from September to mid-December. People were forced to stay home.

In a country like Haiti, more than half the people who work do something informal. That means that they need to be in the streets every day to try to look for a living. Their income, as low as it is, ensures that basic needs are met for a



Burning tires used as a blockade near Port-au-Prince last fall



A Google map from last fall showing the blocked highways

large family, relatives, and friends. In a country where the unemployment rate was already very high and the economy down, the blockade brought businesses to bankruptcy and many people lost their jobs. The inflation rate rose more than 20 percent this year. In a country where education is so needed, the schools were closed and students stayed home with no access to learning for about four months.

Even if there is now an apparent calm in the streets, the situation is still volatile and can turn dangerous at any time, particularly in some sections of Port-au-Prince and other main cities. The worst thing about this is that we don't know when this situation is going to stop. We do know, however, that the Lord is on the throne! He is in control, and he knows the situation of his people in Haiti.

The Reformed Church in Haiti

We praise the Lord also that in all of this, the church continues to meet to hear the preaching and teaching of the Word and to fellowship with God's people. Sometimes during the blockade, it was difficult for some members to come to worship, but all those living within walking distance still did. Political turmoil and danger in the streets did not remove our joy and our eagerness to come and worship the Lord! The people from our churches, especially on the island of La Gonâve, had difficulty accessing food and fuel. But through all of this, the Lord protected his people. We have some members who were attacked in the streets and who suffered loss of money and small possessions, but the Lord preserved their lives.

We don't know what the coming year will bring. It doesn't seem that the political situation will resolve soon. However, we know that the Lord is good. He will continue to preserve his church even in Haiti, and he will continue to establish his kingdom, though the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain. Our God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. He will be exalted among the nations—he will be exalted in Haiti!

A Presbytery in Haiti

You may remember that after several years of prayer and teaching and after several meetings, we were about to form



Octavius Delfils with his ninety-six-year-old father (center) and OP missionary Benjamin Hopp (right) at the church's ninth anniversary

a regional church in Haiti with the first gathering planned for September 2019. That was going to be the start of a new Reformed and presbyterian denomination in the country. However, we could not meet in September because of the political turmoil. Now we are praying and waiting again for a bit of stability so that all the churches and the visiting church officers from North America may be able to gather together for this wonderful event. The churches need fellowship, encouragement, and guidance from each other. Please pray for the Reformed

church in Haiti and the church leaders as they minister to the people during these difficult times. We hope that the Lord will bring enough stability to allow us to meet and form the presbytery in the first months of 2020.

Two Anniversaries

As we began the new year in the wake of the political chaos, Haiti is also commemorating the tenth anniversary of the earthquake of January 12, 2010. It has already been ten years since that powerful earthquake devastated the country! When we look back, we can see that through hardship and the turmoil of these years, the Lord has been building his church and showing abundant love to his people. It is with gratitude that the week before the anniversary of that terrible event, the church in Port-au-Prince celebrated its ninth anniversary. The church members were very glad to invite friends and family members to come with them and worship the Lord with cheerfulness on this special occasion. The sermon that Pastor Benjamin Hopp preached for the occasion reminded us that

“when the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan” (Prov. 29:2).

Though we may live on slippery ground in a country full of wicked people, our God is always faithful to his church. He promises in Isaiah 54:10:

“For the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

With our covenant Lord, we stand firm, even in a slippery land!



Special music after the worship service in Port-au-Prince

The author is an associate missionary of the OPC in Haiti.

REVIEW OF HERMAN BAVINCK'S WONDERFUL WORKS OF GOD

// SHANE P. LEMS



You can't usually tell much about a book simply by reading its first and last sentences. Not so with this book on Christian doctrine by Herman Bavinck called *The Wonderful Works of God*. The first sentence of the book is, "God, and God alone, is man's highest good." The concluding sentence is from the Apostle Paul: "For of him and through him and to him are all things, to him be the glory forever! Amen." These are notable lines, indeed, and they well reflect the content of the book.

I'm guessing many readers of *New Horizons* are somewhat familiar with Herman Bavinck and his many contributions to Reformed theology. From his four-volume *Reformed Dogmatics* to his shorter book called *Preaching and Preachers* to the recently translated *Reformed Ethics* to his many other writings, Bavinck's work certainly takes its place next to other important theologians like Louis Berkhof, Charles Hodge, Francis Turretin, and even John Calvin.

This work was first published in Dutch as *Magnalia Dei* in 1909, then later translated into English by Henry Zylstra and published in 1956 with the title *Our Reasonable Faith*. This 2020 republication of Zylstra's translation returns to the original title, *The Wonderful Works of God*, English for *Magnalia Dei*. A helpful Scripture index has been added to this new edition.

In some ways, this book might be considered a shortened version of Bavinck's four-volume *Dogmatics*. It does cover the

regular topics of doctrine in systematic order. But *The Wonderful Works of God* isn't a volume of "cut and paste" sections from Bavinck's *Dogmatics*. It's a unique work that is in some ways more accessible and devotional than *Dogmatics*.

The book has several strengths. First, as is evident in the opening and closing sentences noted above, this book is God-centered. Bavinck constantly directs the reader's attention to the triune God. This book is also helpfully polemic. By this I mean that Bavinck does at times briefly mention opposing viewpoints, for example, those of Roman Catholicism, and critiques them in light of Scripture.

I also appreciate Bavinck's covenantal and redemptive-historical perspectives in *The Wonderful Works of God*. From his discussion on Adam and Christ to his explanation of the covenant of grace, Bavinck's theology certainly takes into account the progressive and redemptive flow of God's history from creation to consummation, melding redemptive history and systematic theology.

Second, it is scriptural. Bavinck constantly cites, alludes to, or paraphrases Scripture. He does use proof texts, but his theology is much more deeply and broadly biblical than proof-texting alone. For example, consider this sentence: "Redemption, quite as much as creation and providence, is solely the work of God" (251). In one sentence, Bavinck echoes

the truth of Scripture that God alone is the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer.

Third, this book is deeply Reformed. And this makes sense: theology that is thoroughly biblical will be deeply Reformed. Bavinck is very much aware of the Reformed theologians who taught before him. In many ways, he stands on



Herman Bavinck, 1854-1921

their shoulders. And he often mentions or alludes to the Reformed Confessions. For example, Bavinck echoes the Canons of Dort 3/4.11 when he explains regeneration as how God sovereignly and mysteriously “opens the heart that is closed, mellows what is hard, and circumcises what is uncircumcised” (460).

Finally, this book is very practical and devotional. It is true that sometimes books on doctrine end up being technical and dry. But *The Wonderful Works of God* is neither. This is one major reason why I so much enjoy reading Bavinck: his writing helps me learn more about the truths of Scripture in a way that encourages me in the historic Christian faith. Here are a few examples:

Man is an enigma whose solution can only be found in God. (7)

For the saint, heaven in all its blessedness and glory would be void and stale without God. (10)

The knowledge of faith is a practical knowledge, a knowledge of the heart rather than of the head, a knowledge with a personal, profound, soul-absorbing concern. (432)

The moment we have eyes to see the richness of the spiritual life, we do away with the practice of judging others according to our puny measure. (418)

The Wonderful Works of God is in my view one of the best readable summaries of Christian doctrine. Although this book is shorter and less technical than Bavinck’s *Dogmatics*, it is still 550 pages of robust theological writing, at a college reading level. I challenge you to work through it. If you read it well, you will learn more about the great biblical truths of the Christian faith that speak to the head and to the heart—for the glory of God!

The author is pastor of Covenant Presbyterian in Hammond, Wisconsin.

The Wonderful Works of God, by Herman Bavinck, with introduction by R. Carlton Wynne. Westminster Seminary Press, 2020. Hardcover, 695 pages, \$24.99.

🗨️ Out of the Mouth . . .

On our way to church, I announced, “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!” My four-year-old replied, “But Papa, God didn’t make today; he rested on the Lord’s Day!”

—Dhananjay Khanda
Pompano Beach, FL

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

Favorite Psalms and Hymns

Trinity Psalter Hymnal no. 90B

“Lord, You Have Been Our Dwelling Place”

Text by OPC/URCNA Committee, set to “Suilven” by Andrew Gordon

Timothy Shafer

Lord, you have ever been our dwelling place.
Before you made the world of time and space,
Before you made the mountains and the earth,
Eternal you are God; you gave them birth.

Psalm 90, the first of the Mosaic psalms and likely the most ancient of all the psalms, is a psalm of communal lament that brings the reader to an immediate awareness of the eternity of our Creator. Throughout its verses, it returns again and again to the dimension of time, comparing, as commentator Derek Kidner points out, “God’s grandeur and eternity over against the frailty of man.” Kidner goes on to say that this psalm points to God’s eternity as the answer to the dilemma of man’s brevity of life, and that the middle stanzas of the psalm display the darker side of mankind as a race under judgment.

The tune “Suilven” amplifies these themes of time and judgment in a hauntingly beautiful setting. From the first sweeping melodic gestures, it expresses musically a sense of the eternal by its unusually wide opening melodic intervals and the openness and austerity of its beginning and ending harmonies, both of which notably omit the middle note of the triad to create an ancient, hollow sound. Each of the phrases rises rapidly by a leap followed by a slow, graceful fall, creating a lament-like quality in the sound. The harmonies are predominantly minor throughout, ornamented with a significant dose of modern and somewhat biting dissonance, supporting the darker tone of judgment in the middle verses of the psalm.

Though not a difficult melody to sing, the tune nonetheless benefits from repeated exposures over time to fully appreciate its beauty and exceptional congruity with the text of the psalm. This setting truly helps the Word to dwell in us richly.

☆ Congratulations

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

- **Silas VanDrunen**, Bethel Presbyterian Church, Wheaton, IL

STEWARDSHIP

HOME MISSIONS BUDGET BREAKDOWN

This issue of *New Horizons* features the work of the Committee on Home Missions, which, at the 2019 General Assembly, was approved a budget of \$1,656,000. What does Home Missions do with its money?

Church Planting

2020 budget: \$675,000

The largest line item for Home Missions is church planting. The committee provides up to 50 percent of the total budget of new OP mission works if the presbytery and/or the mission work cannot fully support the labors of a full-time evangelist for that work. (This support is typically given for no more than four years.) In 2019, there were six new evangelists and two new interns. Two new works were added in January 2020—in Deer Park, NY, and Farmington, ME—for a total of thirty works supported.

Church-Planter Training

2020 budget: \$115,000

Home Missions doesn't just help provide a salary for church planters, it also provides training. The main avenue is an annual training conference that church planters in their first and third years of funding attend. In January 2020, fifteen church planters and their spouses traveled to Florida for it. In addition, Home Missions visits three seminaries annually to meet future OP pastors and church planters and teach them about ministry in the OPC. It also provides a variety of online training tools for church planters and others, such as outwardopc.com.

Regional Home Missionaries (RHMs)

2020 budget: \$325,000

Home Missions partners with presbyteries to fund RHMs, who are church-planting representatives of their presbyteries and serve as liaisons to Home Missions. RHMs perform a wide variety of church-planting tasks, for example, leading Bible studies, following up with contacts, and leading or coordinating a mission work's first months of worship. In

2019, two RHMs retired, one transitioned to church planter, and one new part-time area home missions coordinator began his labors (Michael Diercks in the Presbytery of Ohio).

Home Missions Staff

2020 budget: \$407,622

Home Missions must also support its staff: general secretary John Shaw, associate general secretary Al Tricarico, administrative assistant Katie Stumpff, and one-third of the salary of Committee on Diaconal Ministries coordinator David Nakhla—as well as the travel and other expenses that make their work possible.

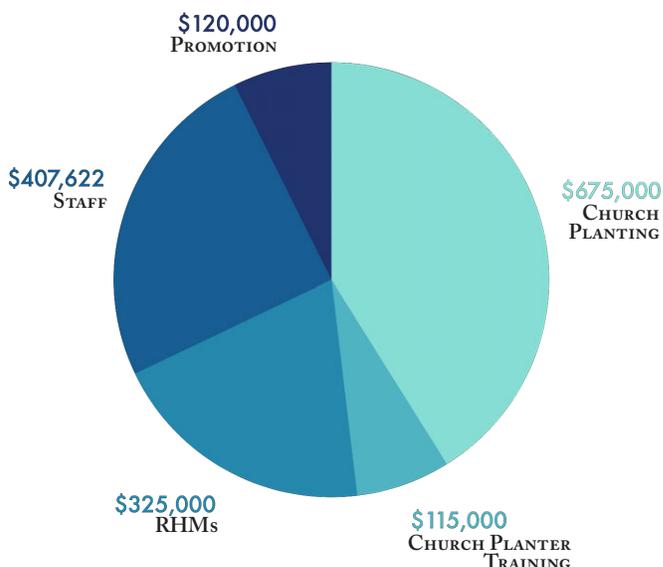
Promotion

2020 budget: \$120,000

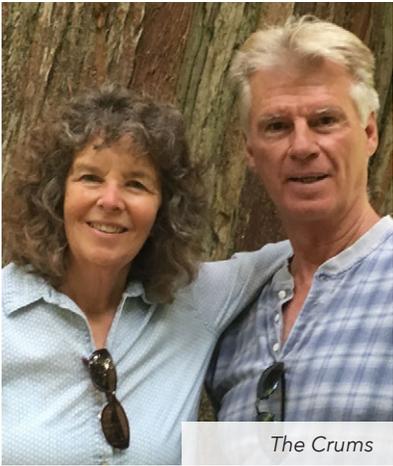
You may have seen the WorldWide Outreach videos last fall; that was the work of Home Missions in partnership with the Committee on Coordination. Home Missions also assists mission works with creating videos and other promotional materials. (If you would like to see an example of their promotional work, visit graceop.org.)

Pray for Laborers

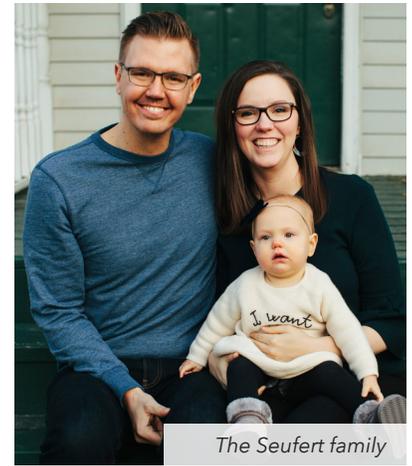
Four presbyteries are currently in an active search for RHMs. Two more presbyteries are preparing for a search. "This is probably our number one need right now in Home Missions," general secretary John Shaw said. "We have the money and the desire. We need the men." Finding men who are gifted and willing to serve as RHMs is difficult because the calling is unique (see "A Pastor Across the Presbytery," pages 6–7). Please pray that God would this year prepare regional home missionaries and church planters to serve in his kingdom (Matt. 9:38).



MARCH



The Crums



The Seufert family

1 Pray for **DAVID (JANE) CRUM**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California. / Pray for yearlong intern **AARON (JACQUELINE) MIZE** at Trinity OPC in Easton, PA.

2 **BEN & HEATHER HOPP**, Haiti. Pray that the Mission would be able to schedule the first meeting of the Haitian presbytery despite unrest in the nation. / Home Missions associate general secretary **AL TRICARICO**.

3 Associate missionaries **OCTAVIUS & MARIE DELFILS**, Haiti. Pray for the health, safety, and spiritual nourishment of the churches in Port-au Prince and La Gonâve. / **LINDA FOH**, technical assistant for OPC.org.

4 **MICAH & EILEEN BICKFORD**, Farmington, ME. Pray that Grace Reformed would have an earnest desire to proclaim Christ. / Pray for **MR. AND MRS. F.**, Asia, as they consider preparations for a new plant.

5 **KEVIN & RACHEL MEDCALF**, Cumming, GA. Pray for Providence Presbyterian as it begins to move toward organization. / Yearlong intern **SAMUEL (BETH) ALVIRA** at Providence OPC and Grace OPC in Mantua and Pennsville, NJ.

6 Pray for missionary associates **P. F. and M. S.**, Asia, as they resume teaching English courses at the university. / **MELISA MCGINNIS**, controller, and **CHARLENE TIPTON**, database administrator.

7 **MR. AND MRS. M.**, Asia. Pray for their family as they seek the Lord's direction for the future of Mr. M.'s work. / **BRAD & CINNAMON PEPP**, Dayton, OH. Pray that God would grant fruitfulness to First Street's outreach and evangelism.

8 **TYLER (NATALIE) DETRICK**, church-planting intern at First Street Reformed Fellowship in Dayton, OH. / Pray for **HANK BELFIELD** as he adjusts to his new role and responsibilities as stated clerk and prepares for the 87th General Assembly.

9 Pray for missionary associates **DR. JIM & JENNY KNOX**, Mbale, Uganda, as they care for their prematurely-born son, Sachairi. / Pray for **CHARLES AND CONNIE JACKSON**, Mbale, Uganda, and the students at Knox School of Theology.

10 **SHANE & RACHELLE BENNETT**, Grand Rapids, MI. Pray for clear direction as Reformation OPC seeks new outreach opportunities. / Pray for **GREAT COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS**, a joint work of the OPC and PCA, as it produces Reformed resources for the churches.

11 **HEERO & ANYA HACQUEBORD**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for their family's spiritual, physical, and emotional health. / **MICHAEL & SAMANTHA SEUFERT**, St. Paul, MN. Ask God to bless this new season in the life of Mission OPC.

12 **BILL WELZIEN**, Key West, FL. Ask the Lord to add to Keys Presbyterian Church. / **GREGORY REYNOLDS**, editor of *Ordained Servant*, and **CHRIS TOBIAS**, cover designer for *New Horizons*.

13 Pray for missionary associate **RICHARD DANIELS**, Mbale, Uganda, as he assists as a lecturer at Knox School of Theology. / **KERRI ANN CRUSE**, video and social media coordinator, and **ANNELISA STUDLEY**, office manager.

14 **GREGORY & GINGER O'BRIEN**, Downingtown, PA. Ask the Lord to work in the hearts of those attending Christ Church's outreach Bible study. / **DAVID (JOELLE) CARNES**, yearlong intern at Lake Sherwood OPC in Orlando, FL.

15 **MARK & JENI RICHLINE**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray that the Word may continue to unite and encourage the members. / Pray for yearlong intern **JEREMY (KOURTNEY) BRANDENBURG** at Calvary OPC in Glenside, PA.

MARCH



The Andrews

16 **LACY (DEBBIE) ANDREWS**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southeast. / Pray for **DANNY OLINGER**, general secretary, as he meets with the **COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** March 16-18.

17 Pray for strength for the **ETHIOPIAN REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** in times of trial. / Pray for young men attending the **TIMOTHY CONFERENCE** in Philadelphia this week, as they consider gospel ministry.

18 **RETIRED MISSIONARIES** Cal & Edie Cummings, Brian & Dorothy Wingard, Greet Rietkerk, and Young & Mary Lou Son. / **JUEON KIM**, church-planting intern at Christ the King Presbyterian in Naples, FL.

19 Affiliated missionaries **DR. MARK & LAURA AMBROSE**, Cambodia. / **NICHOLAS & ROSEMARIE LAMMÉ**, Houston, TX. Pray for open doors and open hearts as Nick ministers to neighborhoods affected by Hurricane Harvey.

20 Yearlong intern **BRENDAN WESTERFIELD** at Redeemer OPC in Beavercreek, OH. / Affiliated missionaries **JERRY & MARILYN FARNIK**, Prague, Czech Republic. Pray for the unbelievers at their mid-week Bible studies.

21 Pray for missionary associate **ALETHEA FLORES**, Quebec, Canada, as she learns about the summer English ministry to kids. / **JAY & ANDREA BENNETT**, Neon, KY. Pray for evangelistic faithfulness and fruit at Neon Reformed.

22 **MICHAEL & NAOMI SCHOUT**, Zeeland, MI. Pray that Grace Fellowship would wholly lean on God through prayer. / Yearlong intern **DERRICK (NICOLE) LEITAO** at Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod in West Barnstable, MA.

23 **BEN & MELANIE WESTERVELD**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for the French Reformed translation and publication of 2-3 books this year. / Yearlong intern **ADAM (NOELLE) WELLS** at Lakeview OPC in Rockport, ME.

24 **JEREMIAH (NATALIA) DICKINSON**, church-planting intern at Harvest Church in East Haddam, CT. / Pray for the labors of **DAVID & RASHEL ROBBINS**, and tentmaking missionary **TINA DEJONG** (on furlough), Nakaale, Uganda.

25 **MARK AND CARLA VAN ESSENDELFT**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for their oldest son, Joshua, as he finishes high school and considers God's plan for his future. / **MARK STUMPF**, manager of the OPC Loan Fund.

26 **Calvin & Connie Keller**, Winston-Salem, NC. Pray that the Lord would add five new families to Harvest OPC this year. / Pray for wisdom for **DAVID NAKHLA**, administrator of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, as he meets with the committee March 26-27.



The Verdick family

27 Associate missionaries **JAMES & ESTHER FOLKERTS, CHRISTOPHER & CHLOE VERDICK**, and **LEAH HOPP**, Nakaale, Uganda. / **MIKE (ELIZABETH) DIERCKS**, area home missions coordinator for the Presbytery of Ohio.

28 Yearlong intern **SEOB (RACHEL) KIM** at Rockford Springs Community Church in Rockford, MI. / **MATTHEW & LOIS COTTA**, Pasadena, CA. Give thanks for deep fellowship at Pasadena Presbyterian; ask the Lord for officers.

29 Pray for the good health of missionary associates **JOANNA GROVE, JOSHUA MARCOUX, JONATHAN ROBBINS**, and **ANGELA VOSKUIL**, Nakaale, Uganda. / Home Missions general secretary **JOHN SHAW**.

30 Affiliated missionaries **CRAIG & REE COULBOURNE** and **LINDA KARNER**, Japan. Pray for physical and mental strength as they take on new duties. / Pray for active duty military chaplain **CORNELIUS (DEIDRE) JOHNSON**, US Navy.

31 Pray for active duty military chaplain **STEPHEN (LINDSEY) ROBERTS**, US Army. / **RON & CAROL BEABOUT**, Mifflintown, PA. Pray with Grace and Truth as they look to new outreach in nearby Lewis-town this spring.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS



George C. Scipione, 1946-2020

IN MEMORIAM: GEORGE C. SCIPIONE

Roger Wagner

On the morning of January 22, the Reverend George Scipione entered the presence of the Lord Jesus in glory. Less than a month earlier, problems with his liver had been detected during an ER visit while he was visiting family and friends in San Diego. Upon his return to Pittsburgh, it was determined that he had advanced and untreatable cancer in his pancreas and liver. He was sent home to his family for his final days. He is survived by his wife Eileen, five children, and two grandchildren.

Scipione was ordained in the OPC in 1974, and served the congregation of Calvary Community OPC in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, until 1982, when he came to Southern California to begin a West Coast branch of the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation and train seminarians in biblical counseling at Westminster Seminary California. He became an associate pastor at Bayview OPC in Chula Vista in 1987.

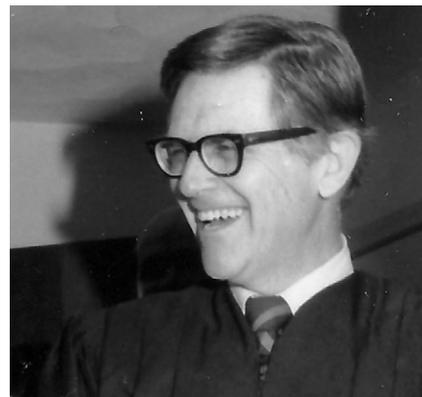
In 2006, Scipione returned east to plant a church in Taylors, South Carolina, (which became Covenant Community OPC), and then in 2008 he joined the faculty of the Reformed Presbyterian Theo-

logical Seminary in Pittsburgh, where he developed and directed their Biblical Counseling Training Institute until 2019, when he retired. He also lectured in biblical counseling and helped church plants around the world.

In the many tributes that have flooded social media since he was diagnosed, Scipione is remembered with great fondness for his self-effacing, faithful service in public and private ministries, and for being an exemplary man of prayer.

IN MEMORIAM: RICHARD L. HORNER

On January 13, 2020, the Reverend Richard L. Horner died at the age of ninety-four and went to be with the Lord in glory. A veteran of World War II having served on Iwo Jima in the United States Army, Horner returned from the war to attend the University of Virginia from which he graduated with an English degree in 1950. He taught high school in Roanoke, Virginia, before sensing a call to the gospel ministry and enrolling at Westminster Theological Seminary. He was ordained and installed as pastor of Calvary OPC in Cranston, Rhode Island, in 1967. It was at Calvary that he met his future wife, Sally. They were married



Richard L. Horner, 1925-2020

in 1971 and blessed with five children. In 1976, Horner became pastor of Garst Mill OPC in Roanoke, a ministry that would continue for thirty-nine years until his retirement in 2007.

UPDATE

MINISTERS

- On January 3, **Jeremiah W. Montgomery**, previously a missionary to Asia, was installed as pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Vandalia, OH.
- On January 11, **Joseph P. Trombetta**, previously a PCA minister, was received into the Presbytery of New Jersey and in-



At the January 3 installation of Jeremiah Montgomery as pastor in Vandalia, Ohio

stalled as pastor of Immanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church in West Collingswood, NJ.

- On January 24, **J. Scott Creel**, formerly the associate pastor of Redemption OPC in Gainesville, FL, was installed as pastor of Amoskeag Presbyterian in Manchester, NH.
- On January 31, at the request of both, the Presbytery of the Midwest dissolved the pastoral relationship between **Edward E. Jensen** and Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church in Des Moines, IA.

MILESTONES

- **Theocharis Joannides**, 78, died on January 7. He served as a minister in both the OPC and the Free Reformed Churches of North America.
- **Richard L. Horner**, 94, former pastor of Garst Mill OPC in Roanoke, VA, died on January 13.
- **George C. Scipione**, 73, died on January 22. Scipione was an OP minister and retired professor at the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

LETTERS

BE A LITTLE PERSNICKETY

Editor:

I offer a slight critique of Ken Montgomery's point in "You Are Not What You Eat" (December 2019) that we "need not be too persnickety about what we choose to eat." Here are a few reasons why Christians should carefully consider what they're eating: Since Roundup use rose dramatically, food is more toxic and less nutrient-dense. Chronic diseases have skyrocketed, possibly in part due to food quality. Animals raised in Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations are often treated abysmally. And some modern farming practices degrade the environment. We can agree to disagree on these wisdom issues, but we must remember that we, along with all peoples, are called by the Creator to steward his creation and treat our bodies as temples.

Paul Meyer
Colorado Springs, CO

DOCTRINE, LIFE, AND NEW HORIZONS

Editor:

Is the message on doctrine and practice in "New Horizons at 40" (January, 2020) consistent? The article affirms that the magazine's purposes include promoting "sound doctrine and faithful practice" with a "self-conscious attempt to be faithful to the covenantal reality that doctrine and practice flow into one another in the Christian life." Yet the masthead states, "Views expressed by our writers are not necessarily those of the editors or official positions of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church." When I had concerns about an article in the June *New Horizons*—which was silent on contrary views that may also be biblically supported—I was relieved to realize that the views were the author's and not an official position of the church. However, since the article was placed in the Christian Education pages of the magazine, the question lingers.

Geoffrey Parker
Prescott, AZ

Editor:

In recounting the magazine's mission of promoting sound doctrine and faithful practice in "New Horizons at 40," we should note that the defining error of liberalism as noted by Machen was its denial of God's supernatural work in redeeming his people. From that denial came the separation of works from sound doctrine. But at this point, we need to ask whether

some of the works promoted by liberals may actually be worth printing in *New Horizons*. Or do we believe that because of our doctrine we have everything to teach liberals and nothing to learn from them?

Curt Day
Allentown, PA

MAKING A MELODY

Editor:

I have to thank you for including the "Favorite Psalms and Hymns" piece in the Christian Education pages in January. I love hymns, and the history of them is so interesting to me. I was so glad to read of a hymn I've never heard before—what wonderful words. I look forward to more of this feature in our magazine.

Krista Groot
Newfield, NJ

REVIEWS

Follow Me: Bible Stories for Young Children, by Liesbeth Van Binsbergen. **Reformation Heritage, 2019. Hardcover, 386 pages, \$18.00. Reviewed by OP member Rachel Crum.**

There is something wonderful about story Bibles. Perhaps it is the way that they present familiar Bible stories in simple, childlike ways and help us to see connections where we might not have seen them before. I have memories of my dad reading a story Bible to us as kids, and I love to

WORLDWIDE OUTREACH AND THANK OFFERING GIVING RESULTS

It is a joy to report that giving to the 2019 Thank Offering was \$1,274,480—exceeding our goal of \$1,200,000. This strong Thank Offering contributed to a total of \$4,666,191 for Worldwide Outreach in 2019. Foreign Missions and Home Missions exceeded their budgeted goals, and Christian Education came close to theirs.

Thank you for your prayers and support for the ministries of the OPC, and thank you for promoting the Thank Offering in the church!



Tom and Jean Tyson celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary at Grace and Peace Presbyterian in California, MD, on December 29.

gather my five- and three-year-old up to read to them from our story Bibles. I was excited, then, to preview a new story Bible, *Follow Me: Bible Stories for Young Children*, recently translated from Dutch into English.

The book is surprisingly heavy, and about twice the size I would expect a story Bible to be (12 x 8 inches). It walks extensively through the Bible, which I think will be an attraction for those looking for something thorough. Its other main attraction is that there are no pictures of Jesus in the illustrations, which can be rare in a story Bible.

There are two pages of text and one full-page illustration per story. The stories are told in very simple language, but they seem somewhat long for very young children. It was difficult for me to figure out the best age group for this book. Each story also includes the Scripture reference it is drawn from and three discussion questions at the end to aid in conversation with your kids.

There is a strange smattering of *thees* and *thous* found throughout in different

stories—pastiche language seemingly drawn from the KJV. I was confused about why those were included in this translation from the Dutch. But my main critique is that each story is more or less a paraphrase of the actual Scripture text, which is why the stories are somewhat long. They include lots of details and are pretty faithful to the text, but are so detailed that they struggle to set themselves apart from the actual Bible stories. I was really longing for interpretation of the Scripture texts, especially in the Old Testament stories. The back cover blurb reads, “In the Old Testament, we are pointed to the Lord Jesus as we see how much we need Him and how God promised to save the world through Him.” I found this to be misleading, as I did not find any references in the Old Testament stories to Jesus or any interpretation of them in light of the gospel and the New Testament. This does a huge disservice to our children and their understanding of the Bible, as it leaves the stories open

to be interpreted in a moralistic way, and makes this book very different from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* (ZonderKidz) and *The Gospel Story Bible* (New Growth), two books which show me and my children how Jesus and the gospel are hidden in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament.

***The Story of Creeds and Confessions: Tracing the Development of the Christian Faith*, by Donald Fairbairn and Ryan M. Reeves. Baker Academic, 2019. Paperback, 416 pages, \$20.23 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor Calvin R. Goughier.**

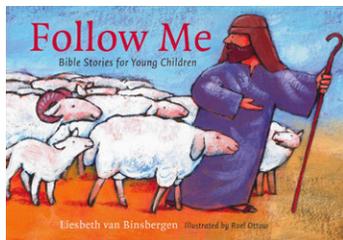
New Horizons readers will no doubt be delighted to hear of a new history of the church’s confessions of faith. That history, from the Reformation to the present day, is covered in the second half of this book. Our own Westminster standards are treated, as are many less familiar confessions from other traditions. Everyone

from Anglicans to Unitarians wrote confessions, and they are all covered. Even the Eastern Orthodox Church was involved in Reformation confessions, I was surprised to learn. Many in our churches will also be keenly interested in the discussion of modern confessional revisions, since our own history is closely connected to these developments.

The best thing about the history of confessions in the second half of this book is that it follows a wonderful history of creeds in the first half. Creeds express Christian faith in the persons of the Trinity, out of a fundamental conviction that salvation is by faith in God, who shows us grace by coming down to rescue us from our sin. Out of this central conviction grew the church’s creedal affirmations that Jesus Christ is a fully divine savior, and that he assumed a true humanity.

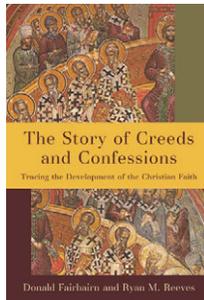
Where did the church learn to express its faith in creeds? The opening chapter of this book shows that the idea comes straight from the Bible. The “Shema” of Deuteronomy 6:4, the baptismal formula of Matthew 28:19–20, and other texts get to the heart of the biblical message by stating the name of God, in whom Christians trust for salvation. Those who hold to “no creed but the Bible” can learn to love creeds by reflecting on such biblical statements of faith. Protestants who instinctively evaluate everything by the doctrine of justification by faith can also learn to love creeds for the way they point our faith to the God who justifies.

This book explains church history in a clear and coherent way. This is an important quality for any book on the subject, but it is especially rare for books on the early church. Even those of us with a decent grasp of Reformation history are often confused by the early church. We wonder whether the bulk of the church ever understood the Bible or the gospel amid the seemingly ceaseless conflicts between East and West, Bible and philosophy, piety and politics. Much of the problem comes from the fact that historians have often explained early church history from perspectives that are foreign to Christianity, thus obscuring rather than enlightening the subject. By working from the church’s own perspective ex-



pressed in the creeds, this book provides (in my judgment) the clearest and most accurate introduction to early church history currently available.

Understanding creeds and confessions together will help us to use our confessional standards more wisely. The Westminster standards are not the sum total of our Christian heritage, but a faithful expression of the catholic faith of the creeds. Accordingly, their most important elements are precisely those that are not unique to them. In the same way, this understanding will be fruitful for our Christian life, as we seek the maturity that rejoices in the unity of Christ's body (Eph. 4:13), even as we give thanks for the blessings of our own confessional tradition.



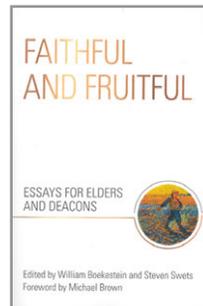
***Faithful and Fruitful: Essays for Elders and Deacons*, edited by William Boekestein and Steven Swets. Reformed Fellowship, 2019. Paperback, 328 pages, \$16.99. Reviewed by OP professor J. V. Fesko.**

There is an ocean of theological literature on a host of topics, from the doctrines of God to last things, and everything in between. Nevertheless, as plentiful and vast as this body of water is, there are some dry spots on the landscape when it comes to books specifically written to assist and instruct elders and deacons in their sacred task of serving Christ's church. Thankfully, there is another contribution to this often-overlooked genre of theological literature. In a follow-up volume to Reformed Fellowship's 2007 *Called to Serve: Essays for Elders and Deacons*, editors William Boekestein and Steven Swets have published *Faithful and Fruitful: Essays for Elders and Deacons*.

The book contains twenty chapters

on a wide range of practical topics including: training church officers, prayer, hospitality, managing one's household, catechesis, avoiding burnout, clerking, serving on a search committee, evangelism, and missions. All the chapters offer sage biblical advice and counsel, though two standouts are Richard Anjema's contribution on ministering to the sick and dying and Jonathan Cruse's essay on congregational singing. Many congregations struggle with singing and thus Cruse's advice is an excellent booster shot to help elders improve this aspect of congregational life and worship.

Among the book's strengths are the practical nature of the chapters and the



A Pastor Across the Presbytery

[Continued from page 7]

the PCUS that Andrews found himself once more in a church-planting situation, with “no building, no session, and at first, no denomination.” He approached it with such oomph that, eight years after joining the OPC, Andrews was called as a regional home missionary. Two decades later, he's still an energetic force when he walks in the room—“even after a short night and a four-hour car ride all the way from upper Virginia!” Monteith said.

Gentle Transitions

On a Friday night last December, Reformation Presbyterian in Virginia Beach, Virginia, held an organization service. Andrews led worship and gave the charge to the congregation. The next afternoon, two hours away, Knox Reformed Presbyterian in Mechanicsville, Virginia, was received into the OPC. Andrews again led the service. And on

Sunday morning, Andrews drove an hour south to Yorktown, Virginia, to fill the pulpit before heading home to Meadowview, six hours away.

Andrews gives two weekends a month to the Yorktown work, one weekend a month to Marion, North Carolina, and one weekend a month to the work in Bluffton, South Carolina. He also serves on multiple provisional sessions at a time, working with the presbytery's home missions committee to lend his wisdom and experience to the particular situations of several churches at a time.

“When we don't have an organizing pastor, I'm in the work a lot more,” Andrews said. But even when a church is ready to have an organizing pastor, Andrews doesn't wash his hands of the session. He has learned to stay longer in order to transition the work—because sometimes that's exactly when issues come up.

One church brought in a pastor to candidate only to have baggage from a difficult event float to the surface during the interview process. “The enthu-

siasm was sucked out of the room,” Andrews said. The session stepped back and worked through the baggage before calling someone else.

“You don't know the glue that's holding the various members of the church here,” Andrews said. As he watches mission works mature, he wants to see a group starting to be a *church*, not just a gathering of people. “Usually the catalyst is a crisis in a family, so that the congregation must respond as brothers and sisters in Christ.”

Andrews models well the work of the Spirit in the life of the church, Monteith observed.

“When I think of Lacy, that's the example I see: he embodies the love, the joy, the peace, the patience, the gentleness, the kindness, the self-control. His foundational love for Christ and Christ's church is what motivates him to then love what he's doing, to do it so well, and to be so genuine in doing it.” □

The author is managing editor of New Horizons.

solid biblical and exegetical engagement that inform each essay. Given that the contributors come from both the Presbyterian and Continental traditions, the book ably serves the needs of both. Other strengths include the fact that the book covers areas of weakness in many Reformed and Presbyterian churches. As mentioned above, congregational singing is one such weakness. So is personal evangelism. Scott Clark's essay captures our fear of witnessing to unbelievers but points us to three things that might lessen our anxieties: that Christian witnessing is simple, steadfast, and spiritual (247). First, when witnessing, we should keep things simple and not allow the unbeliever to distract us from our task by posing multiple questions (251–52). Second, we should remain steadfast and undaunted in our witness, even in the face of opposition. Despite criticism, we can tell others what Christ has done for us, and in so doing we confess Christ (256). Third, the Spirit of God is ultimately the one who must do the heavy lifting in our witnessing—only he can remove hearts of stone and replace them with hearts of flesh (260).

Sessions, consistories, and deacons would do well to read both books, *Called to Serve* and *Faithful and Fruitful*. They might even use the books for a session study so that they better understand their sacred work. And they should also keep the two books nearby as a resource for regular consultation.

Faithful and Fruitful is a welcome book and will undoubtedly prove to be useful for elders and deacons.

***What Is a Girl Worth?*, by Rachael Denhollander. Tyndale, 2019. Hardcover, 352 pages, \$19.49 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor S. Scott Willet.**

The story of Rachael Denhollander is one that every pastor and elder ought to know, but not because it is such a happy and enjoyable account of a godly young woman growing up to be a resilient and articulate advocate for justice and righteousness. To be sure, it is filled with numerous anecdotes from a warm and faithful Christian family, and the story includes an emotionally satisfying account of a young couple getting to know and love one another.

Many readers will also chuckle as I did at Denhollander's own accounts of early childhood stubbornness, a character trait which would later be transformed by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit into a godly persistence and diligence. But the rising action of Denhollander's memoir is defined in the book's subtitle: *My story of breaking the silence and exposing the truth about Larry Nassar and USA Gymnastics*.

Denhollander is unique because of her passionate doggedness, her legal training, her self-controlled yet clinically precise use of language, and her zeal not for personal vengeance but for biblical justice. But she is not unique in her experiences of abuse. That is the real tragedy of her story. No pastor or elder should ever think, "Sexual abuse could never happen to anyone in this congregation." More than likely, it already has.

For Denhollander, sexual abuse first came when she was seven, in a small Bible-believing church in Michigan, at the hands of a college student at the church. Denhollander's parents were ostracized from the church for accusing the young man of abuse, despite similar accusations of several others. Years later and now married, Denhollander again encountered that same tendency to cover up allegations of sexual abuse. The Denhollanders' Reformed Baptist church had formed a working relationship with the flagship of a network of churches known as Sovereign Grace Churches (SGC). In the context of claims of mishandling numerous allegations of sexual assault within the SGC, they sought privately to raise their concerns about the SGC to their own church leaders. They were rebuffed, accused of being divisive, forbidden to discuss certain matters, and Denhollander's husband, Jacob, was removed from leadership. (Later the church pastors published a public confession that included the words, "In hindsight, we see we were sinfully unloving." Forgiveness was requested and granted.)

Denhollander writes of her experience in those churches that "there simply was a complete inability to understand the evi-

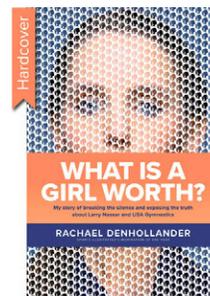
dence or the impact of abuse." Her book, in contrast, provides us with an opportunity to listen and begin to understand the impact of abuse. Her story will give a voice to many survivors of sexual abuse and give hope of being heard and believed.

At age fifteen, Denhollander was sexually abused by a world-renowned doctor who was also the team physician for the United States Women's Gymnastics team—Larry Nassar. Her deeply personal accounts of that abuse are painful to read, though noticeably absent of salacious or prurient language. She provides any sensitive reader with the ability to understand

the effect of grooming by sexual abusers and the nature of sexual predators, as well as why she (and many, if not most, victims) didn't speak up sooner. Because of Denhollander's honesty and self-awareness, readers will come to understand the feelings of shame in the confused hearts of many child victims as well as the fear of not being

believed by the adults in their world. Yet she revealed her private thoughts and experiences because it was her desire to put an end to the ongoing abuse of this one particularly heinous offender. It was worth *everything* to her to protect the many little girls and young women she knew were being harmed. Hence the title of her book.

Denhollander was the first to speak up publicly against Larry Nassar. Despite the risks to her own name and reputation as well as the inevitable loss of her privacy, she put a name and a face to her accusations. She would not be bullied. She would not be intimidated. And she would be vindicated. In 2017, Nassar pleaded guilty to multiple counts of sexual conduct with minors and to child pornography. At Nassar's sentencing hearing in early 2018, a wise and honorable judge allowed victim impact statements from any woman who chose to come forward. When it was all said and done, Denhollander's statement was the last of 156 such statements. Nassar was then given a lengthy sentence, ensuring that he will spend the rest of his natural life incarcerated. A fitting ending to a book that is hard to put down.





Short-Term Missions & Disaster Response



The Committees on Diaconal Ministries, Foreign Missions, Home Missions & Church Extension of
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

OUR MISSION is to...

- help churches and mission fields find individuals and teams to assist them with short-term ministry projects
- identify opportunities that match the gifts and expectations of those who wish to serve on a short-term basis
- mobilize the church to respond to disasters
- encourage the church to grow in service



HOW WE SERVE

- Youth group ventures
- Working with missionaries
- Working with children
- Vacation Bible School
- Teaching missionary kids
- Teaching English
- Service projects
- Evangelism
- Emergency & medical outreach
- Education outreach
- Construction/mechanical work
- Community outreach

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”
- I Peter 4:10 (ESV)

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www.OPCSTM.org
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David P. Nakhla, Short-Term Missions & Disaster Response Coordinator
562-760-7606 david.nakhla@opc.org