

NEW HORIZONS

≡ *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ≡

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in Secret
// by Douglas B. Clawson

JUNE 2021

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New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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Danny Olinger with his son David, upon Danny's return home from the hospital and David's seventeenth birthday. In the weeks since his hospitalization, the Lord has continued to answer prayer on Danny's behalf. He is mostly off supplemental oxygen and can sleep through the night. However, the blood clot remains and his oxygen levels have yet to return to pre-COVID levels. To hear daily of individuals and congregations praying for him has encouraged him beyond what words can express and has refreshed his heart in the Lord.



FROM THE EDITOR

On April 14, following a twenty-three-day stay in Abington Hospital where he was treated for COVID-19, pneumonia in both lungs, and a blood clot, *New Horizons* editor Danny Olinger penned the following letter to the Committee on Christian Education under whose leadership he serves.

Dear CCE and Friends,

Thank you for your prayers for me. The Good Shepherd has gone before me and delivered me. I do not expect ever to be the same, so thankful am I for what our Lord has done.

I am at home, but I have oxygen available when I have to walk. I am okay when sitting, as long as I don't cough. However, I still cough violently, up to two days ago, blood spitting every hour or so. After even the current coughing, I need five minutes at least to recover my breathing and oxygen levels above 80 percent. Within ten minutes I have it up to the low 90s. This cycle has left me without sleep for beyond forty-five minutes or an hour for quite some time. So we are rejoicing that I was able to have two blocks last night of over two hours each. Thank you to those of you who have been praying Psalm 4:8 for me at night.

Walking, I can only take around twenty steps. My neck and back are sore and in constant pain. But the biggest concern is whether there is permanent lung damage. They are very hopeful right now that there is not. Pray that the inflammation of the lungs would continue to decrease. My primary doctor is thrilled with the progress that I have made. On day two, I remember her yelling at me, "Danny, do we have your permission to ventilate if we need to?" My oxygen had gotten that low. For the next seventy-two hours, as I lay on my stomach with my head to the right for two hours before turning my head to the left, I would breathe in through my nose and recite a few words from Psalm 23. Then I would exhale and finish the verse. The Good Shepherd truly was going before me through the valley of the shadow of death. By day four, that same doctor was giving me the biggest thumbs up. She then had two weeks off. Three days ago she reappeared and told me that she wanted to be the one who let me know that I had made it, that I was going to be able to go home, because she wasn't sure I was going to survive it. I was able to tell her I am a Christian and that Christ sustained me throughout that 120-hour

battle when I was receiving the Remdesivir injections and keeping my oxygen above ventilating levels.

I had the opportunity to talk about Christ with so many nurses and assistants. One nursing assistant would even sing a hymn or psalm whenever it was his turn to take my vitals.

Thank you to so many who reached out to me and said that you were praying for me. Two dear friends in the Lord, two brothers, Stephen Tracey and Lane Tipton, were pastors to me and calmed my soul when things were so difficult. They would text me every morning at six a.m. to see how the night had gone. They would share Scripture with me, and see how I was feeling. At night, they would check in on me again. I praise God for their love of me. There were times when my strength was so low and the nights had been so violent to my body and breathing that only they and Diane would know how hard it was. And, I guess as an editor, I buried the lede in that Diane was there for me every step. I love her so much and am so thankful I have been blessed with thirty-three years with her. When I finally had strength to talk again, I would talk to her on the phone and we would pray together to end the day.

Thank you to everyone who has helped fill in when I was in the hospital for those twenty-three days. Please continue to pray for me in that I have a long way to go. But, again, I rejoice with my whole heart over what the Lord God has done. I am thankful for the ordeal. I cried a lot, in both sorrow over sin and rejoicing over God's goodness and mercy to me as a sinner. I was so arrogant, brothers, in so many things. I have loved myself and the world too much. I am so thankful that God brought me to an end of myself. I am so thankful that the Good Shepherd laid down his life for me. I am so thankful for Jesus the Great Physician. It is my heart's desire to pray for others as they have prayed for me, to love others as they have loved me in Christ's name. So thankful for Christ and his love which makes such love possible.

We are all so blessed in Christ. What joy it is to share with you in ministry in that expression of Christ's church which is the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

*In the name of the Lamb slain,
Danny*

PRAYER: OUR HIGHEST PRIVILEGE



BRUCE H. HOLLISTER // It was several years ago now that the Lord graciously brought to me a season of refreshment in my prayer life. In his kind providence, he brought to me this particular prompting, or “wake-up call,” as I was reading excerpts from a spiritual classic: Adolphe Monod’s *Les Adieux (Farewells)*.

Adolphe Monod was a French Reformed pastor and one of the greatest French preachers of the nineteenth century. Struck with cancer at age fifty-three, he went to be with the Lord about a year later. While in declining health, surrounded by family and friends, Monod presented from his sickbed a meditation on each of the last twenty-five days of our Lord’s life. His family carefully kept record of these devotional talks. Monod’s dying testimony is most inspiring and instructive.

Monod on Prayer

One of Monod’s regrets was that he had not prayed as he should. He put it this way:

My dear friends in Christ, among the subjects about which a Christian who believes himself to be near his end carries regrets, there is certainly none he would want so much to reform, if he returned to life, as prayer. (*Living in the Hope of Glory*, P&R, trans. and ed. by Constance Walker, 152–153)

And this:

Ah, if I were restored to life, I would like, with God’s help and in spite of myself, to give prayer much more time than I have done and to lean on prayer much more than on work. It is our duty never to neglect work, but work has no strength except when supported and animated by prayer. (159)

Monod’s comments strike at the heart of what we as Christians already know concerning prayer, but what we sadly fail to act upon. We are just not sufficiently convinced that our work truly has no strength except when supported and animated by prayer.

Monod mentions the well-known example of Martin Luther. It is said that Luther, during the period that he was appearing before the Diet of Worms, spent three hours each day crying aloud to God.

Luther’s friend Dietrich overheard Luther and took it upon himself to assemble those prayers for the good of the church. Dietrich observed that there was not a single day in which Luther did not reserve at least three hours for

prayer, those hours taken from the time during the day that was most conducive to work. Luther clearly believed that his work had no strength except when supported and animated by prayer!

How was it that Martin Luther accomplished what he did for the kingdom of God? By faith in the Word of God, *and by prayer!*

All of us must ask ourselves this question: “What is it that will most impact my life and the life of those around me?” Or to put it another way: “How do I think my life will bear the greatest fruit for the kingdom of God?” Listen again to Monod:

Prayer is the distinctive mark of the Lord’s powerful servants. *All of them*, in spite of considerable differences, offer to us this common trait: They are men who pray much and who pray fervently. (156; emphasis added)

Prayer’s Strategic Significance

As good Reformed folks, we are commonly quick to glory in the fact that we know much and care very much

about doctrine—about the Word of God and the sacraments—as well we ought. But in our weakness of faith, we far too often neglect what our catechisms identify as the third of the primary means of grace: prayer!

So, here is Westminster Shorter Catechism Question 88: “What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?”

And the answer: “The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are his ordinances, *especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer*; all of which are made effectual to the elect for salvation” (emphasis added; see also Larger Catechism Q. 153 and 154).

We are given to understand that these three primary means of grace go together! We cannot abstract one from the others, nor can we neglect any one of them and end up with anything resembling true spirituality. If we neglect prayer, we will not really know much about the Word of God *or* the sacraments—at least not much that will bear true and abiding fruit in our lives or in the lives of those to whom we minister. As preachers, our sermons will be barren and lacking in power. In conversation, we will fumble about with platitudes. In other words, without prayer, neither Word nor sacrament will bear abiding fruit in our lives. Indeed, if we neglect any of the three primary means of grace, we end up with something not *Reformed*, but *deformed*.

Sadly, we as Christians—even good, Reformed Christians—frequently prove ourselves to be a species of unbelieving pragmatist when it comes to things spiritual, and particularly when it comes to prayer. All of us very naturally gravitate to what we really believe “works.” Thus we show our pragmatism: What *works* is what is true, and what is true is that which *works*! So we think: What really works, what is really effective, is, well . . . our work! We just don’t believe that prayer is that important. And so we work when we should pray, and our work is then ineffective, fruitless, and unsatisfying. I dread the words

that many of us may say at the end of our lives, “I was so very busy, but I accomplished so very little!”

Consider then the strategic significance of prayer, positively. If, by God’s grace, we give ourselves afresh to prayer, we will bear much fruit in our lives individually, in our marriages, in our families, in the congregations in which we serve, in our presbyteries, and in the denomination that we love. Think of how the churches of our denomination would thrive if we all took up prayer in a new way!

What do you think will most impact your life and the lives of those around you?

Central to Our Communion with Christ

Prayer is at the very center of our communion with Christ. It has been well said that prayer is the breath of the soul. As goes prayer, so goes our communion with the Savior. And whatever hinders our communion with Christ, hinders our prayer. It is then most instructive that our Lord Jesus Christ ties his astonishingly big promise concerning prayer (John 15:7–8) directly to communion with himself and to all fruitfulness in the Christian life:

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

When I am not abiding in Christ—not communing with him through his Word—I have little taste for prayer; neither do I really understand prayer, its beauty and privilege. Does that sound familiar? Do you have no taste for prayer? You too, then, haven’t been communing with your Lord. You’ve drifted again into self-dependence, into the old fleshly way of living and thinking. Spiritual realities have become lifeless to you—hollow, merely theoretical. In your Christian service, you are leaning on your *work* rather than on your *Savior* through prayer.

Conversely, if I am abiding in

Christ, I have great liberty to ask for much, and I have a deep and happy assurance that I will bear much fruit. Our Lord could not be more explicit. He clearly intends that through prayer we should bear much fruit. We can as much say that all fruitfulness comes in answer to prayer.

A Window into the Kingdom

It is in and through prayer that an exciting world is opened to us, a “window” into the kingdom and into what God is doing. Every conversation, every interaction, and every activity is then illumined with the light of our Savior’s presence. Out of our communion with him—yes, as we simply ask!—it is his design that we should see a continual bearing of fruit though the whole of our Christian life—that we should see continual answers to prayer, countless answers to prayer, answers to prayer every day of our lives! At least, that is what our Savior intends, we can be sure. Again, he could not have been more explicit: “Ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit.” We are frequently guilty of shrinking our Savior’s great promise with various well-intended and biblical qualifications. Too often, this simply serves to mask our prayerlessness. As Monod expresses it,

Only prayer can put us in contact with the invisible world through the Word of God. That world is closer to some and further from others than they either think or desire. (160)

As has been well said, “Little prayer, little fruit; much prayer, much fruit.”

Hear the dying Monod again:

All together, with one spirit and one heart, humbled by the slackness of our prayers, let us form the holy resolve finally to know through experience the true promises of prayer so that we might harvest from it the blessed heritage of the invisible world. (160)

He, being dead, still speaks. □

The author is regional home missionary of the Presbytery of the Midwest.

LEARNING TO PRAY IN SECRET



DOUGLAS B. CLAWSON // Jesus is our God and Lord and King. He is also our Savior, our brother, and our friend. He is with us, and we are with him, every moment of every day. There is not a need that he does not know or a tear that he does not see. We are to have humility and reverence before him whose is the kingdom and

the power and the glory—absolutely. But he also invites us to call God our Father. He lives to pray for us (Heb. 7:25) as he sits at the right hand of the Father, and he tells us that we should pray to him without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17).

When praying in secret, we need to remember all that we have been taught about prayer, but, most of all, we need to just talk to God. We need to know that we can pour out our hearts to him. We need to remember that he is our best friend and only hope and that we can tell him everything and anything. Yes, he already knows it, but we can say it anyway. We can say it because he hears and listens to us for the sake of Jesus.

We may be ceaselessly calling, texting, and posting on our phones. Even better than connecting with friends is talking to Christ, our best friend, in secret, each day (keeping in mind who Jesus is and what we owe him). Just as he speaks to us by his Spirit through his Word anytime that we hear it, read it, or think about it, so we should speak to him through his Spirit in prayer, any

time and about everything.

Examples of Prayer

Some experiences change how we conceive of prayer. I remember once sharing a room with Pastor Lawrence Eyres for a presbytery meeting. As I walked into the room following my shower, I saw that he was praying, not comfortably seated in a chair, but on his knees. This spiritual father was forty-four years my senior and the unintended consequence of his private devotions left an impression that I will not forget.

On another occasion, I ran into Pastor Abe Ediger following a presentation at the church where he regularly worshiped. As we spoke in the parking lot, he told me with obvious deep regret how his hearing loss kept him from serving the church in ways that he once had. But, with equal intensity and gladness, he told me that he was now able to spend more time in prayer than he had ever been able to before. So, here was another spiritual father, thirty-six years my senior, who, through a casual conversation in a parking lot, left another

impression that I have not forgotten.

“What is prayer?” the Shorter Catechism asks in Question 98. “Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.”

But is there more to know that could help us?

“Lord, Teach Us to Pray”

We know that Jesus prayed alone often and for long periods of time. It is in the context of the great crowds that came to hear him and be healed by him that we read that Jesus went out to desolate places and up mountains to pray (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; Mark 6:46). He prayed all night on a mountain before choosing the disciples whom he made apostles (Luke 6:12). Later, it was while praying on a mountain with three of those disciples that he was transfigured (Luke 9:28).

Since these earlier occasions of Jesus’s prayers occur while he was by himself (or with only a couple of

disciples, as in Luke 9), there is probably something special to note in the fact that, in Luke 11:1, the disciples were witness to his prayer. It was after Jesus had finished praying that the disciples asked him to teach them to pray, just as John had taught his disciples.

It cannot be that these men did not know how to pray. While we aren't explicitly told anything about their worship, the requirement of attending the annual feasts and their probable synagogue attendance mean that they had almost certainly heard public prayer. We know that they knew a lot about God's Word—it was because of their knowledge of the Scriptures that, on their first meeting with Jesus, they confessed that he was the One written about by Moses and the Prophets, the Christ and Son of God (John 1:35–51). That knowledge of the Scriptures and especially of the Psalms gave them many examples of prayers. And early

in his public ministry, Jesus had taught some things about prayer; for example, he taught them that they should pray for those who persecute them (Matt. 5:44).

The disciples knew that Jesus prayed. They knew that John had taught his disciples to pray. And they surely knew many prayers found in Scripture. But on that occasion of being near Jesus when he prayed, perhaps sometime in the second year of his public ministry, there was something about his prayer that made them ask: "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1).

So, he taught them the words that have become so familiar to us that we can practically recite them without thinking. It is a simple prayer. It is so simple that, considering the amount of time Jesus spent in prayer, it must have been only an outline.

As is summarized in our catechism, this prayer taught them that we should

come to our Father with reverence and confidence, praying with and for others. It taught them that we should glorify God in all things, and it taught them to pray that God's kingdom would grow and Satan's kingdom be destroyed. It taught them to ask that we would know, obey, and submit to God's will in all things. It taught them to look to and ask that God would provide for our needs and to ask that we would be forgiven for our sins and given a heart to forgive others. It taught them to ask that God would keep us from being tempted and

deliver us when we are tempted, and that all praise and all glory are owed to him. Along with the prayer, he encouraged them to pray with faith in the God who, like a good father, knows our needs before we ask, provides for our needs, gives us the Holy Spirit, and forgives us when we forgive others.

Later, in his parables, the disciples would learn that when

they pray, they should not lose heart like the widow (Luke 18:1) and that they should pray repentantly and humbly like the tax collector (Luke 18:13–14). Jesus also taught them that they should not be like the hypocrites whose public prayers in the synagogue and on street corners were meant to draw attention to themselves, or like the Gentiles who repeat empty phrases. Like their giving and their fasting, their praying was to be in secret behind a closed door.

Christ's Intimacy with the Father

All of us have the example of the prayers found in the Old and New Testaments. All of us have the instructions of Jesus. And some of us have had many examples of hearing others pray. Maybe our pastor or parent or teacher has used a prayer from a prayer book or devotional or other carefully composed prayer. In other instances, the prayers

we have heard may have been extemporaneous and drawn from Scripture, with praise, thanksgiving, confession of sin, and a list of prayer requests. However, in each of those cases, even when there is a correct desire and effort to join our heart and mind with the person praying, there can be a feeling that "those are not words that I would use when praying in secret."

The disciples had heard and knew of many more prayers than most young believers, and still, after Jesus finished praying, they asked him to teach them how to pray.

So, what was there about Jesus's unrecorded prayer in Luke 11:1 that made men who had many other examples ask, "Lord, teach us to pray"?

We have a few examples of Jesus's prayers. There is John 11, when he prays for the raising of Lazarus. There is John 17, when he prays about the glory that he has brought to the Father, and for those the Father has given to him. And there is the prayer that he prayed in the garden before his arrest.

What did the disciples hear in Christ's prayers? If we consider those examples—apart from their divine character, which we may never share—we see a trust, a confidence, an intimacy, which all of us should want when we pray. In John 11 and 17, Jesus's eyes are turned to heaven, but he is praying to a Father whom he knows to be very near because the Father loves him and is listening to his every word.

You, too, can trust him, because he has done everything for your salvation. You, too, can have confidence in him, because he has promised to complete his work in you. You, too, can know that you are close to him, and he to you, because his Spirit lives inside you.

Therefore, when you pray in secret, with humility and reverence, you can pray with trust, confidence, and intimacy, because in Christ your Father loves you and is listening to your every word. □

The author is associate general secretary of the Committee on Foreign Missions.



OP pastor Lawrence Eyres, an example of fervent prayer

LEADING IN PUBLIC PRAYER



TERRY L. JOHNSON // If we are honest, most of us would have to admit that the public prayers of our church are often endured rather than enjoyed. The various prayers we hear week by week can be the low points in our public services. Whereas sermons are well-ordered, well-expressed, and delivered with urgency, the prayers are

often the opposite: disordered, poorly phrased, carelessly arranged, trite, predictable, and surprisingly limited in range, neglecting whole categories of concern. The sermon may be compelling; the prayers are not. The sermon may be fervent; the prayers are in monotone and tedious. Public prayer today is in a sorry condition.

What can be done? Let me offer several suggestions that may help us first to think correctly about public prayer and then to start delivering those prayers in a way that will edify the congregation.

Public Speech

Public prayer needs to be understood by the minister of the church as a form of public speech. Like the sermon, it is meant to edify the congregation. A well-intended but false piety will limit the audience of one's prayers to God alone. This begs to be corrected. *Like* private prayer, public prayer is addressed to God. *Unlike* private prayer, it is delivered in the hearing of the

congregation. Consequently, public prayer should be calculated to bless and establish the congregation. Whatever else 1 Corinthians 14 teaches, the Apostle Paul insists that songs and prayers in public worship must edify the church (1 Cor. 14:13–19). The older pastoral theologies (ones authored by, for example, Fairburn, Murphy, Porter, Shedd, and Spurgeon) and preaching manuals (ones authored by, for example, Doddridge, Dabney, Dale, Beecher, and Broadus) include public prayer in their treatment of preaching. Ministers should be as careful to edify their listeners in their public prayer as in their public preaching.

Order

Much public prayer seems to be delivered spontaneously, meaning haphazardly, without forethought or order; one sentence seems to follow another randomly, without logic or meaningful connection. Disorder, however, is no more effective in praying than in preaching. Listeners shouldn't be

wondering, "Where is he going?" If the congregation is to "hang" with the preacher, if it is to pray with him and be edified, some thematic order is necessary.

It helps if those who lead in public prayer ask "What kind of prayer is this?" Is it a prayer of praise? Then stick to praise, developing it thematically from the attributes and works of God. Is it a prayer of confession? Of thanksgiving? Of intercession? Of illumination? Or is it a benediction? Develop the prayer within the genre, rather than bouncing from one genre to the next so that all the prayers end up sounding alike. If the prayer combines genres, as is the case with the "pastoral prayer," then progress systematically from confession of sin to the five-fold intercessions for: the sanctification of the saints; the church and its ministry; the sick; the civil authorities; and Christian mission around the world. Order in public prayer will help the congregation to follow along, to not be distracted by disorder, and consequently

to be edified.

Scripture

I have written extensively on this subject elsewhere (see *Worshipping with Calvin*, 108–122; *Serving with Calvin*, 204–210). It is a shame to hear public prayers utilize common terminology when scriptural language is available. It warms the hearts of listeners when the pastor's praise echoes the praise of the Bible, when his confession of sin is expressed in divinely revealed penitential language, and when his intercessions are drawn from the promises and commands and ideals of Scripture.

Regularly, the pastor might pray through the Sermon on the Mount, the various New Testament household codes, Proverbs, Psalms, and so on.

“Lord, teach us to pray,” is the need of every generation, fulfilled in ours through the Spirit-illuminated Word of God. What makes more sense than for the pastor to pray publicly for that which God himself requires of his people, for what he commands and commends? What makes less sense than for the divinely revealed ideals, commands, demands, goals, aspirations and promises of Scripture never to supply content for the prayer life of the church? Should the people of God not hear their pastor pleading, “O Lord, we pray that we might be holy as you are holy; that we might abhor what is evil and cling to what is good. Oh, that we might hunger and thirst after righteousness. We pray that we might seek first your kingdom and its righteousness; that we might love our enemies, love our neighbors, and love the brethren”?

Urgency

Among the many characteristics of the psalms, one of the most prominent is fervor. Whether the theme is praise, confession of sin, pleas for help, laments in distress, or thanksgiving for provision, the prayers of the psalms are full of energy. They are fervent. They are urgent. Is it true that if we ask it shall be given to us, and that if we seek we shall find, and if we knock that it

will be opened to us? (Matt. 7:7–8). If so, and if our aspirations are high, our needs great, and our outlook global, how can the note of urgency not be characteristic? At the same time, how inexplicable are the careless, drowsy, or boring prayers of so many public services?

Closely associated with urgency is earnestness in prayer. Several officers in our church have a particular gift of prayer. They show little to no ability to speak publicly or lead in public prayer. Yet, in group prayer meetings, they pray



Spurgeon, “prince of preachers,” placed an even higher value on public prayer

with exceptional power. The key? Earnestness. Their prayers arise from deep within their souls. The sheer authenticity of their prayers makes them utterly compelling for the rest of us.

The older authors understood the importance of urgency and earnestness. Prayer without “agonizing earnestness and vehement desire,” says C. H. Spurgeon, “is utterly ineffective” (*Morning and Evening*, January 15). Like Daniel, we should “set upon God with a holy violence in prayer,” says William Gurnall (*The Christian in Complete Armor*, part 2:421). We ought to pray fervently, for “cold prayer is no more prayer than painted fire is fire” (*Complete Armor*, 2:475).

Getting There

If our public prayers are lacking, what can we do? The OPC Directory for Worship in 2.B urges “a thorough

acquaintance with the holy Scriptures,” indicating the importance of studying the scriptural language of prayer; “the study of the best writings on prayer,” of which Matthew Henry’s *A Method for Prayer*, Isaac Watt’s *A Guide to Prayer*, Samuel Miller’s *Thoughts on Public Prayer*, and Hughes Old’s *Leading in Prayer* are the classics; and “by meditation, and by a life of communion with God,” meaning the private practice of prayer; one may “acquire both the spirit and the skill of prayer”; indicating that public prayer is both a gift and a skill that can be developed and improved over time.

The Reformed tradition has encouraged neither reading prayers (which typically is no more effective in inspiring a congregation than reading sermons), nor impromptu prayers (that which comes off the top of the head for most of us is “mere froth,” as Spurgeon said). Rather, the Reformed tradition has encouraged “studied” or “conceived” prayer. Prior thought and planning should inform public prayer. The minister may perhaps take an outline with several headings and Scripture texts noted to guide him. Planning will help to ensure that his public prayers balance form and freedom and that they are fresh, well-ordered, comprehensive, scriptural, and expressed with the urgency of which they are due.

Spurgeon was once asked what he would do if forced to give up either the sermon or the pastoral prayer. His answer was the sermon would just have to go. Ministers might keep this priority in mind before they turn over the prayers of the church to others, even ruling elders, who by gifts and calling are not theologically, biblically, or rhetorically equipped for the task. Perhaps only a diminished sense of the value of public prayer led us to imagine they might be otherwise. □

The author is a PCA minister, pastor of Independence Presbyterian Church in Savannah, Georgia, and author of several books on worship, including [Reformed Worship \(2014\)](#).

THE SAINTS WE SERVE ALONGSIDE

// MARK C. VAN ESSENDELFT

All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. (Titus 3:15)

It is easy to write an article about what we are doing, but the bigger and better question is: what is God doing? Or, whom is he working through? You never know who the next person is that God will raise up and use. We are quite surprised sometimes by whom the Lord chooses to use.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to some of the people we work with, to tell a little about them, and to ask you to pray for them. These are hopefully the “first-fruits” of the church in Karamoja.

First, I would like to introduce you to Dangela Joyce. Joyce has worked with the Mission since its inception twenty years ago. She was raised in a Muslim family, and her testimony is that she worked with the mission five years before she was converted. She is a single mother now who has seven

children of her own, the youngest being five years old. She has also taken in five orphaned (or neglected) children. She is one of the most faithful church members that we have. She serves on the mercy committee with me and brings much wisdom about the culture when deciding diaconal cases. Please pray for her and her family that they would continue to grow in the grace of Christ and would



Dangela Joyce



Sagal Oliver, a believer who has worked in the Van Essendelft home for a few years and regularly attends Carla's Bible study

shine bright in the darkness.

You should know about Sagal Oliver. She is a nineteen-year-old who works for us in our house. She is married and has one child. She has worked for us since we arrived here over three years ago. Although we never doubted if she was a believer, her faith has blossomed in the last few years. My wife, Carla, started a Bible study about a year ago, and Oliver was there from the beginning. The interesting thing is that what she has learned in the Bible study has challenged her to put her faith into practice. Now the Bible study includes three ladies from her village who attend regularly. Please pray that she and her young family would continue to grow in grace. Please pray also for the ladies she has brought to the Bible study that they would see fruit in their lives.

Lochap Emmanuel is a young man who went through the Timothy program started by fellow missionaries David and Rashel Robbins. He showed much promise both in gifts and integrity, has had many opportunities to teach, and is well respected both in the



Lochap Emmanuel

church and community. We had a gracious donor who funded him and one other student to pursue higher education. He is now in his second year and hopes to pursue medical training. We would love to see him come back here after he completes his schooling and become either a ruling elder or pastor in our local church. Please pray that his faith and integrity would

continue to grow and that he would not fall into the many sins so common in the surrounding culture that have disqualified other promising men.

Alupo Sarah is a young lady around seventeen years old whom we sponsored to go to high school last year. She has shown herself to be a pious believer. We were hoping she would continue in school, but she decided to marry one of the young men from the Timothy program, Angella Paul. We were very pleased in her choice of a husband, but we were shocked to learn that her family beat her quite severely after her husband did not bring enough cows for a dowry. Pray for her and her husband that they would be able to endure such abuses and shine with the light of Christ in their godly marriage.



Alupo Sarah with her husband

Lote Lina is a young lady around eighteen who is also just married with her first child. Although we never worked closely with her, I like to tell her story. When Lina was about sixteen, she was drinking quite heavily and was running from God. As she explains, one day she went to the well to get water and a demon came over her. Pastor David Robbins was called by some of his students, and when they arrived, they found Lina half-naked and writhing in the mud screaming. Not knowing what else to do, Pastor Robbins, along with other young men, took turns praying over her for several hours until, in her words, “The demon left me.” It has been two years since then, and Lina is still walking with the Lord. Pray for her as her grandmother is the local witch doctor and has even tried to steal her away from Christianity. Pray that Lina would have a lasting faith and would be a witness both in her family and the community.

These are real people with whom we work. As far as we can see, the Lord is working in and through them to further his kingdom. There are many others that I would love to tell



Lote Lina with her child

A Call for Evangelist Missionaries

Douglas Clawson

What do Uganda, Uruguay, and Haiti have in common? They each have the presence of an OPC mission, and each has need of an additional ordained evangelist missionary.

The pandemic has provided a time of reflection for all of us. Each of us has had to consider the real importance of what we were not able to do and the real importance of what we were able to do. It made us think about the way that others see Jesus in us and hear Jesus from us.

On our mission fields, while there were times of restrictions to be sure, the pandemic also brought new opportunities for preaching the gospel, encouraging believers, and helping with physical needs. Thank you for praying—and please continue to pray—for your missionaries and the churches that they work with.

Please also pray that our Lord would call additional evangelist missionaries to go to the field.

Is the work hard? Yes. Does the work in most cases require knowing a language other than English? Yes. Are those places dangerous sometimes? Yes.

But does Jesus want his servants to be willing to go? Yes.

We have all been sent by Jesus into this world to serve him wherever we are. However, while we are united to him and each other in his work for us, we differ from each other in his work in us. Each one of us is a unique member of Christ’s body. Not everyone is called to the same kind of service or to the same place. Not everyone has the same giftedness. But some of you may wonder whether the Lord has given you the gifts and possibly the calling to go to Haiti or Uruguay or Uganda. This sort of service is not for everyone. And it is not always the right time in someone’s life to go. But we need ministers who will consider such a calling—ministers who are clear preachers and teachers, who are experienced pastors, who have an evangelistic heart, and who are good coworkers with other pastors, elders, and deacons.

Might Christ be calling you? Please pray about it and contact us at opforeignmissions@opc.org.

you about, but this is a sample of Christ’s kingdom bearing fruit on this earth.

We offer our heartfelt thanks to all of you who support us financially and, most importantly, who support us in prayer. It is not always easy to live in Karamoja, and we have many trials, but we are held up by Christ through the prayers of the saints!

The author is an OP missionary deacon in Nakaale, Karamoja, Uganda.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

TRINITY PSALTER HYMNAL IOS APP NOW AVAILABLE



The highly anticipated *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* mobile app is now available on the Apple iOS platform. The app has been professionally developed and designed for ease of use and seamless functionality for both iPad and iPhone devices.

Intended as a supplement to the print and digital editions of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* app features the full text and music of the songbook, as well as professional and high-quality piano tune recordings. Some key features of the app include searchable full text, browsable title and first line index, bookmarking of songs, and looping of a tune for the number of stanzas in each song. The mobile app is a great resource for planning worship, learning new songs, and singing along in family devotions.

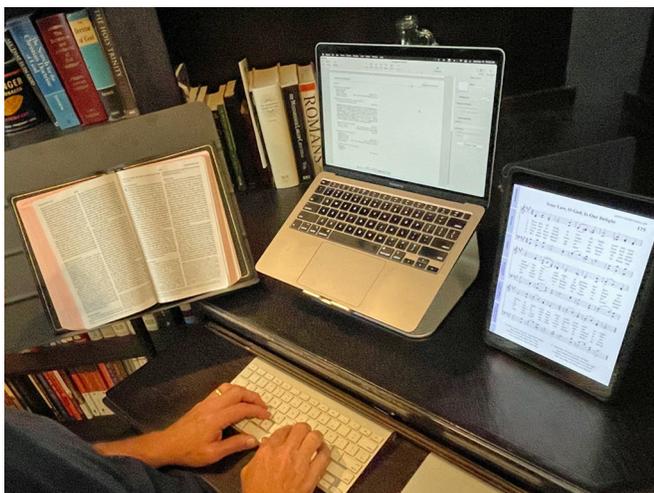
The iOS app is available for purchase and download now for a one-time price of \$9.99. Future app releases are included with the purchase. Future app upgrades and features are being

developed to include more robust Scripture and tune indexes akin to those in the print editions, and possibly the creeds and confessions found in the print editions.

To purchase the app, search for *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* on the Apple App Store or see www.trinitypsalterhymnal.org/purchase for more information. See details in the App Store for device and software compatibility, and copyright restrictions. By purchasing and downloading digital editions of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, the purchaser agrees to the TPH Digital End User Agreement. At this time, the app is only available for purchase in the United States and Canada.

An Android operating system mobile app is still under development to be released later in 2021.

The *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* is a joint publication of The Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and The Psalter Hymnal Committee of the United Reformed Churches in North America, © 2018–2021 *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* Joint Venture.



A glimpse inside one OP pastor's study, with bulletin preparation as well as the TPH selection onscreen

Trinity Psalter Hymnal App Free to Ministers

For OPC ministers who purchase the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* iOS or Android app, the OPC's Committee on Ministerial Care is offering a full reimbursement. After purchasing, please contact Katie Stumpff at ministerialcare@opc.org to begin the reimbursement process.



The Committee
on Ministerial Care
SUPPORT • RESOURCES • ENCOURAGEMENT

REVIEW: *THE CHRISTIAN AND TECHNOLOGY*

Kerri Ann Cruse

“Technology is a wonderful blessing” (91). In *The Christian and Technology*, J. V. Fesko presents his readers with this refreshing take on the important and sometimes stressful subject of technology and media consumption.

Viewing tech as what it’s meant to be—a tool—Fesko is able to shine a positive light on the subject. But he also gives us readers a way to analyze our hearts to see if we are being helped or hindered by the technology we utilize. Is my iPhone a means by which I glorify God, or is it causing me to shift my affections away from him? Instead of simply broadcasting a warning of the dangers of technology (a message that has perhaps reached saturation both inside and outside the church), Fesko goes beyond their inherent threats and encourages us to look at these tools with discernment, detachment, and even contentment.

More than an analysis of screens alone, this book looks at all kinds of technology that we take for granted and the effects they have on the church: social media, the car, the book, virtual reality, and the internet. For example, we can drive to find good biblical teaching. That’s a blessing. But, by the same token, we can also leave a church as soon as the pastor says something that offends or irritates us. In this way, technology has opened wide the way to church-shopping and a consumeristic approach to the faith. This should give Christians serious pause.

Fesko explains how even something as wonderful as the book can prove detrimental to our spiritual life. He writes, “Gutenberg’s printing press made books affordable and widely accessible, but this should not mean that we stop writing God’s word on the walls of our hearts” (52). Sadly, the proliferation of easy access to the Scriptures in our homes has made the need for memorization less pressing.

So how do we as Christians respond to these different technologies? If we cut off the technological limb that is causing us to sin, we may address the surface problem, but as Fesko accurately points out, “the root cause is our restless idolatrous hearts” (14). We are always worshiping something, so going cold turkey is not enough—we will soon fill the void with another substitute for God (11). The answer is not fleeing from technology, but understanding how to use it and making sure it is not using us.

This book guides Christians on how to identify who or what we are worshiping instead of God and to fix our attention on what is true, noble, right, pure, and lovely (Phil. 4:8). Like the technology it addresses, this small book is a powerful tool.

The Christian and Technology, by J. V. Fesko. Evangelical Press, 2020. Paperback 124 pages, \$8.99 (Amazon).

Favorite Psalms and Hymns *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* no. 382 “How Great the Bright Angelic Host”

Kathleen Winslow

The book of Hebrews is a rich commentary on the Pentateuch, and indeed the entire Old Testament. It describes the types and shadows of Old Testament worship and records the faith of Old Testament believers. But always, the author of Hebrews draws our focus to Christ, the fulfillment of those types and the object of their faith. In this new hymn, Mary Bahnfleth and Nancy Tischler distill these truths in poetry accessible to all ages.

The first four stanzas follow a pattern: “How great” the angels (Heb. 1–2), men like Abraham (ch. 11), the priestly office, and the tabernacle (ch. 3–10); “but greater still is Christ” and his everlasting “heavenly home.” The fifth stanza sums up the exhortations that punctuate Hebrews: “Take care to fix your eyes on Christ, the author of true faith [3:1, 12:2]. Draw near to God [4:16, 7:19, 10:22]; hold fast to hope [4:14, 6:19, 10:23]; give sacrificial praise [13:15].” The refrain emphasizes the deity of Christ and his offices as our victorious Redeemer.

Lou Ann Shafer’s music is majestic and joyful, and the melody, straightforward. A few surprising harmonies add sparkle without increasing the difficulty for congregational singing. At our Christian school, we sang it each day for a month. By day three, students had mastered the tune. Three weeks later, a kindergarten mom from our congregation told me, “I love how often I overhear Jane singing ‘How great is Christ, God’s radiance; how great is Christ, God’s Son.’ I think it’s her new favorite, too.”

🗨️ Out of the Mouth . . .

In the midst of the first COVID lockdown, our church began releasing Sunday worship as pre-recorded videos on YouTube. After having “attended” church in our living room for about a month, one evening we opened the YouTube app on our TV to watch a cartoon with our children. When our son saw the red YouTube icon, he immediately looked us in the eye and asked, “Are we going to church?”

—Mark Stumpff
Mifflinburg, PA

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

LOVING YOUR COMMUNITY: LESSONS ON NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT

// AL TRICARICO

I trust that readers will agree: As Christians, we have been given a precious duty to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. It is the second great commandment, as Jesus put it (Matt. 22:35–40). God has placed us all in a world filled with residents who are objects of God’s love (John 3:16). Some of them live near us. As God’s people, we are to take on the Lord’s loving interest in them, and shine the light of the gospel before them in ways that bless them and lead them to think well of the Savior we serve (Matt. 5:16).

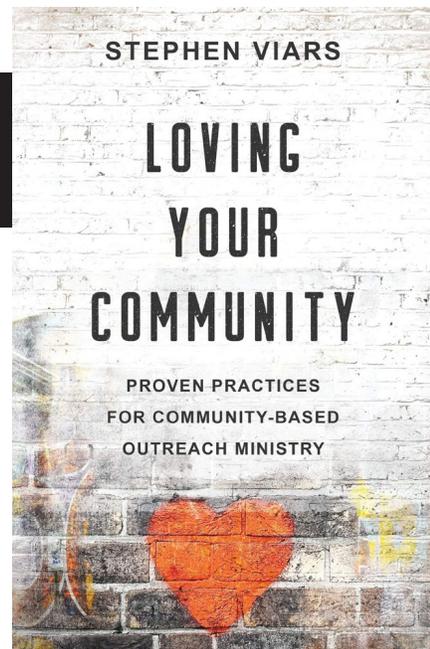
If you are like me, you find this calling to love easy to understand, but difficult to practice. You wonder how best to extend love to people around you. You are acquainted with them only lightly, though they live in close view of your own home. While all people are neighbors to be loved, by their proximity particular individuals and families who live in your neighborhood ought to move your heart and attract your resolve to serve them in Jesus’s name.

And what about Christian congregations? God has placed these worshiping testimonies of grace in needy communities. How can churches reach people near them who bear the divine image, who have needs that can only be met through gospel truth, and who are invited to believe in Jesus, the only name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12)?

As both individuals and as churches, do we know our neighbors’ names? Are we aware of their questions about life? About truth? About God and his world? Do we think deeply about the gospel’s answers to the questions they have?

One Church’s Example of Loving Neighbors

Faith Church, serving Christ in Lafayette, Indiana, is a large congregation with a robust vision for loving their neighbors. Its ministries are described in the 2020 book *Loving Your*



Community, written by its senior pastor, Stephen Viars. The book suggests ways to intersect with communities that correlate with the expressed needs of people and are shaped by a clear commitment to bring the gospel to bear on the lives of those who receive the benefits of the church’s ministries.

I recently read the book. At first gaze, I balked at the sheer size and number of the church’s efforts to engage with its community. The list of activities found on its content pages is intimidating and raises some questions, at least in my mind, about the place of the church in the world. I imagine that others would have a similar response. Still, I am glad I read it, I rejoice in the congregation’s creative efforts to serve, and I have drawn a few lessons that we can all take away from this intriguing story. For instance, there are helpful examples of the church’s community-based outreach through instructional classes and “restructured” ministries.

The instructional classes aimed to “offer biblical and practical truth to your neighbors.” Once the church discovered what is on the minds of people, the “Faith Community Institute” was born. Classes were constructed to directly address issues like parenting, conflict resolution, anger control, financial management, and general life skills—all with a view toward delivering instruction from God’s Word that provides real and lasting help.

Some of the church’s ministries were also, as Viars put it, restructured. Faith Church redesigned many of its activities to intentionally include its broader community. Their church athletic league became a community athletic league. Church picnics were renamed “community picnics” and were advertised as such. Even the church staff took on a new profile of stated ministry descriptions that include ministry to non-churched neighbors. A youth pastor thus became a servant of the neighborhood, and was announced to neighbors accordingly.

This reminded me of similar concerns raised by members of an Orthodox Presbyterian church: Oakland Hills Community Church, in Farmington Hills, Michigan. In an interview

on the [Outward OPC podcast](#), their pastor, Ralph Rebandt, shares the story of how their church's name was chosen. They surveyed the community, and the name was assigned accordingly. (You can listen to the interview with Rebandt on [outwardopc.org](#).)

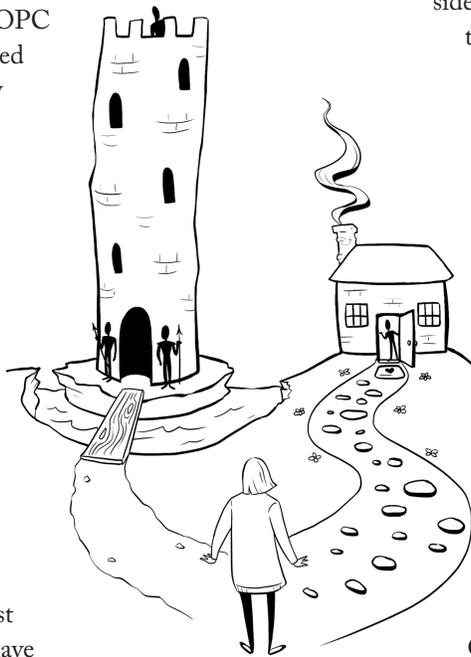
There are other, even more ambitious, initiatives taken up by Faith Church. Pick up the book and learn about the church's participation in neighborhood restoration projects along with the launching of its own community development corporation. Viars reports that such projects enriched lives in the community as well as growing the membership of the church.

Lessons for Us

I realize that congregations of the OPC will not take on what might seem oversized projects like some of those overseen by Faith Church. But we can all rejoice in what this faithful congregation is doing and in the positive results of their multi-faceted gospel witness. In addition, there are lessons we would do well to hear and apply in our own way. Here are three that come to my mind.

1. *Discover the needs of your community.* In a way, you can guess how people perceive things since you belong to the same neighborhood. And yet, there are advantages to conducting the investigation. Yogi Berra said, "You can observe a lot just by watching." He surely would have agreed that you can learn a lot just by asking. When you survey a community, like Faith Church did, you make contact with those who need Jesus. You do the opening work of building friendships. You learn what is on the minds of folk whom you want to serve in the best ways. You participate in a ministry of listening and learning as you go. Outreach ideas emerge that will help you maintain contact with those you are called to love.

2. *Keep the Bible at the center.* One of Faith Church's ministries should resonate with all of us—a church-based biblical counseling center. Life is hard and full of pain. Needs are deep and many. We all understand this. We



who know Christ also know how to provide help and hope to our hurting, unbelieving neighbors. Viars believes that the church is positioned perfectly for community-based counseling. For most of us, this means local efforts along with sound referrals. For all of us, it means weeping with neighbors and offering ways to discover how Christ can help and heal.

3. *Construct facilities with community in mind.* Some of our churches and most of our mission works do not yet own property. When the time comes to buy—and perhaps to build—consider how a new facility might be used by those outside of the church. Faith Church began with multi-purpose space and offered use to outside organizations. This was an excellent way to communicate care and intersect with neighbors. It is also a good way to build a reputation of generosity.

Fortress or Haven?

What provided the most profound impact on me personally as I read the book was a statement of reproof that I want to take to heart. It is difficult in our day to know how to navigate when more and more people seem to oppose the gospel we love. The temptation toward self-righteous distance from unbelievers is strong and can easily overtake us. Let's not let that happen. Here is the statement.

One of the fundamental questions each of us has to answer is this: do you believe you are intrinsically better than those who are struggling in your community, or are the strengths and successes in your life the result of God's grace? *Churches need to consider whether they have positioned themselves as fortresses of self-righteousness or havens of grace.* (24; italics mine)

This statement made me pause and pray. Viars challenged me, and perhaps his words will challenge you to consider our place in the world, as those who are called to interact with the world. How will we do it? How will we grow in our understanding of grace and move forward in love as we deliver the gospel that has rescued us from sin and death and hell? How can we all grow in our pity toward those who do not (yet) know Jesus? What will we do to love our community?

The author is associate general secretary for the Committee on Home Missions.

Loving Your Community, by Stephen Viars. Baker Books, 2020. Paperback, 240 pages, \$12.14 (Amazon).

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date news and prayer requests, receive our newsletter by emailing HomeMissionsToday@opc.org. New editions will be published on June 9 and 23.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

// JEREMY J. LOGAN

If you remember the 1964 classic film *Mary Poppins*, you might recall the scene when Mr. Banks takes his children to his place of employment. It is there that Mr. Banks, along with his boss, attempts to persuade his son, Michael, to invest his “tuppence” wisely in the bank. They explain to him how through this little deposit he can become part of a grand work. They speak of the building of railways, dams, ships, and canals, capturing his sense of wonder in order to convince him that he would become involved in the expansion of an empire.

As you watch the scene, it is hard not to get caught up in the excitement of it all. Of course, it is just a movie. But it does accurately describe how we can invest in something grand and glorious through our small contribution. In fact, we can invest in a kingdom that is far greater than any earthly kingdom, one that will grow to fill the whole earth and shall never end.

I am, of course, speaking of the kingdom of God.

Like little Michael, we don’t have a lot to offer. In fact, what we do have to give has been bestowed upon us by another. The Scripture clearly reveals to us that God possesses all things. “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof” (Ps. 24:1). This truth is rehearsed throughout the Bible to remind us that everything that we have has been given to us by God himself. The Scripture also tells us that God does not need our gifts. He says to Israel, “I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. . . . If I were hungry, I would not tell you; for the world and its fullness are mine” (Ps. 50:9–10, 12). He also tells us, “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine” (Hag. 2:8). If this is true, then why does he invite and even command us to bring our gifts before him?

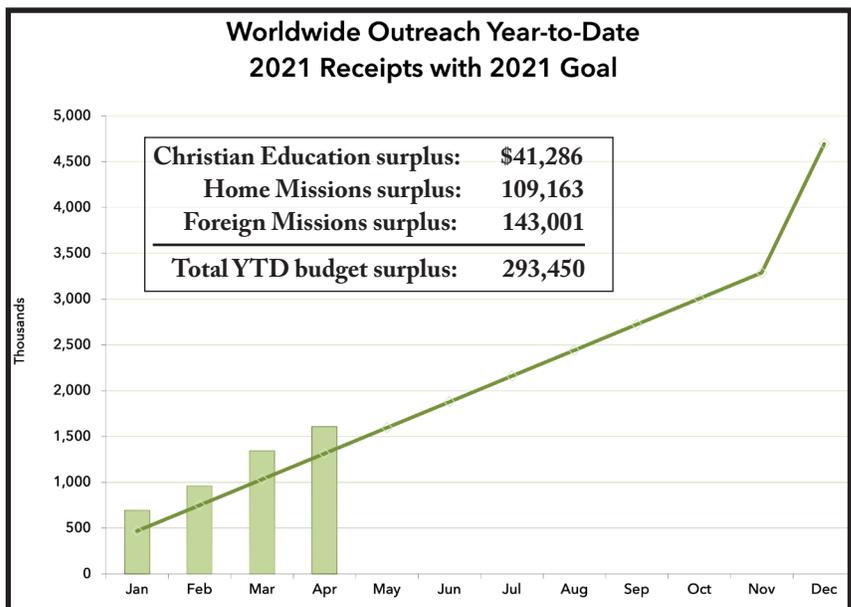
First, in presenting our gifts to God, we are acknowledging that everything we have has been given to us. What we have is not ours by right but has been graciously provided to us by our heavenly Father. Therefore, our giving is an act of worship toward the one who alone has given us life and breath and all things.

Second, as his children, we ought to imitate him (Eph. 5:1). Since he has given us all that we have, then we too, like him, ought to give.

And third, we are to give to him because he is a good Father toward his children. Consider how you earthly parents make opportunities for your children to help when you are working on a project. Now to be honest, you could do it more easily, more quickly, and probably much more efficiently by yourself. But because you love your children, not only do you want to teach them about your work, but you desire to spend time with them, and therefore you allow them to join with you in the work you are invested in. Well, it is the same with our heavenly Father. He gives us the privilege and opportunity to join with him in the glorious work of building his kingdom.

So, similar to Michael’s opportunity in *Mary Poppins*, we, as God’s children, have been given the opportunity to enter into this grand work, our Lord’s work, through the support we are enabled by him to give, no matter how small and seemingly insignificant (see Mark 12:41–44). And the truly astonishing thing is that he will graciously reward us for doing so. Therefore, invest in the work of God’s kingdom.

The author is pastor of Knox Presbyterian Church in Mount Vernon, Ohio.



JUNE



The Jeromins



The Walkers

1 Pray for **MR. AND MRS. M.**, Asia, as they make many practical decisions in preparing for a return to the field. / **MARKUS & SHARON JEROMIN**. Pray that God would bless the ministry to the lost in Battle Creek, MI.

2 **CALVIN & CONNIE KELLER**, Winston-Salem, NC. Pray for Harvest OPC's leadership training and its building committee. / Pray for Christian Education general secretary **DANNY OLINGER** in his recovery from COVID-19.

3 **MR. AND MRS. F.**, Asia (on furlough). Pray for a fruitful trip to South Korea, where Mr. F. will teach a class to seminarians. / Pray that **OPC.ORG** will be used to edify the church and help it to spread the gospel.

4 **KEVIN & RACHEL MEDCALF**, Cumming, GA. Pray for the Lord to strengthen the faith of Providence and increase its obedience. / John Fikkert, director for the **COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL CARE**.

5 **SHANE & RACHELLE BENNETT**, Grand Rapids, MI. Pray that God would bless Reformation OPC's monthly neighborhood walks. / Pray for the work of the OPC's Committee on **CHAPLAINS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL**.

6 **MARK & JENI RICHLINE**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for recent visitors who have attended the church's new members class. / Summer **MTIOPC** courses: Pray for students and teachers (Stephen Tracey, John Muether, and David Noe).

7 **HEERO & ANYA HACQUEBORD**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for the church's ministry to members who have recently lost loved ones due to COVID-19. / Pray for **MIKE (ELIZABETH) DIERCKS**, area home missions coordinator for the Presbytery of Ohio.

8 **PAUL & SARAH MOURREALE**, West Plains, MO. Pray for the outreach ministry of Covenant Reformed. / Summer interns **NATHANIEL (EMMA) VROOM** at Resurrection Presbyterian in Matthews, NC, and **NATE (AMY) JEFFRIES** at Calvary OPC in Glenside, PA.

9 Pray for affiliated missionaries **DR. MARK & LAURA AMBROSE**, Cambodia, as they return for a five-year term after their recent home assignment. / Pray for affiliated missionaries **CRAIG & REE COULBOURNE** and **LINDA KARNER**, Japan.

10 **CARL & STACEY MILLER**, New Braunfels, TX. Pray God would give New Braunfels OPC wisdom in managing facility space with new growth. / Summer interns **CALEB MALTBY** at South Austin Presbyterian in Austin, TX, and **SAMUELIS (MILDA) LUKOSIUS** at Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod at West Barnstable, MA.

11 **MARK STUMPF**, manager of the OPC Loan Fund. / Yearlong interns **JOSEPH (ANNIE) POLLARD** at Calvin Presbyterian in Phoenix, AZ, and **MATTHEW (HYOJUNG) WALKER** at Westminster OPC in Hollidaysburg, PA.

12 Please pray for missionary associates **DR. JIM & JENNY KNOX**, Mbale, Uganda, as they consider schooling for their children. / Pray for **CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION**, a virtual conference for deacons held today.

13 **BEN & MELANIE WESTERVELD**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for wisdom as the church considers offering summer Bible camps and the English for Kids program. / Home Missions associate general secretary **AL TRICARICO**.

14 Pray for **DAVE (ELIZABETH) HOLMLUND**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Philadelphia. / **CHARLES & CONNIE JACKSON**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for healing as Charles recovers from recent surgery.

15 Home Missions administrative assistant **KATHARINE OLINGER**. / Summer interns **NATHANIEL (SARAH) CROFUTT** at Redemption OPC in Gainesville, FL, and **WILLIAM (SAMANTHA) STEVENS** at Trinity OPC in Syosset, NY.

JUNE



The Bakers

16 JEREMY & GWEN BAKER, Yuma, AZ. Pray for the everyday outreach efforts of Yuma OPC. / Pray for assoc. missionaries **CHRISTOPHER & CHLOE VERDICK**, Nakaale, Uganda, and the safe delivery of their third child due in August.

17 ETHAN & CATHERINE BOLYARD, Wilmington, NC. Pray for Heritage OPC's evangelistic Bible study in Burgaw, NC. / Pray for financial controller, **MELISA MCGINNIS**, and database administrator, **CHARLENE TIPTON**.

18 Associate missionaries **JAMES & ESTHER FOLKERTS**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for opportunities for gospel outreach to the mountain villages. / Pray for associate missionaries **ANGELA VOSKUIL AND LEAH HOPP**, Nakaale, Uganda.

19 Yearlong interns **A. J. (CHELSEA) MILLSAPS** at Sandy Springs Presbyterian in Maryville, TN, and **MARC (RUTHIE) SCATURRO** at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, MI. / Pray for **DAVID & RASHEL ROBBINS**, Nakaale, Uganda (on furlough).

20 JAY & ANDREA BENNETT, Neon, KY. Pray for the evangelistic faithfulness and continued growth of Neon Reformed. / Yearlong intern **TAYLOR (SOPHIA) SEXTON** at Heritage Presbyterian in Royston, GA.

21 Tentmaking missionary **TINA DEJONG** and missionary associate **JOANNA GROVE**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the spiritual growth of the missionary children. / Home Missions general secretary **JOHN SHAW**.

22 BILL & MARGARET SHISHKO, Deer Park, NY. Pray that The Haven, OPC, would be able to secure a suitable worship facility. / Pray for **MARK (PEGGY) SUMPTER**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southwest.

23 GREGORY & GINGER O'BRIEN, Downingtown, PA. Pray for awe and joy in worship at Christ Church, and for fruit in outreach. / Pray for **MARK & CARLA VAN ESSENDELFT**, Nakaale, Uganda, as Carla plans for next school year.

24 Pray for **RETIRED MISSIONARIES** Cal & Edie Cummings, Brian & Dorothy Wingard, Greet Rietkerk, and Young & Mary Lou Son. / Pray for **BRUCE (SUE) HOLLISTER**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Midwest.

25 Yearlong intern **SILAS (ANASTASIA) SCHREYACK** at Merrimack Valley Presbyterian in North Andover, MA. / Pray for **TRISH DUGGAN**, communications coordinator, for Diaconal Ministries and Disaster Response.

26 Assoc. missionaries **OCTAVIUS & MARIE DELFILS**, Haiti. Pray for the Lord's blessing on the translation of Reformed literature for the Haitian church. / Pray for **DISASTER RESPONSE** efforts as coordinator David Nakhla and others gear up for another hurricane season.



The Tamirats

27 MELAKU & MERON TAMIRAT, Clarkston, GA. Pray that the Lord would supply volunteers for teaching English. / **TONY & KATHLEEN CURTO**, Ethiopia. Pray that Tony might travel to teach pastoral seminars in Europe.

28 RYAN & ROCHELLE CAVANAUGH, Merrillville, IN. Pray for the Lord to lead families in need of his gospel to Mission Church. / Pray for stated clerk **HANK BELFIELD** and others preparing for the 87th GA in Sioux Center, IA, July 7-14.

29 Pray for affiliated missionaries **JERRY & MARILYN FARNIK**, Czech Republic (on furlough), as they visit churches in the US during furlough this summer. / **GREGORY REYNOLDS**, editor of *Ordained Servant*.

30 BEN & HEATHER HOPP, Haiti (on furlough). Pray for continued grow in grace for La Gonâve church members during a challenging political season. / Pray for **GREAT COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS** and the OPC trustees on its board, including Alan Strange, president, and Archibald Allison, secretary. / Yearlong intern **JEREMIAH (ANNA) MOONEY** at Covenant Community in Greenville, SC.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

IN MEMORIAM: PAUL S. MACDONALD

Roger W. Schmurr

It's fitting to write a memorial for Paul MacDonald in *New Horizons* because he oversaw the magazine's genesis in 1980. In fact, he was the person who proposed its name. Paul then carefully applied his English teacher expertise and experience in service to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Experience doesn't do justice to all Paul's work for the church. He nurtured Pilgrim OPC in Bangor, Maine, as a ruling elder for sixty years, preached often for the congregation and churches throughout New England, assisted in a church plant, wrote for *New Horizons*, helped start Penobscot Christian School, and served on the denomination's Committee on Christian Education for forty-two years and as a board member of its publishing arm, Great Commission Publications, for thirty-three years. Paul's New England, gentle humor could relieve tensions in any meeting.

Paul's parents hosted John Murray when Murray preached in Maine in the 1940s, and Paul eventually studied under Murray at Westminster Theological Seminary. Years later, Paul's youngest daughter married Murray's son. Paul's grandson, Seth Dorman, will be ordained and installed as pastor of the OPC in Limington, Maine, on June 11. Another grandson, Isaiah English, is under care of the Presbytery of the Southeast.

Paul died on April 23 at the age of eighty-eight. He is survived by his wife, Jo, his five children and their families, and a brother.



MacDonald, 1933-2021



Participants from Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community in the virtual PNYNE women's retreat on April 16-17

IN MEMORIAM: GLENN T. BLACK

John Mahaffy

Glenn T. Black was born into a covenant home on December 29, 1923, near Idana, Kansas. As a child, he watched hawks soaring on thermals. During World War II, he joined the Army Air Corps, becoming a B25 pilot. While in training, he married Carmen Crook. On a mission over Italy, his plane was hit. Despite an injury which almost severed his right arm, he piloted to a base for a safe, gear-up landing.

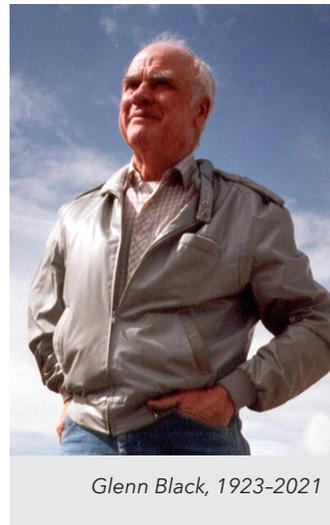
After graduating from Westminster Theological Seminary, he was ordained as pastor of Westminster OPC in Westchester, Illinois. After planting a church in Oregon, he served as a missionary-at-large in Denver, and then throughout the old Dakotas Presbytery. Piloting his own plane facilitated planting

churches in an area that extended from the Canadian to the Mexican border. He retired to Oregon.

On April 17, 2021, at ninety-seven, he entered glory.

Retired Army chaplain, Chris Wisdom, recalls that Glenn Black, "among others, laid hands on me and prayed over me in my ordination . . . I still remember sensing Christ's presence in his purposeful look and bright smile when he extended his uninjured hand and grasped mine firmly.

What a gracious, truth-filled leader!"



Glenn Black, 1923-2021

SCHROEDER RETIRES FROM SAN MARCOS

On February 6, 2021, Harvest OPC in San Marcos, California, celebrated the retirement of its founding pastor, Mark Schroeder, after twenty-seven years of faithful service.

While studying at Westminster Semi-

nary California, Mark served for eight years at New Life OPC (now PCA) in Point Loma, California, as intern and assistant to its pastor, George Miladin. In 1989, Mark graduated from seminary and was ordained as a teaching elder. In 1993, he became the church-planting pastor of San Marcos Presbyterian Church (now Harvest). While pastoring Harvest, he served as moderator of presbytery and on the presbytery's Christian education, nominating, and ministerial oversight committees. For the past twenty-five years, he has served on the missions committee, often as chairman.

Mark and Tammy, married for thirty-eight years, look forward to what the Lord may have in store for them.



Mark and Tammy Schroeder

UPDATE

CHURCHES

- On April 24, Trinity Presbyterian in Waco, TX, became a particular congregation of the OPC.

MINISTERS

- Mark A. Schroeder retired on December 31. Schroeder was pastor of Harvest OPC in San Marcos, CA.
- On March 19, the Presbytery of the Midwest received Charles K. Telfer as a ministerial member without call.
- On April 9, the Presbytery of the Midwest installed Bruce H. Hollister as its regional home missionary. Hollister was previously the pastor of New Covenant



At the April 24 installation of Miller Ansell: Phil Hodson, Joe Troutman, Joe Keller, Mike Rogers, John Terpstra, Miller Ansell, Jim Henley, Terry Reininger, and Wayne Wylie

Community in Joliet, IL.

- April 16, Kim M. Kuhfuss was installed as an evangelist of Five Solas OPC in Reedsburg, WI, to serve as organizing pastor of Monroe County OPC in Kendall, WI.

- On April 24, Miller E. Ansell, previously the organizing pastor, was installed as pastor of Trinity Presbyterian in Waco, TX.

MILESTONES

- Retired OP pastor and missionary-at-large Glenn T. Black, 97, died on April 17.
- Ruling elder Paul S. MacDonald, 88, died on April 23. He was a longtime member of the Committee on Christian Education and the board of trustees of Great Commission Publications.

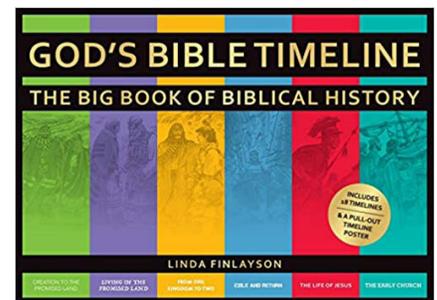
REVIEWS

God's Bible Timeline: The Big Book of Biblical History, by Linda Finlayson. Christian Focus, 2020. Hardcover, 96 pages, \$17.14 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP member Sarah Pederson.

Have you ever marveled at the fact that, though your life's circumstances seem so large and significant, you are just one of billions of people who have inhabited this earth across countries and years? Of the many throngs of men, women, and children that have walked the globe, the stories of a select few are recorded in Scripture, as these individuals' stories intersect with the

greatest story ever told—the coming of Christ and God's plan of salvation.

Linda Finlayson, who has written several biographies and church history books for children, has now given us a comprehensive biblical timeline that weaves to-



gether the order, events, characters, and dates of the Bible alongside other historical events. *God's Bible Timeline* is divided into six color-coded sections: Part 1: Creation to the Promised Land; Part 2: Living in the Promised Land; Part 3: From One Kingdom to Two; Part 4: Exile and Return; Part 5: The Messiah; and Part 6: The Early Church. Each section begins with helpful introductory material, after which colorful, comprehensive timelines are interspersed with explanations about characters, locations, and occasions, replete with graphics and maps. Each of the eighteen timelines contained in this book is structured in such a way as to give readers the most important details of the events without burdening them with too much information. This book is addressed to young readers and is especially appealing to parents teaching their children at home. A beautiful pull-out timeline poster includes an overview of biblical history as

well as heroes and villains. A bibliography in the back of the book contains helpful books and articles for those who wish to pursue further research.

Readers may wish to know that while dates of events are included when possible, they are often left out, especially for the earlier timeline events. Events such as creation and other early events are listed by Bible chapter rather than by date. Also, when a date is approximated based on comparing the event with other events happening around the same time, the word “circa”—approximately—is added. There are also no pictures of Jesus in this book, which is a welcome consideration for this reader.

This book is a delightful library addition for anyone who wants to get an overview of history in a simple, colorful timeline that is useful and instructive for young and old alike. It would be an excellent book to study as a family to obtain basic biblical history, and it can also be used as a springboard to further historical studies. A useful companion volume to this book is Finlayson’s *God’s Timeline: The Big Book of Church History*. I look forward to using these books with my family.

***The Mystery of the Trinity: A Trinitarian Approach to the Attributes of God*, by Vern S. Poythress. P&R, 2020. Hardcover, 728 Pages, \$34.50. Reviewed by OP Pastor Arthur J. Fox.**

In his introduction, Vern S. Poythress tells us, “We are seeking in this book to deepen our knowledge of God in his majesty” (xxiii). He then focuses on challenges concerning God’s attributes: how can God be independent and yet relate to the world, immutable and yet interact with the world, eternal and yet act in different ways at different times; how can Scripture use “unworthy” descriptions of God like “angry,” “regretful,” and “grieved”; how can finite man truly know the infinite God; and how can God’s attributes be identical with God and also be distinguished from one another (xxvi–xxviii).

Poythress addresses these challenges using the doctrine of the Trinity. In doing so, he interacts with Aristotelian philosophy and with other theologians who interacted with that philosophy, such as

Aquinas, Turretin, and Charnock, each of whom tried to explain the world and God’s relationship to it. Poythress says that the Trinity is in fact too mysterious to fully understand because man’s thinking is limited by his finite nature and the influence of sin. God is transcendent, beyond our understanding, and yet immanent, revealing himself to us in limited ways in creation and the Word.

Yet, Poythress shows us that we can grow in our understanding by thinking biblically. He models this for us by closing each chapter with a prayer that reflects what he has taught (a unique and truly edifying practice). This is not a simple book to understand, but if you take the time to think and pray, you will find help from Dr. Poythress to enable you to grow in your understanding of the mystery of who our triune God is and how he relates to us and the world.

***The Attributes of God: An Introduction, Short Studies in Systematic Theology*, by Gerald Bray. Crossway, 2021. Paperback, 160 pages, \$15.19 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP professor Ryan M. McGraw.**

God’s attributes are vital for Christian faith and practice. Christianity is ultimately about knowing the right God in the right way. The right God is triune, and he reveals himself through his attributes and acts. The right way to know him is through Spirit-worked faith in his Son, Jesus Christ. Gerald Bray provides readers with a clear and easy-to-follow guide into the unsearchable depths of God. Following the precedent set by John of Damascus (675–749), who was the first theologian to classify the divine attributes, Bray directs readers through a biblical pathway that promotes knowing God, walking with him, and

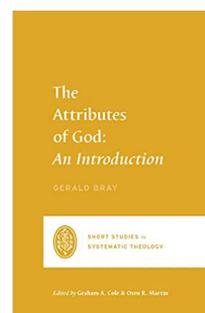
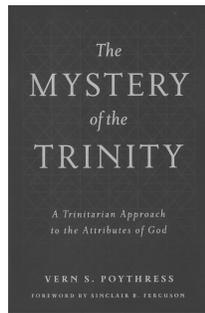
marveling at him, and that will benefit believers of every level.

While the topic of the divine attributes is complex, Bray’s plan is simple. In four chapters, he treats God’s being and attributes, God’s essential attributes, God’s relational attributes, and the practical significance of his attributes for believers. He covers a wide range of attributes, recognizing that attributes describe the one and simple being of God without defining him decisively. He summarizes his approach well by stating,

The theology of God’s attributes is therefore both a confident expression of faith and a humble admission of ignorance in line with the nature and content of God’s self-disclosure to us. (19)

His treatment is consistently Trinitarian, in which he locates God’s intrapersonal relations in the Godhead and his personal relationship with redeemed people. Personality, as such, is not a divine attribute, but connects us to the attributes personally via the Trinity. Christology looms large in these pages as well, illustrating how Christ declares the invisible God to us, without confusing Jesus’s human and divine natures. The appendix is particularly valuable, since it sketches ways in which theologians have classified and listed God’s attributes from the early church, through the Middle Ages and the Reformation, and up to the present. This material is particularly valuable because there are almost no two lists of divine attributes that agree fully. Bray shows readers that even though this is the case, there is often a tacit set of reasons undergirding various lists of attributes.

Bray devotes a large amount of space to the issue of divine impassibility, since this is a recent area of theological contention (34–45). Sympathetic to his critics and well-balanced, this section illustrates why God is not distant and aloof from human suffering, while defending God’s inability to suffer. Christ suffered according to his human nature, and in this way, “God suffered and died in the



only way he could” (36–37), namely, by God the Son taking on a passible human nature. His explanation of the doctrine is filled with Scripture texts that assume, imply, and illustrate divine impassibility, bolstered by theological arguments. With regard to the related and equally debated issue of divine simplicity, Bray illustrates particularly well how the divine attributes imply one another and interrelate (e.g., 70). He is sensitive to modern debates related to the doctrine of God, without letting them derail his edifying biblical narrative as a whole.

This book is an excellent primer on the divine attributes that sets the right tone for studying the subject.

***What Happens When We Worship*, by Jonathan Landry Cruse. Reformation Heritage, 2020. Paperback, 200 pages, \$14.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Lowell Ivey.**

Jonathan Cruse wants you to be *exhilarated* by the worship of God. His title already hints at this by asking one of the most important questions we can ever ask, “What *happens* when we worship?” The question assumes that worship is something more than a checklist of duties to be performed in a mindless, robotic way. True worship is *meaningful* precisely because it is *spiritual*. As Cruse reminds us, worship is a “supernatural event” (1). Something is really *happening* in worship because Someone is *present* in, with, and among us when we gather together to respond in faith to his call.

So, what is happening when we worship? The simple answer is that God is meeting with his people, to renew his covenant of grace with them in Jesus Christ, to transform them by his Word and Spirit, and to impress upon them their identity as the children of God. In worship, God comes down to us in covenant compassion and, by his grace, lifts us up to the heavenly places, where we enjoy a foretaste of the life of the world to come. In worship, we are being shaped

by God. Our hearts are being renewed, our minds are being enlightened, and our wills are being subdued by Jesus Christ.

In other words, biblical worship reflects the pattern of God’s revelation to us in the history of redemption. As Cruse observes:

The worship service is a sacred moment when God condescends to His sinful people and restores them to Himself. Even though we do not deserve his favor—and have done plenty to earn His wrath—God reminds us in worship that our relationship with Him is about His commitment to us, not our performance before Him. Put another way, through the steps of corporate worship God graciously renews His covenant faithfulness to us. (47)

The faithfulness of God to us in Christ (not our faithfulness to him!) is put before us at every point in biblical worship. God calls us out of the darkness of this world and into his glorious holiness and the light of his truth (83–91). We hear again of God’s holiness, his verdict of condemnation against sin, and our

need for cleansing grace in Christ (93–105). We hear of what Christ has done for us in the preaching of the Word and are again called to walk worthy of our calling as the children of God (107–121). We commune with God at his table in the spiritual feast of the Lord’s Supper (123–139). And finally, we are sent out with a new name, singing a new song, as God pronounces

his blessing on us (141–159). Every element of worship teaches us what God has done for us in Christ and who we are now because of what Christ has done. Worship calls us to respond in faith, hope, and love as we wait for the privilege of worshiping Christ face to face in glorified bodies in the new creation.

This book does far more than set forth what worship is and what worshipers do. It draws the reader into the very heart of God by showing what God is doing in our midst every time we gather to wor-

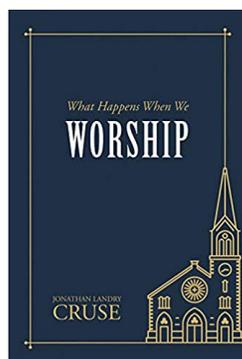
ship him. It is a book that will make you exhilarated to be a worshiper of God.

***Fault Lines: The Social Justice Movement and Evangelicalism’s Looming Catastrophe*, by Voddie T. Baucham Jr. Salem, 2021. Hardcover, 270 pages, \$17.05 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor Michael L. Myers.**

Fault Lines is a careful refutation of Critical Theory and its related ideologies, particularly critical race theory, intersectionality, and antiracism. Voddie Baucham draws from lessons he learned both from his upbringing (chs. 1–2) and decades of study in Scripture and sociology. He argues that these categories of thought are not merely analytical tools but unbiblical worldviews that pervade the social air we breathe. Throughout the book Baucham utilizes the imagery of fault lines and the earthquakes that occur near them to illustrate the damage these ideologies have caused and will continue to cause to evangelical Christianity.

Chapter 3 discusses the requirement to seek true justice and the lamentable mischaracterizations of justice that plague the current “cultural moment” (42). Through careful documentation and measured explanation, Baucham explains the need for truth and the widespread danger of false narratives. While always upholding and affirming the worth and dignity of human life, Baucham reviews the narratives around high profile deaths, including Tamir Rice, Philando Castile, Michael Brown, and George Floyd. His goal is neither to condemn nor justify the police; rather, he highlights the disparities in the narratives woven about these names while introducing other names that are unknown (47). In the following chapters, he identifies the underlying worldview assumptions driving the widespread acceptance and propagation of dangerous false narratives (63).

Chapters 4–6 form the book’s theological backbone. Baucham outlines how the “Cult of Antiracism” is a new religion entirely distinct from biblical Christianity. “This new body of divinity” includes its own erroneous versions of original sin, law, gospel, martyrs, means of atonement, new birth (wokeness), liturgy,



canon, theologians, and catechism (67). Baucham has coined the phrase “Ethnic Gnosticism” to put a name to “the idea that people have special knowledge based solely on their ethnicity” (92), a concept similar to standpoint epistemology.

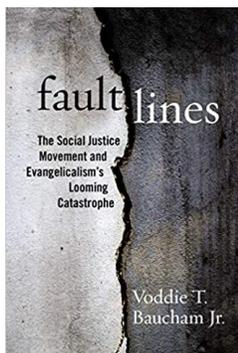
Baucham’s discussion of abortion in chapter 9 and critique of Black Lives Matter in chapter 10 are exceedingly helpful. The final chapter is one of the most powerful statements this reviewer has read related to these serious matters. The right way to deal with racial enmity is through the gospel of free grace in Jesus Christ. The framework through which Christians need to interpret even the most heinous actions of the past is the unsearchable providence of God (Acts 2:22–24). Through forgiveness, love, biblical repentance, and pursuit of biblical justice, the Christian church can lead the way in dealing with the heart of these issues.

Voddie Baucham’s *Fault Lines* is full of solid principle and righteous polemics. Although Baucham does not shy away from “naming names,” he also affirms his love for those within the church with whom he disagrees, and lets the weight of truth do its work. I bless God for Baucham’s courage in writing this work and warmly commend it to readers of *New Horizons* and members of the OPC.

***Losing a Spouse: A Widower’s Way*, by Dennis L. Disselkoen. Advantage Inspirational, 2020. Paperback, 190 pages, \$16.00 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP minister John M. Fikkert.**

A book written for Christian widowers is a rare find indeed. Dennis Disselkoen, a retired OPC minister, writes from his own experience of losing his wife, Grace, to terminal cancer after more than forty-six years of marriage.

The book helpfully walks through the author’s own journey, from the time of his



wife’s diagnosis, to the experiences at her death, and beyond to what life looked like for him as a widower. He also includes excerpts of interviews he conducted with ten other men who lost their wives, each with their own unique circumstances.

In addition to providing an invaluable window into the personal experiences of widowers, Disselkoen provides specific and pragmatic advice on a wide array of topics, such as what to expect from hospice care, planning for funerals, managing financial concerns, considering remarriage, setting new routines, and re-engaging socially as a widower. He also addresses how to manage loneliness, a primary concern for all spouses who lose their partner.

The underlying strength of the book is its pastoral wisdom. More than just a travelogue through loss or a reference book of essential tips for widowers, Disselkoen’s heart as a minister shines on page after page. For example, he states, “Death is not the end; it is a deplorable interruption that causes great pain; but it is not a time of hopelessness; it is a time to express hope that is based on God’s word.” At another point he writes to widowers newly adapting to their loss, “During this life is the only time we can get prepared for the next. Are you prepared? As long as your life may be, it is but a single drop in the ocean of eternity. What better time than now to turn to God in your grief.”

Chapters 12 and 13 are worthy of special mention as thoughtful

and well-researched chapters on grief and loneliness. Disselkoen normalizes an internal sense of loneliness common for widowers, and contrasts that with those making intentional choices to isolate socially. He discusses emotions in men and how they are expressed (or not). This section also offers an insightful critique on the limits of the stages of grief model popularized by Kübler-Ross, and he provides a useful alternative for understanding experiences of grief. At one point he concludes, “Christ was the supreme sufferer. He is God’s answer to our grief, and our hope is in him. With this as our

Positions Available

Pastor: Providence OPC in Mantua, New Jersey, seeks a mature, tested pastor who loves the Lord, his Word, his people, and his worship. Located just across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, this growing church is filled with young families, many children, new believers, and older, mature believers. Find more information on our website at providenceopc.org or email: providenceopcsecretary@gmail.com.

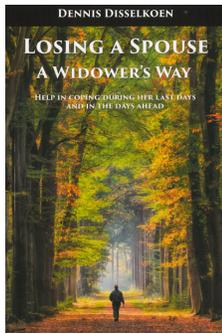
Pastor: Redeemer OPC, an established Reformed congregation located on the central California coast, is looking for a pastor with experience in reaching people of all ages in both biblical preaching and outreach. Experience in working with families and young people is also desired. If interested, please contact the search committee at rpcopcsearch@gmail.com or send written resume to: P.O. Box 2473, Santa Maria, CA, 93457

Youth Director: Faith OPC in Long Beach, California, is pleased to announce an opening for a youth director to work part-time with our middle and high school youth group. We are seeking candidates who have a heart for mentoring youth and are enthusiastic about modeling responsible participation in the life and mission of the faith community, along with fostering personal and spiritual growth. More information can be found at www.faithopc.org. Email questions or inquiries to office@faithopc.org.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS *Continued*

perspective, even in our grief we may glorify God.”

The potential audience for this book goes beyond the demographic of Christian men who have lost their wives. Disselkoen’s description of a widower’s experience is a unique way to consider other kinds of loss, grief, and singleness. In that vein, pastors and elders would do well to read it as they seek to shepherd well those in their flock who undergo various kinds of grief, including but not limited to the loss of a spouse. Likewise, the book can be profitably read by church members who want to encourage their brothers and sisters in Christ who are dealing with terminal illness or the loss of a loved one.



***Men and Women in the Church: A Short, Biblical, Practical Introduction*, by Kevin DeYoung. Crossway, 2021. Paperback, 176 pages, \$17.99 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor Zachary M. Simmons.**

With characteristic clarity and brevity, Kevin DeYoung makes a nuanced contribution to a fraught topic that will reward your careful attention and critical reflection.

DeYoung plainly describes himself as “complementarian,” arguing that the term has valuable intrinsic meaning. DeYoung seems to feel at home in the complementarian mainstream (John

Piper is mentioned favorably); however, he is not rehashing old ideas, but offering a fresh voice that seeks to avoid manifold pitfalls in both content and tone.

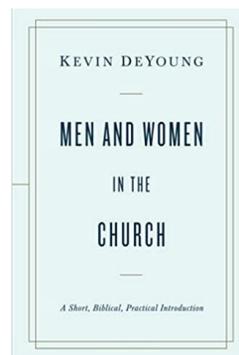
The book includes both old and new material (it is partly a revision of DeYoung’s out-of-print *Freedom and Boundaries*, 2006). Part 1: Biblical Exploration, surveys Old Testament history and the Gospels, then ventures a more detailed exegesis of five key Pauline texts. Part 2: Questions and Applications, seeks to answer common objections and offer wisdom for raising boys and girls to be godly men and women. Bavinck admirers will appreciate DeYoung’s extensive interaction with his *The Christian Family*.

In places, DeYoung engages more or less directly with contemporary discussions familiar to some OPC readers. For example, he acknowledges that “the phrase ‘biblical manhood and womanhood’ has fallen on hard times, and perhaps some of the wounds have been self-inflicted,” though he thinks the phrase “at its best” is still useful (34). He affirms that “manhood and womanhood cannot be reduced to authority and submission” but maintains that authority and submission “are meaningful expressions of what it means to be a man and a woman” (136). In dealing with 1 Corinthians 11:3, he explicitly and thoroughly rejects the “eternal subordination of the Son” (52).

DeYoung makes a concerted effort to emphasize the vast range of opportunities

for women’s gifts to be valued and voices heard in the life of the church. He opposes “defaulting to ‘traditional’ women’s roles” on the one hand, though he also opposes the view “that a woman can do whatever an unordained man can do” on the other (94). Thoughtful readers from a range of perspectives will find points of disagreement. In places, DeYoung’s Old Testament exegesis seems strained to fit the “patterns” he educes, and in some of his conclusions he seems to overgeneralize. On the other hand, his advocacy for women (and unordained men) praying and sharing publicly in corporate worship will be moot for churches where only ordained officers speak individually in the worship assembly.

Men and Women in the Church would be more valuable if it confronted more directly the sinful oppression of women that has been committed in the name of complementarianism. DeYoung acknowledges in his introduction that “boneheaded complementarians” exist, “doing cringey, offensive, or genuinely sinful things” toward women in the church (18), but many fine opportunities to confront and correct these problems are missed. Nonetheless, the positive vision DeYoung



himself casts is gentle and gracious. He generally succeeds in his goal to be “tender, winsome, and warm ... grounded in Scripture and sensitive to people” (131). DeYoung’s exemplary tone and approach are worthy of emulation by future writers on this subject.