

NEW HORIZONS

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025

IN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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Cover: Two of the fourteen graduates of Knox School of Theology in May 2025: Lokiru Timothy (center), the first student from Karamoja, and Richard Wamono. Cover photo and photos on pages 3–5 by Christopher Verdick.

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Managing Editor: Judith M. Dinsmore
Editorial Assistants: Ayrian J. Yasar
Diane Olinger
Proofreader: Caroline Reeves
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Send inquiries, letters to the editor, and
other correspondence to the editor at
danny.olinger@opc.org. Letters to the
editor may be condensed for publication.

*Karimojong
graduate
Lokiru Timothy
celebrating
with friends
and family*



GRADUATING TO THE NEXT STEP



L. CHARLES JACKSON

After many years of labor and prayers, this spring we celebrated the first graduation of the new Knox School of Theology in Mbale, Uganda. It was my last time to address the school as its principal, and I was overwhelmed. For my wife Connie and I, this event was one of the most emotional, joyful, and amazing moments in our life in the ministry. We didn't know what to make of the flood of emotions coming together all at once—joy; thankfulness that we were finished after years of labor, mixed with a serious sense of loss and homesickness for Africa; appreciation for deep friendships; and an overpowering feeling of hope for what this graduation represented for the church in Africa. It wasn't just the culmination of ten years of our lives; it was an encounter with the beauty of God's work. It was the end of our work in Uganda, but for the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), it was a great new moment in our church's history.

On May 24, 2025, we granted four diplomas and ten bachelor's degrees in theology. This graduation celebrates more than simply a newly accredited program in Uganda; it represents the greatest opportunity for pastoral and theo-

logical education in a Reformed confessional school in East Africa. It also highlights that the OPC, a small and relatively unknown church in America, is now at the cutting edge of Reformed theological education in Africa.

A DESIRE FOR BETTER EDUCATION

When I taught my first class as a visitor in 2013 at what was then called Knox Theological College, I began with four or five students. One failed because he didn't know English well enough to pass the class. Another failed because he only came to half the classes. As I watched and listened to the students, I realized that most would not have qualified for an accredited program. From our arrival as missionaries in 2015, I dreamed that the OPC could expand Knox's horizons with a more formal program and greater outreach. However, I was told that accreditation was too long, too hard, and too expensive. It was true that the process was long, hard, and expensive, but it was worth it.

God's providence moved us all along the way. Soon after our arrival to Uganda, it became clear that pastoral training was going to need accreditation due to changing laws and growing pressure from governments across East Africa. We wanted to send qualified, better-trained students back to their churches as future leaders for gospel reformation in Africa. We couldn't find any serious, accredited undergraduate programs of pastoral study that were confessionally Reformed in Uganda.

Our earliest attempt was to work with a local Christian university in Mbale, LivingStone International University (LIU). This worked well as a start. One of the first graduates, Pastor Muwoya David, is now working for Knox. (Incidentally, David grew up in a village church that OP missionary Tony Curto helped to start years ago in



Jackson speaking at the graduation ceremony

Kachonga.) Though LIU was a great partner, they were not Reformed, and we had a passion to train pastors biblically and confessionally.

When COVID hit in 2020, everything changed. The government closed churches and schools. Everyone was sent home to wait. Then it occurred to me that this may be the opportunity to do what we hadn't had the time to do—create an independently accredited program. Starting from scratch, I formalized the name as Knox School of Theology (KST), and off we went. I hired a young MDiv graduate named Okuch Andrew Ojullo to help me work through the mountain of paperwork that we needed. We created a new curriculum, a constitution, bylaws, and multiple other documents and guidelines. God blessed the efforts. In summer 2022, KST was given a provisional license of accreditation, and we began our new program with a fresh batch of students from all over East Africa. It was so exciting!

AT THE FOREFRONT OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The response to our new school has been overwhelming. Having never advertised, we have more students applying than we are able to accept. We are so humbled now to have students from Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Kenya, and of course, Uganda. Last year we had fifty applications from all over Africa—including Ethiopia, Tanzania, and even Cameroon (western Africa). Although KST can only accept a limited number of applicants from all these nations, it places OPC foreign missions on the frontline of theological education in Africa. God has providentially put us at the center of an amazing situation.

The new students at Knox represent a rapidly growing field of current and future pastors looking for an accredited institution dedicated to high-quality, undergraduate pastoral training. When you narrow down the field of Reformed theological schools that are accredited, KST is one

of only a few on the whole continent of Africa. Can you imagine? The whole continent! Africa's Christian population is experiencing rapid growth, but there are very few formally trained pastors in comparison.

EAGER APPLICANTS, AMAZING STUDENTS

A few years ago, one of our potential students from South Sudan walked along dirt roads for two days, with nothing but a bag over his shoulder, only to find that the one road available for his bus to Uganda was flooded. He reluctantly turned around and walked home, still longing to come to KST sometime in the future. He represents so many passionate pastors and young men who yearn to come to KST, but due to poverty, civil unrest, and difficult social and cultural conditions, are simply unable to join us.

Each student at KST has a unique and beautiful story. Khamasi John graduated this past May as the valedictorian for KST in the diploma program in spite of serious health problems. John was born in Kenya, and as a young man, he sold drugs with his father near Lokichogio. After a dramatic conversion and many years in the ministry of a Pentecostal church, he made his way to KST at the urging of his friend, Santulinous "Santu" Ekada, a teacher at a Reformed graduate school in Kampala.

Santu told John that KST was the best and only choice for a Reformed undergraduate program in East Africa, and that, unlike so many other pastoral training centers, it is biblical as well as accredited. At our banquet, John testified to the grace of God he experienced through the loving and excellent academic training at KST, and he affirmed his strong commitment to Reformed theology.

Another beautiful story about God's work is connected to the OP Mission in Karamoja. One of our 2025 graduates is a young man named Lokiru Timothy—often called "Timo." Timo is a native of Karamoja and a fruit of God's work through the Mission in that challenging place. He came to KST and personally testified about his wonder and awe at the education he was receiving. He said he had never encountered anything like it.

As a graduate of Knox, Timo is now qualified to pursue pastoral ministry in Karamoja with our mission there. You may think that since he is a local from the area, things will be easy—but remember Jesus's words that a prophet has no honor in his hometown (Matt. 13:57). Timo's natural ability



The new administration building on graduation day

to know the culture and speak the language fluently is a benefit, but it also means that clan, family, and cultural ties will be challenging to his work and witness. Praise God, and pray for Timo, that he may by God's grace complete the circle of our work in Karamoja to have a local Karimojong pastor and a particularized church in that region.

KST is also situated brilliantly with full-time African instructors and staff. An OP mission's task is to work itself out of a job by turning its work over to the indigenous church—and we are well on our way. Please pray for our instructors—Okuch (yes, the same man who helped me with the paperwork for registration) from South Sudan, Desire from Burundi, and Kakule Joseph, Paul Magala, and Muwoya David, all from Uganda. These men are not only academically qualified by government standards but also honest, humble, hardworking, and godly young men who love the church. Please pray for their future in the ministry.

THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S WORK AT KST

In addition to all the other beautiful stories over the past few years, we can recall how God allowed the school to purchase more land beyond the initial land that missionary Phil Proctor had helped to purchase years ago. This additional land was exactly what the National Council of Higher Education requires schools to have. God provided the means to renovate the old buildings and build a new pavilion, a new kitchen, and two new dorms. And just in time for graduation, we officially opened a new administration building, containing offices, classrooms, a computer lab, and an expanded library, as well as a two-bedroom apartment for visiting professors.

These additions to our provisional program now complete all the infrastructure requirements for Knox to

apply to move from provisional to permanent accreditation. With our two new missionaries in Mbale, Fred Lo and Mike Kearney, we can move to the next level for Knox's place in African theological education.

As Connie and I close ten years of our lives spent serving God in Uganda, we are amazed at what God has done, especially in the work of Knox School of Theology. We are in awe at

the beauty of God's work. When I look at the pictures that I am showing to churches, I can hardly believe it myself. God has done a great work through the OPC these last three decades in Uganda, and he blessed us to be a part of it. We thank all the missionaries who work there now and those who went before us. Thousands in the church have prayed and supported this Mission over the years. We thank you all and ask that you join us in praying that God will continue to bless and to grow the work of the Lord in Africa. **NH**

The author is a former OP missionary in Mbale, Uganda.

THE 2025 GRADUATES OF KST

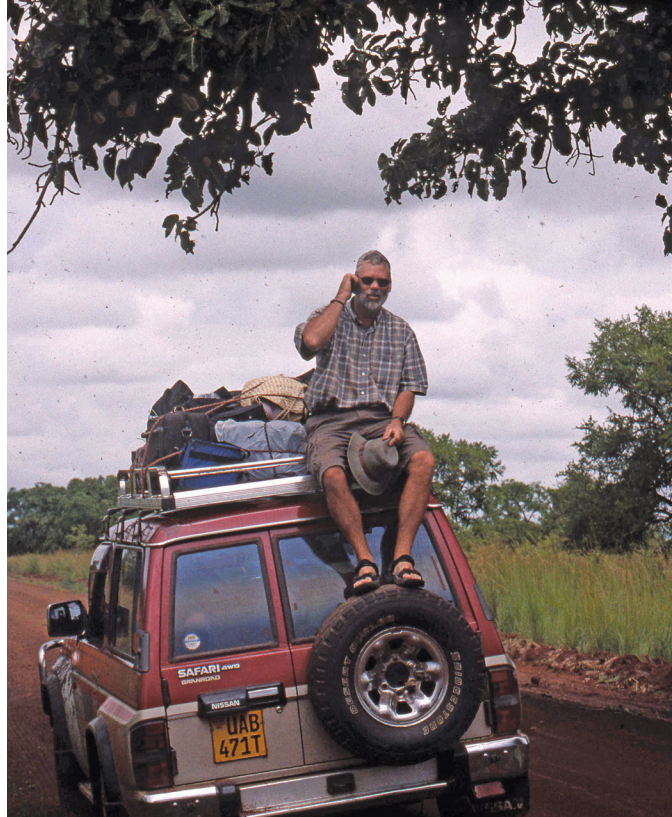
Bachelor of Theology:

Augustino Okeny (South Sudan)
Gasisiro Daniel (Democratic Republic of Congo)
Tegule Gernald Brian (Uganda)
Arop Joseph Anei (South Sudan)
Ruach James Gai (South Sudan)
Lokiru Timothy (Uganda)
Kwizera Joseph (Burundi)
Wajegaa Abdallah (Uganda)
Wakooba Bernard (Uganda)
Ombewa Martin Otieno (Kenya)

Diploma of Theology:

Khamasi John (Kenya), valedictorian
Mwima Eric (Uganda)
Dor Meat Lam (South Sudan)
Wamono Richard (Uganda)

Tony Curto
getting a
satellite
signal



CHURCHES AND A SCHOOL IN MBALE, UGANDA

**L. ANTHONY CURTO, BRIAN T. WINGARD,
PHILIP T. PROCTOR, JONATHAN B. FALK**

The OPC Committee on Foreign Missions has been working in Uganda for thirty years. Others, who were there before us, asked us to work in the east, around Mbale. Rev. Dr. L. Anthony Curto (who served 1995–1999) began by helping the Presbyterian Church of Uganda plant churches in the villages and train men to be pastors, ruling elders, and deacons. Soon, with the establishment of Westminster Theological College, pastoral training was being done in a school setting.

When Tony moved to begin church planting in Nakaale, Karamoja, Rev. Dr. Brian T. Wingard (who served 1998–2001) and Rev. Jonathan B. Falk (1999–2002) continued the pastoral training in Mbale until Tony's return (2001–2004). Then, as the chapter of our work at Westminster Theological College closed, a new one began. Rev. Philip T. Proctor (2003–2011) arrived to start Knox Theological College. He would be helped there by Brian Wingard (2007–2011) and others until the work was eventually taken up by Rev. Dr. L. Charles Jackson (2015–2025) who guided the restructured Knox School of Theology toward

seeking official accreditation. Many men, like Jon Falk, came for short terms to teach several courses.

For the reader, the change in school names, Westminster Theological College, Knox Theological College, and Knox School of Theology, may seem confusing, but those names changed, in part, because we were planting churches with and preparing church officers for changing denominations. While each change may indicate some conflict at the time, they also indicate growth, blessing, and the glorious work of Jesus Christ.

For thirty years, the OPC CFM has worked with our brothers in Uganda to seek and find spiritual maturity. In the following pages, we hope that you will see how God used you and your missionaries to walk alongside the church in Uganda to the praise of the glory of Jesus Christ.

—General Secretary Douglas Clawson

WHERE SHALL WE FIND LEADERS?

L. Anthony Curto (Mbale, 1995–1999, 2001–2004)

Kathleen and I moved to Uganda, East Africa, in the summer of 1995. We were to work with the Presbyterian Church in Uganda (PCU) as missionaries of the OPC helping to plant PCU churches in the district of Mbale. The PCU had a congregation established in the town of Mbale, and its goal was to plant churches in the surrounding rural villages.

The plan was to begin preaching in these rural villages each week on selected market days when the people

would be gathered to buy and sell. Local Bible studies could be started with interested villagers. The hope was that these contacts would be the beginning of mission churches, which would in turn grow into fully established congregations of the PCU.

The Lord quickly blessed our labors, and we had about ten Bible studies in the first four months after our arrival. Each week I would go and preach on market days and then go to a *shamba* (compound) to teach a Bible study with interested villagers. From the very beginning, these studies began to grow.

The villagers' interest in the Bible studies immediately made us ask: *Where was the PCU going to get qualified men to be pastors and elders here?* The PCU in the capital city of Kampala sent some men to help us out, but this was only a temporary solution. There were many young men attending the Bible studies, but most did not have education beyond primary school.

TRAINING CHURCH LEADERS

Working with the session of the Mbale PCU, I started what we called the Mbale Christian Workers Institute. The goal of the institute was to begin discipling young men who were in the Bible studies, with the hope that what would emerge would be men the church could recognize as potential ruling elders and pastors. The session in Mbale invited several men from each Bible study. The program was to be one year in length. We would meet as a class once a week, and then I would meet with each student weekly at the village Bible study. The elders of the Mbale church appointed Moses Were to work as my translator.

We needed to give our attention to two questions: what would be our curriculum and where would we get materials? With the help of George Scipione from Southern California, we put together student backpacks. These backpacks contained books for each student, such as Berkhof's *Manual of Christian Doctrine*, some Banner of Truth titles, and Dr. Scipione's *Timothy, Titus, and You: A Workbook for Church Leaders*.

Bible studies quickly grew into churches; Curto baptizing new believers in 1996.



WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

While we were carrying on the work of the institute, I was also working with the brothers in Kampala on their vision to begin a theological college of the PCU. The church recognized that they couldn't keep sending men abroad for their theological training. One major reason was the risk that those men would lose their roots in the village. Many of the men who went abroad never came back to Uganda, or if they did, they refused to go back to the village.

After much prayer and planning, the PCU decided to start Westminster Theological College (WTC) with two campuses, one in Kampala and one in Mbale. I was asked to be the teacher at the Mbale campus. The college would be under the oversight of the PCU's general assembly. The training would be for three years and include a full theological curriculum. The men who would attend the Mbale campus would be selected by the Mbale session and myself from among those who had attended our institute. In the fall of 1996, we began with nineteen candidates from the villages in the surrounding area of Mbale.

At this time, we began to build the first classroom for WTC Mbale. The first year, the students met together on my compound. Classes were held in the mornings so that the work of village preaching and Bible studies could continue. Each weekday, I would go to the village, accompanied by the students from that village, to carry on the work of church planting. This gave the students opportunities to apply what they were learning in their village context.

The Lord brought great blessings during our first year. The classroom was finished in early 1997 on the grounds of the Mbale PCU. Also in 1997, through a generous donation, we were able to start purchasing books for a theological library.

The next great blessing from the Lord was his provision of OPC missionaries: Brian and Dorothy Wingard arrived in 1998 to labor with us in Mbale. Brian and I started teaching together at the college in its second year. In 1999, at the end of the first three-year cycle at WTC Mbale, we had our first graduation. Shortly afterwards, Kathleen and I returned to the States for furlough. But our Lord, who never goes on furlough, carried on his work to call and prepare men for the gospel ministry in eastern Uganda.

STUDENTS RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Brian T. Wingard (Mbale, 1998–2001, 2007–2011)

Dorothy and I arrived in Mbale, Uganda, early in 1998. My call from the Committee on Foreign Missions was to serve as a full-time teacher at Westminster Theological College (WTC), an institution established by Rev. Dr. Tony Curto but under the oversight of the Eastern Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Uganda.

Having come from my previous assignment in Kenya at the Reformed Theological College of East Africa, I was not altogether prepared for WTC. At WTC, we were required to enroll any student that the presbytery sent to us. Some of these men were up to the academic challenge of a theological college, but many were not. Some had not completed, or in some cases even started, secondary school—what in the States would be called high school—and many of them were very recent converts.

One incident stands out in my mind. In an introduction to the Old Testament course, I asked a question concerning the dating of an Old Testament book, and one student suggested the author was John the Baptist. Marking test papers was often distressing because I knew that these men would be sent to pastor churches in which the spiritual life

and health of the congregation would be in their hands.

In the fall of 2001, I left Mbale to serve in Eritrea but came back to Mbale in 2007. Dorothy and I returned to find a newly organized Knox Theological College, several kilometers outside of Mbale.

The Rev. Philip Proctor had found property to begin to erect the school, and he served as the principal. The relationship between Knox Theological College and the indigenous church was slightly different from the arrangements between the Presbyterian Church in Uganda and WTC. As per a cooperative agreement, the OP mission now had greater oversight and could decide which students to admit. Because of the addition to our team of the late Rev. Thomas Mayville, Knox Theological College received students from the church in Kenya that the Reformed Church in the United States was assisting. This broadened the pool from which the college drew.

One class that stands out in my mind is Christian Ethics. This course gave me the opportunity to address ethical situations that the students faced. There was always a lively discussion as the students learned how to think biblically rather than culturally about these issues.

Another high point was the sermon evaluation class in which students would present sermons before the class and the whole faculty—Phil Proctor, Thomas Mayville, and myself. The faculty would rotate in leading the evaluation of the students' efforts.

Between my years at WTC and Knox Theological College, there was progress. The students attending the schools had better educational backgrounds, and the school was serving a broader and more diverse area. I thank God for that progress, and for the further milestone of the present accredited institution.



*Brian Wingard
with students from
the Westminster
Theological College
in 1999*



BEGINNING A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Philip T. Proctor (Mbale, 2003–2011)

We are temporary. Missionaries and pastors; families and individuals. Our lasting legacy is not in what we do but in the lives that God touches through us, his instruments. In 2 Timothy 2:1–2, Paul lays the foundation for Christian ministry: entrusting the gospel witness to faithful men who will themselves teach others. Who were those men that Timothy chose? Who were the men they themselves trained? Their names are not recorded, but history shows what mighty works God will do through anonymous, faithful people.

In 2003, Meredith and I arrived in Uganda as Dr. Tony Curto was transitioning to ministry in the States. The relationship with the indigenous Presbyterian church was also in transition. Training indigenous church leadership has always been at the center of the OPC's foreign missions, so step one was to begin a formal training program.

Knox Theological College, later renamed Knox School of Theology (KST), was born out of my garage office in our home in Mbale. The aim was to produce graduates who were men of piety, who were preachers of Jesus Christ, and who understood how to use the Westminster Confession and Catechisms in their pastoral ministry. Training African pastors for God's people in Africa is at the heart of our obedience to Paul's "job description" in 2 Timothy 2.

PURCHASING PROPERTY

Early days were, to say the least, eventful. KST had to purchase property, and the OPC needed to establish a local non-governmental organization (NGO) that could issue work permits and own real estate. I discovered that

Uganda had two types of land ownership: customary and title. Customary ownership is the local method of neighbors agreeing that so-and-so has owned this piece of land for years, with such-and-such boundaries. Titled property has been surveyed and registered with the Ugandan government. Titled land usually comes with "squatters" who have paid for the land through the customary route and must be evicted by the owner of the land title. Learning these intricacies while teaching was an adventure.

In the end we purchased a non-titled piece of land through the customary process and then had it surveyed and titled. We found a beautiful piece of property four miles outside Mbale, and the school was "official."

When I think of our ministry in Uganda, I immediately think of all the people who helped me to shoulder the load. Ministers from the OPC and other Reformed denominations throughout the world came and taught three-week classes so that I could focus on the labyrinth of paperwork. Short-term teams came to help with construction and participate in evangelism in the local congregations. During furloughs, we saw the eagerness of God's people faithfully holding us in prayer. Our Foreign Missions general secretaries were endlessly patient and supportive, listening for hours on phone calls and offering wise counsel. During our second term, the Wingards joined us and were a rich blessing to our whole family. Thomas Mayville, a minister in the Reformed Church in the United States, joined us with his wife, Carolyn. Deep friendships were formed that continue to this day.

DEVELOPING A COLLEGE FOR PASTORS

Once we had purchased the property, the next step was to develop it. We put up a perimeter fence, built a road to



*Phil Proctor
preaching
in 2004*

access the property, and put in a well that would supply KST's needs and also serve the community. As people came for their daily water, the students and faculty could tell them of the water of life which quenches the deep thirst of the human soul. Twenty years later, the well remains a gathering place for the community.

Generous donors gave both time and financial resources toward the construction projects. We were able to quickly construct our first three buildings for classrooms, administration, and a dormitory, enabling us to accept students from all over East Africa, including Kenya and Malawi. Meanwhile, the core focus of training pastors drove everything we did. We had chapel five days per week with a faculty member preaching on Wednesdays and the students rotating through preaching and evaluation the other four days. My goal was that by the time a student finished our three-year program, he would have preached and been evaluated on at least fifty sermons. I cut many a student off at the thirty-minute mark, which helped them learn to organize and distill a sermon to its key elements. We covered systematic theology in conjunction with the Westminster Confession. Above all, we poured ourselves into the Scriptures, outlining books of the Bible, showing the grand themes of redemption from Genesis to Revelation, and seeing Jesus Christ in every page.

CHALLENGES AND BLESSINGS

While I was in the process of laying the foundation for KST, I felt like a constant failure. There was too much that I didn't know, and it felt like I was walking blindfolded through a minefield. There was significant opposition from some in the Ugandan church to establishing an NGO and building the facility for it outside their financial ownership and control. Threats against me escalated, affecting my family. Civil lawsuits and false property claims

overshadowed the efforts. When our time in Uganda concluded in 2011, I left behind a work that was essentially a community college and was carried forward by others who came after me.

I continue to be richly blessed through my service on the Committee on Foreign Missions. My wife, Meredith, and I just returned from a visit to Uganda, visiting KST and encouraging our missionaries in Karamoja. What a joy to support the missionaries just as the church had supported us so many years ago!

What a blessing to witness the faithful, continuing service of many of our first African graduates who remain in ministry today! What a beautiful privilege to see what God has been doing all along!

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Jonathan B. Falk (Mbale, 1999–2002)

When Margaret and I left the mission field in Mbale in 2002 to help reopen the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's Mission in Asmara, Eritrea, we never thought we would see Uganda again. Much to our surprise, we found ourselves back in Uganda for the fall term of 2019 at Knox School of Theology (KST). In our absence, the population of Mbale had almost doubled in size, which meant that driving in congested traffic was even more challenging than we remembered. It was a joy for us to visit with Ugandans who had worked and worshiped with us during our earlier ministry in the country. It was even more encouraging to see the former students of missionaries Tony Curto and Brian Wingard serving as faithful pastors in the village churches.

IMPRESSIONS FROM A RECENT VISIT

When I first saw the campus of KST in 2019, I recalled the early days of pastoral training in Mbale. Students used to sit on benches under a shade tree, and then they moved to a church building where instructors wrote on a primitive blackboard painted on rough cement walls. I encouraged my students to give thanks to our gracious God who had provided their new facilities. Today, with the construction of the Juba House dormitory, the new administration building, and the provisional accreditation of the college, there are even more reasons to give thanks to our Father in heaven.

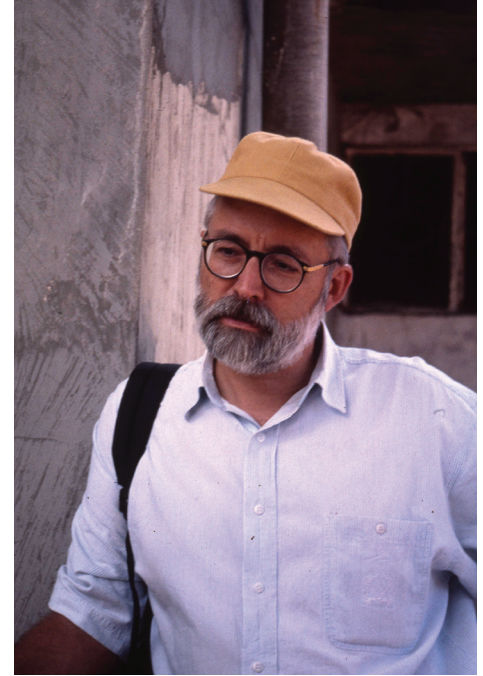
On my recent visit, I was delighted to be able to spend time with my students, both in and out of the classroom. I commuted to school with a van-load of students driven by Paul Magala, the college registrar and an instructor. Chai (tea) breaks and lunches were provided for the students, and I enjoyed rich fellowship with them during those times. A good number of students were already serving as pastors in various evangelical congregations and commuted daily to class. My class on pastoral counseling used various counseling cases these pastors were facing and sought to apply biblical solutions. Depression and family conflicts are common to all societies. These problems are compounded by the traditional African practice of polygamy. I encouraged the students to use the Word of God faithfully in their counseling ministries.

Another course that I particularly enjoyed teaching was World Missions and Culture. We discovered that missions did not begin with Abraham or the nation of Israel or the Great Commission of Jesus, but in eternity between the inner life of the persons of the Triune God. God the Father sent his Son to redeem a people through his life and death, and the Father and the Son sent the Spirit to apply that work of redemption to his people. I encouraged the students to plant and develop churches that are sending churches from the start. We remain under the command and commission of our Lord and King to preach to all nations the saving good news of his life, death, resurrection, and ascension until he returns.

The church in sub-Saharan Africa is growing rapidly, as is the population of the entire continent. But the church faces great challenges. An aggressive Islam, funded by

wealthy Gulf states, continues to build mosques, schools, and medical clinics. The temptation to return to the traditional practices of appeasing the spirits of deceased ancestors remains strong among poorly taught Christians. But perhaps the greatest threat the African church faces is the prosperity gospel, originally imported from the United States. It is a false gospel that claims deliverance from sickness, poverty, and suffering, and, in exchange, promises health and wealth. The students that I taught recognized it as a gospel without the cross and without saving power. We give thanks that Knox School of Theology is contributing greatly to the strengthening of Christ's church in East Africa. **NH**

*Jonathan Falk
in Uganda
in 2000*



*A main
street in
Mbale in
2004*



WHAT THE CHURCH IS IN THE WORLD TO DO



DANNY E. OLINGER

On March 26, 2025, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shut down its foreign mission endeavors. Mission workers were let go, tendered severance packages, or offered other positions in the PCUSA. In its announcement, the denomination included a statement, “Four Waves of Mission,” about its work in foreign fields since 1789. According to it, the major achievements of the first wave, 1789–1958, were the establishment of the inaugural Protestant missions board in the United States and the sending of missionaries that led to the opening of hospitals, clinics, and schools around the world. The second wave started in 1958 and saw mission stations dismantled and resources turned over to local groups. The third wave, beginning in the 1970s, saw partnerships with other faith traditions. Mission networks were developed that “offered a U.S. presence in the world that often radically contrasted with that of large transnational corporations and U.S. government policies.” It was also at this time that “humanitarian needs

and social justice goals joined evangelistic goals as they shared incarnationally.” The fourth wave has now come with the sunset of Presbyterian World Mission.

A RESOUNDING QUESTION

In his 1925 book, *What Is Faith?*, J. Gresham Machen lamented that the teaching of Modernism—which rejected, or did not want to speak of, the sense of sin and guilt, the fear of God’s judgment, and the necessity of Jesus’s atoning death on the cross—was spreading in the leadership of the Presbyterian Church. Jesus Christ, God come in the flesh and the object of faith, was not being proclaimed as such in all the activity of the church, particularly on the mission fields. In its place was a “polite paganism” (41), which relied on human resources and was being quietly substituted for the heroism of devotion to the gospel.

Still, Machen rejoiced that there were those Presbyterians whose hearts were touched by the conflict taking place. They knew that they were sinners for whom Jesus had died, and that the least they could do

was to be faithful to Him; they could not continue to support, by their gifts and by their efforts, anything that was hostile to His gospel; and they were compelled, therefore, in the face of all opposition, to raise the question what it is that the Church is in the world to do. (41)

Machen then added, “God grant that question never be silenced until it is answered aright!”

RETHINKING THE CHURCH’S TASK

Machen’s willingness to fight for the gospel in the Presbyterian Church was put to the test with the 1932 publication of *Re-Thinking Missions: A Layman’s Inquiry after One Hundred Years*. Financially underwritten by John D. Rockefeller Jr., representatives of seven denominations—Baptist (Northern), Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, PCUSA, Protestant Episcopal, Reformed Church in America, and United Presbyterian—surveyed missionaries, gathered information, and drew conclusions from missions in Burma, India, Japan, and China. *Re-Thinking Missions* declared that the aim of missions was “to seek with people of other lands a true knowledge and love of God, expressing in life and word what we have learned through Jesus Christ, and endeavoring to give effect to his spirit in the life of the world” (59).

The report also maintained that Christianity was the fulfillment of other religions. It stated that Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism were stung by critical Christian missions but had responded with internal reform. The

report decreed that relations between these religions and Christian missions increasingly take the form of a common search for truth.

Machen responded that *Re-Thinking Missions* attacked the historic Christian faith. “Jesus is presented as a “great religious Teacher and Example, as Christianity’s ‘highest expression of religious life,’ but certainly not as very God of very God” (Stonehouse, *Machen*, 419). Machen concluded that the report “belittles evangelism, definite conversions, open profession of faith in Christ, and membership in the Christian Church.”

As disheartening as the content of *Re-Thinking Missions* was, as disturbing to Machen if not more so was the posture of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions and its secretary Robert E. Speer to the report. Two board members participated in the project and were on the Appraisal Committee that had written the report and put forth recommendations. Rather than disapproving of the final product, Speer issued a vague statement concerning the board’s loyalty to the evangelical basis of Presbyterian missions.

NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN

Alarmed at what was happening with Presbyterian foreign missions and Speer’s mode of leadership that sought to avoid doctrinal conflict at all costs, Machen founded the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. In doing so, he was charged with violating his vows as a gospel minister in the Presbyterian Church. He was found guilty at the presbytery level and lost his appeal to the PCUSA General Assembly on June 1, 1936. Ten days later what we now know as the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was formed.

Despite the fact that the OPC was small in size, forty-eight congregations and a little over four thousand members, the new church was committed to foreign missions based upon such texts as Acts 3 and 4.

In Acts 3, Peter and John heal a man lame from birth in front of the temple. The Jewish leaders were jealous and had them arrested. The next day Annas the high priest and other high priestly members questioned Peter and John by what power or by what name they had done this. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, replied they did this “by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the chief cornerstone” (4:10–11). Peter then declares what could be called a Christian manifesto of the New Testament church and missions: “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by

which we must be saved” (4:12).

Peter’s Spirit-filled declaration tells us what is at the heart of Christianity. What does Christianity believe about salvation? There is salvation in no one else but Jesus. What does Christianity believe about authority? God gives the name by which we must be saved.

The healing of the lame man is a picture of salvation in Jesus. The lame man could not deliver himself from his condition. Crippled from birth, he had to be carried every day to the temple gate to beg. What happens to him is supernatural. He’s made a new creation. That’s why he’s leaping after he’s healed in Acts 3. He can finally go into the temple and worship God. For his whole life, he’s been barred by the law from doing so. In the new day that Jesus brings, the lame man is not kept at a distance.

The heartbreak is that from Machen’s day forward the PCUSA did not unambiguously lead with these biblical truths. Jesus Christ through his death on the cross and resurrection from the dead saves sinners, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. Peter is not talking about the goodness of man and everyone working together. He’s talking about salvation being found only in Jesus Christ.

A CHURCH DEVOTED TO GOSPEL MISSIONS

Christianity is a message of supernatural salvation in the name of the crucified and risen Christ. The church is to be witness of the salvation found in Jesus. It is to take the message about him from Jerusalem through Samaria to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The church’s task is not about cooperating with other non-Christian faith traditions found around the world. The church’s task is to not to provide an alternative American political presence. The commission that Jesus gives to his church is to go into the world and to make disciples of every nation, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching all that Jesus commanded (Matt. 28:19–20).

In June 1936, there was rejoicing in belonging to a Presbyterian church devoted to proclaiming the supernatural, divinely given salvation in Jesus Christ in its exclusivity, in its purity to all peoples. Praise be to God that the OPC has had and continues to have the blessed opportunity to raise up and support gospel missionaries who take the good news concerning Jesus to the ends of the world. That’s the answer to the question raised by Machen: What is it that the church is in the world to do? **NH**

The author is editor of New Horizons.

JESUS SAID, “LEARN FROM ME”

G. MARK SUMPTER

In the mid-1960s up in Anchorage, Alaska, I would wake up listening to a radio show out of New York City every Sunday morning. It wasn't David Wilkerson of the famed *The Cross and the Switchblade*, but it was something similar. That was my start as regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Northwest (PNW), to which I was called last year. Of course, there has been a great deal of growth along the way.

“GROWING UP” SPIRITUALLY IN THE PNW

I was baptized as a seven-year-old, reared in the church—in a churchgoing home—and my burden grew as an upper teen for service with children and youth. But I didn't know the Lord Jesus Christ in a saving way until I was eighteen and my dear Peggy told me at 2:00 a.m. one July morning what Christ is all about and what he came to do. Within weeks I wanted to know the Bible. I wanted to serve the Lord. My hunger for service in the local church grew. But I needed guidance. Big time. Peggy and I were married a year and a half later and moved to Portland, Oregon, where we began learning about worship, discipleship, and service at First OPC under our pastor, Don Poundstone. Don was our rock. Don was our shepherd. We were young.

The men of the presbytery opened to me many doors of learning and service so that I could grow. Youth work, Christian education, vacation Bible school, camp and retreat ministries, and learning to worship and be a Presbyterian were the threads that were woven. My “Timothy Conference” lasted nearly twelve years! I never had an official internship, but between the PNW and my time in Escondido, California, for my seminary training, many churchmen shaped my life. Along with stumbling through the ups and downs of the Christian life, in learning to walk the walk and follow Christ Jesus in faith, God provided help and guidance through his church while I was taken under care, a licentiate, and then ordained. Within the faith and life of the local church, the church loved me and provided training. The Lord is good!

More recently, I've had the privilege to take up learning something new in the same presbytery where I began

Previously RHM for the Presbytery of the Southwest, Sumpter now serves the Presbytery of the Northwest as its RHM



ministry: how to be a regional home missionary—how to serve under the care of a presbytery; to be involved in the lives of people who are thinking of outreach and evangelism and a new church; and then, to assist with the start of an Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

LEARNING AS AN RHM

Here are the areas that I continue to learn and grow:

Preaching. I get the privilege to open God's Word and preach. From pulpit to pulpit, whether established churches or new ones, it's still a time of learning. How do I best preach from the Bible; be faithful to the Scriptures; be helpful, in my context; and keep Christ the focus regarding the missionary mandate of seeing the Good News spread?

Worship. Over and over again, in working with new groups of saints, we take up teaching and application of Scripture-based, covenantal worship, the dialogical principle, and the blend of reverence, joy, and awe in prayer, singing, and the administration of the sacraments. I keep learning that we in our various OPC churches do a lot of the same things in our worship, but in different ways. And I get the opportunity to learn right along with the saints.

Fellowship. Deepening friendships and deepening like-mindedness become huge in church planting. Spending time with people around the dinner table or over

coffee is investing in the future of the local church. I've heard our RHMs and church planters say things like (and I agree), "Many want to plant a pulpit, but we want to plant a church—and the best way to plant is at the speed of relationships!" I tell myself, "Learn by spending time with the people."

Evangelism. Gathering a group takes openness. Because of the varied backgrounds of people, I often hear varied expressions of their theology. And I remember my own expressions! With patience, I try to listen and to teach. And I try to show care. And then I try to show more care. Zeroing in on the gospel is critical. Whether beginning to gather folks or working on various forms of developing outreach and evangelism in a growing church plant, we learn to keep the main thing the main thing. It is Christ Jesus, who is our hope.

Training. Questions and answers abound in church planting. How can we best observe the gifts of God's people; how can we deploy their gifts into service? Are there women who can be trained to serve in ways that increase the discipleship of women in the home and in the world? How about men—how can men start to take the baby steps to learn to explore matters for ordained service someday? Do our young people sense their place as part of the church of today and not just the church of tomorrow? This is training.

In the PNW, as a new RHM here, I am privileged at the present time to help two church-planting fields: Eugene, Oregon, and Klamath Falls, Oregon. I am learning with these saints to put one foot in front of the other. Jesus Christ is shepherding us all. He said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me" (Matt. 11:29). This has been my chief end—sort of—from the days of my youth.

The author is regional home missionary for the PNW.

Brian, Nicole, and Archer Tsui in 2023



NEW REGIONAL HOME MISSIONARY FOR CA AND NV

Brian Tsui

As the new regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada, I would appreciate your prayers that I might be useful in the work of church planting. To that end, you might want to know a bit about me and God's faithfulness in my life.

My parents both emigrated as children from the Guangdong province of China and Hong Kong during the Cultural Revolution for a better life in the States. I grew up in the Bay Area of Northern California. Our family religion was Chinese ancestral worship, which involved laying out food and drink offerings before a picture of a deceased grandparent. In exchange for honoring our ancestors, guidance and good fortune could be expected. Failure to do so would mean misfortune or even a curse.

When I was seven years old, my family was invited to a faithful, Chinese non-denominational church where I heard the gospel explained to me at a midweek children's service. The invitation to trust in Christ and have a real relationship with God was very appealing to me. But for the next seven years, although my family attended church regularly, the Bible was difficult for me to read and understand. Around the age of fourteen, I earnestly asked God to show himself to me and, by God's grace, the Bible amazingly became much more readable; I began to feast on the Word as I never had before. My youth leaders saw a great change in me and began to help me lead in the youth group and serve on Sundays. It was during this time that I sensed God was calling me to pastoral ministry.

It was at Redeemer Seminary in Dallas, Texas, in many ways, that I learned Reformed and covenantal theology. In 2013, I was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in America as an assistant pastor at a church in North Dallas, where I had served as an intern. Their evening service—one of few in the area—gave me ample opportunity to work on my preaching. Three years later, an opportunity to plant the first Reformed University Fellowship in the California State University system materialized, and I was called to plant RUF at San Jose State University. Two years later my wife, Nicole, and I adopted our only son, Archer, from South Korea.

In 2022, I transferred to the OPC to accept a call to Covenant Presbyterian Church in San Jose. In 2024, I was encouraged to consider serving as the RHM for the presbytery, which came to pass later that year.

REVIEW: HARRISON PERKINS'S *RIGHTEOUS BY DESIGN*

CAMDEN M. BUCEY

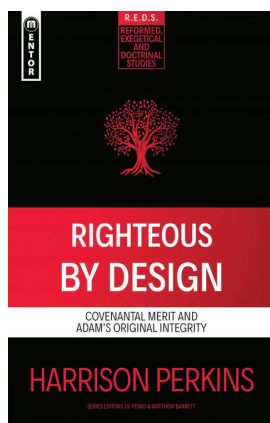
In *Righteous by Design: Covenantal Merit and Adam's Original Integrity*, Harrison Perkins addresses long-standing Reformed debates over Adam's original state and the covenant of works with scholarly rigor and pastoral warmth. At its core, this book defends the classic Reformed position that Adam was created with original righteousness, fully capable of obeying God and attaining eternal life under the covenant of works without needing any superadded gift of grace.

DESIGNED FOR COMMUNION

Perkins emphatically rejects the medieval Catholic notion of the *donum superadditum* (a "superadded gift") as unnecessary and unbiblical. Instead, he argues that Adam's nature was inherently oriented toward communion with God and eternal life. God "designed us for that end in our nature" (281), so no supernatural elevation was required. This stands in stark contrast to the Roman Catholic idea that man's natural state needed a supernatural gift to reach its supernatural end.

Because Adam was created upright, his obedience would have had real value before God—not through strict condign merit (as if creatures could earn divine rewards by intrinsic worth), but through covenantal merit (*meritum ex pacto*). By God's voluntary promise, Adam's perfect obedience—flowing from his righteous nature—would have justly received the blessing of eternal life.

Following key Reformed theologians such as Turretin, Witsius, and Vos, Perkins shows that God made Adam for eschatological glory from the beginning. The Westminster Shorter Catechism's statement that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever" (Q/A 1) embodies



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Paperback, 384 pages,
\$24.99.

this understanding that our supernatural destiny was built into our created nature. Creation was never meant to be an end in itself but was always aimed at greater communion with God.

Perkins commendably integrates the ontological dimension of Adam's righteousness with the covenantal structure of God's relationship to him. Some discussions of the covenant of works become dryly contractual, but Perkins grounds the covenant deeply in the doctrine of the image of God. He insists that Adam's ability to obey and please God was rooted in his nature as an

image-bearer reflecting God's holiness. As Perkins puts it, "the image of God and original righteousness are bound together" (325)—being in God's image means being oriented to love, obey, and enjoy God.

NATURE-GRADE DEBATE

A significant portion of *Righteous by Design* explores the classic nature-grace debate: What kind of help did human nature require to reach its supernatural end? Perkins's answer is clear: Before the fall, nature required no infused grace—not because humans could reach God on their own, but because God had built that supernatural end into nature from the start. The "help" God gave was not an infused *habitus* (habit of grace) but rather the generous act of establishing a covenant as a special act of providence with Adam.

Perkins emphasizes God's "voluntary condescension" in making the covenant of works. God freely stooped to enter into a relationship where Adam's obedience would be rewarded—a sheer act of divine kindness. This is how

Reformed theology can say the covenant of works was in a sense gracious (God was not obliged to promise anything to Adam), while still avoiding the confusion of calling it “grace” in the technical sense. In fact, Perkins argues (and this reviewer agrees) it is better not to use the word “grace” for the pre-fall situation at all, since Scripture and Reformed confessions typically reserve “grace” for God’s *de*-merited favor toward sinners. That is, what the elect receive (eternal life) is precisely the opposite of what they deserve (eternal death; Rom. 6:23).

His treatment of covenantal merit provides helpful clarity on issues similar to those examined in the OPC’s 2016 Study Committee Report on Republication. Readers familiar with those debates will appreciate Perkins’s careful distinctions regarding the nature of merit, divine condescension, and the relationship between the prelapsarian covenant and later administrations.

COMPLEXITY OF THE “CATHOLIC VIEW”

Perkins challenges the assumption that medieval theology was monolithic. He shows that Reformed theology sometimes has more in common with Thomas Aquinas than with post-Tridentine Catholicism on original righteousness, particularly in rejecting the idea that Adam was created in a purely natural state before the fall. According to him, both Aquinas and the Reformed taught that original righteousness was integral to man’s original nature, rather than an externally imposed addition.

However, while Aquinas classified original righteousness as a supernatural gift that perfected human nature, the Reformed in contrast saw it as inherent to the image of God itself. While there is a narrow alignment between Aquinas and the Reformed against pure nature formulations, their differences on the nature of original righteousness remain significant. Therefore, post-Tridentine Catholic theology increasingly emphasized pure nature with grace as a necessary add-on—a shift that moved away from both Aquinas’s original position and the Reformed tradition, though in different ways. Unlike Aquinas’s system, which contained elements that later Catholic theologians

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developed into a more robust expression of nature-grace dualism, Calvin’s explicit rejection of that dualism left no room for reinterpretation in the development of Reformed covenant theology.

FOCUSING ON THE SECOND ADAM

The heart of this book is warm and doxological—Perkins wants this recovery of covenant theology to edify the church, not just advance academic arguments. But at the end of the day, this is a scholarly work that addresses several complex theological and historical issues. As such, it is not intended for every reader of *New Horizons*, even though Perkins’s work addresses foundational issues that impact all believers. By examining how Adam related to God as created, Perkins illuminates our understanding of humanity’s relationship with God and our ultimate purpose. His clear articulation of a properly formulated covenant of works helps us better appreciate the work of Christ, the second Adam, who succeeds where the first failed. In these fundamental matters of creation, covenant, and redemption, Perkins provides important conceptual clarity that strengthens our grasp of Reformed theology at its most basic level.

CONGRATULATIONS

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

- **Sophia Rassbach**, *Covenant Presbyterian, Marina, CA*

The author is an OP minister and historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

BUDGET OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS

When you give to the OPC to support Worldwide Outreach, where does your money go? On this page for the next few issues there will be snapshots of the budgets of the committees of the OPC. This month, take a look at the Committee on Foreign Missions.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Asia (\$298,660): Supports the work of two missionaries, one of whom labors from the United States due to security concerns, and assists with indigenous church planting and leadership training.

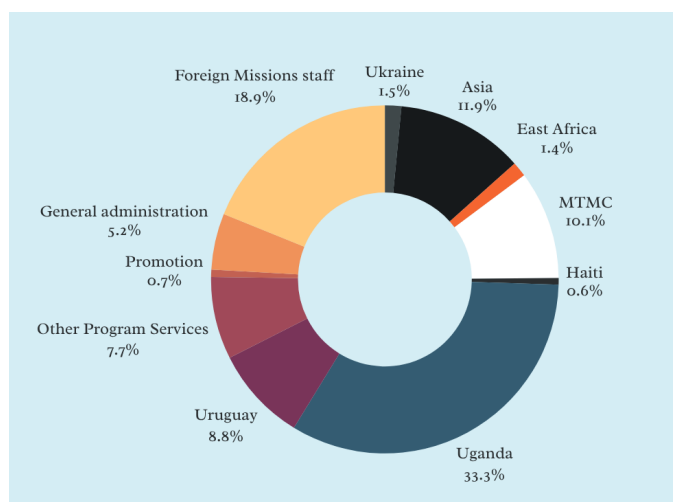
East Africa (\$35,000): Supports the work of the persecuted Reformed congregation planted by OPC missionaries over twenty years ago.

Mobile Theological Mentoring Corps (\$253,147): Supports the work of indigenous churches in Ethiopia, Kenya, Quebec, and Colombia, the labors of regional foreign missionary Benjamin Hopp, as well as leadership training in Africa, Asia, South America, and Europe.

Haiti (\$15,500): Supports the ministry of associate missionary Octavius Delfils (PCA) working with the churches in Port-au-Prince and La Gonâve.

Uganda (\$836,893): Supports two missionary evangelists, Michael Kearney and Frederick Lo, and funding for one more that is urgently needed; Karamoja facilities manager Travis Emmett; tentmaking missionary Tina DeJong; and associate missionaries Leah Hopp and the Verdicks. The Uganda mission also supports Akisyon a Yesu Presbyterian Clinic, the Knox School of Theology, the Reformation Book Room, and the Timothy Discipleship Program, and it assists the Reformation Church of East Africa in church planting and leadership training.

Ukraine (\$38,400): Contributes to the support of missionary evangelist Heero Hacquebord, who is laboring with the PCA Mission to the World team in Ukraine, planting Reformed churches.



Uruguay (\$221,345): Supports the labors of missionary evangelist Stephen Payson as well as funding for another evangelist that is urgently needed, and assists with the operating expenses of the church plant in Montevideo and a new work in Maldonado.

Other Program Services (\$192,700): Provides for short-term missionaries and interns, missionary candidates, missionary training and care, and benefits to retired missionaries.

SUPPORTING SERVICES

General administration (\$131,200): Just as the OPC does not require its foreign missionaries to raise their own support, it also doesn't require them to cover their associated administrative expenses. This also provides for departmental expenses including committee meetings and travel.

Promotion (\$17,000): Printing, publication, and mailing of materials informing the church about our foreign missionaries and encouraging the church to pray for them.

Salaries and benefits (\$474,696): Provides for the general secretary, an associate general secretary that is urgently needed, two administrative coordinators, and the short-term missions coordinator.

AUG-SEPT 2025 PRAYER CALENDAR

1 Pray for missionaries **Cal & Edie Cummings**, **Mary Lou Son**, and **Brian & Dorothy Wingard**. / **Lacy (Debbie) Andrews**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southeast.

2 **Jeremiah Montgomery**, Home Missions general secretary. / Pray for Stated Clerk, **Hank Belfield**, as he works on communications and administrative matters following the 91st General Assembly.

3 Associate missionaries **Octavius & Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Praise God for a new membership class with thirteen young people and for safety to worship on Sundays. / Pray for US Army chaplains, **CH (CPT) Stephen L. (Lindsey) Roberts** and **CH (CPT) Jeffrey P. (Jennifer) Shames**.

4 **Paul & Rachel Johnson**, Laveen AZ. Pray the Lord would grow Laveen Presbyterian through new members. / Pray for **Ben & Heather Hopp**, Africa and Haiti, as they each teach a course at Knox School of Theology this coming semester.

5 Pray for **Chris Byrd**, regional evangelist for New Jersey. / Pray for **Judy Alexander** as she steps into her new role as administrative coordinator for the Committee on Christian Education this month.

6 Give thanks for the **Ethiopian Mercy Reformed Church's (EMRC)** recent translation and publication of the *Five Points of Calvinism* in Amharic. / Pray for **Danny Olinger**, director of the Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC.

7 Pray for **Mr. & Mrs. M.**, Asia, as they begin hospitality and Bible study ministry to international students at the local university this fall. / **Mike (Elizabeth) Diercks**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Ohio.

8 Pray for **Al Tricarico**, Home Missions associate general secretary. / Pray that *The Reformed Deacon* podcast would be an encouragement to deacons across the denomination as they serve diligently.

9 **Mr. & Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray for a seminary graduate and his family who have recently returned to the country to assist Mr. F. and to further prepare for ordained work. / Pray that the *Ruling Elder Podcast* would be edifying and encouraging to both the ruling elders and the congregations they help shepherd.

10 **Andrew & Cheyenne Farr**, Klamath Falls, OR. Pray the Lord would bless Klamath Reformed's monthly Saturday outreach events. / **Heero & Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for their family's continued physical, emotional, and spiritual health as they serve the church in wartime conditions.

11 **Eric (Heather) Watkins**, evangelist for Chicago, IL, and Daytona, FL. / Yearlong intern **Zac (Caroline) Reeves** at Community Presbyterian Church in Kalamazoo, MI.

12 For September: Pray for administrative coordinators **Joanna Grove** and **Tin Ling Lee** as they prepare for Foreign Missions meetings Sept. 15–24. / Yearlong intern **Daniel (Anna) Karlson** at Calvary OPC in Cedar Grove, WI.

13 Pray for tentmaking missionary **Tina DeJong**, Nakaale, Uganda (on furlough). Pray for the Emmett, Hopp, Kearney, and Verdick families preparing for homeschooling this fall. / **Bradney & Eileen Lopez**, Guayama, PR. Pray the Lord would bless Iglesia Presbiteriana Sola Escritura OPC's ministry.



Tina DeJong (day 13)



The Lopezes (day 13)

14 **Bruce (Sue) Hollister**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Midwest. / Yearlong intern **Jooho Lee** at Calvary OPC in Glenside, PA.

15 **Mike & Jenn Kearney**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Mike as he starts to teach at Knox School of Theology and for Jenn as she homeschools Joanna. / Yearlong intern **Cliff (Bre) Foster** at Central Presbyterian Church in Irvine, CA.

16 **Phil & Melanie Hollstein**, Madisonville, LA. Pray for the outreach and evangelism efforts of Prince of Peace Presbyterian Church. / **Fred & Ka-Ling Lo**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for the incoming students at Knox School of Theology and their growth in Christ.

17 **Brad (Cinnamon) Peppo**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Ohio. / Yearlong intern **Joshua (Kamì) Smith** at Covenant OPC in Mansfield, OH.

18 Associate missionaries **Christopher & Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for wisdom and patience as they raise Carmel, Zion, and Olive to love Jesus. / Pray that the Lord would continue to nurture the gospel seeds that were planted this summer and would bless the follow-up to the summer's **short-term missions** efforts.

19 Associate missionary **Leah Hopp**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the unity of the Uganda team as they get to

know their newest team members. / **Jim (Bonnie) Hoekstra**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Wisconsin & Minnesota.

20 **Kevin & Cami Godsey**, Peoria, IL. Pray the Lord would bless the ministry of Radiant OPC. / Yearlong intern **Juhan Song** at Trinity OPC in Easton, PA.

21 **Travis & Bonnie Emmett**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Knox graduate Lokiru Timothy as he serves as clinic chaplain and interns at Nakaale Presbyterian Church. / **Stephen Pribble**, website technical associate.

22 **Jefferson (Ellen) De Oliveira**, Spanish language evangelist for Springfield, OH. / *For September: Pray Douglas Clawson, general secretary of Foreign Missions as he reports to the committee this week (Sept. 22–24).*

23 **Mark & Lorie Wheat**, Sugar Land, TX. Pray the Lord would bring new members to join Good Shepherd OPC. / Loan Fund Administrator **Mark Stumpf**.

24 Pray for the imprisoned pastors in **East Africa** who are denied healthcare because they refuse to deny the Lord. / **Charlene Tipton**, accounts manager.

25 Pray for affiliated missionaries **Craig & Ree Coulbourne**, Japan. / **Mark (Peggy) Sumpter**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Northwest.

26 **Brian (Nicole) Tsui**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada. / **Ayrian Yasar**, editorial assistant for *New Horizons* and *Ordained Servant*.

27 Affiliated missionaries **Mark & Laura Ambrose**, Cambodia. Pray for the plans to build another dorm to shelter girls escaping from trafficking. / **David Nakhla**,



Jooho Lee (day 14)

Disaster Response coordinator. Pray that the Lord would protect our brothers and sisters during hurricane season.

28 **David & Rebekah Graves**, Wichita Falls, TX. Pray that the Lord would grow Living Stone OPC. / Pray that the Lord would provide pastors and officers for the congregations of the **Reformed Church of Quebec**.

29 **Lauren LaRocca**, administrative coordinator for the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension. / **Anna Hall**, administrative coordinator for the Committee on Ministerial Care.

30 Pray for affiliated missionaries **Jerry & Marilyn Farnik**, Czech Republic, as they prepare to teach Christian counseling courses. / Pray for **Anneke Fesko** as she coordinates care and support for wives of ministers through the Committee on Ministerial Care.

31 Pray for **Stephen & Catalina Payson**, Montevideo, Uruguay (on furlough), returning in October to serve with the Salvos por Gracia church and Soli Deo Gloria church plant. / **Chris (Megan) Hartshorn**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California.



The Emmetts (day 21)



The congregation of Grace United OPC in Stanton, CA

NEWS

NEW OPC IN SOUTHERN CA

On June 29, the Presbytery of Southern California recognized Grace United OPC as a particular congregation and installed Pastor Peter Sim, ruling elders Sanjay Patel and Joshua Kim, and deacons Richard Chung and Andrew Yoon. The Rev. Jonathan B. Moersch moderated the service, the Rev. Dr. A. Craig Troxel preached from 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, the Rev. Danny E. Olinger gave the charge to the congregation, and the Rev. Dr. David M. VanDrunen gave the charge to the pastor.

FIRST HOME FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS IN NC

On June 19, Landis OPC celebrated the completion of its first 16' x 40' Chalmers Home in McDowell County, North Carolina, built for Clyde Huffman, who lost his brother and home during Hurricane Helene in 2024. The project, sparked by Landis OPC member Jimmy Laughridge's compassion and led by his church with support from OPC Disaster Response and the Presbytery of the Southeast, united seventy volunteers from nineteen churches and nine states. The ceremony included prayer and Scripture, praising the Lord for his amazing provision. This effort is not just about rebuilding homes but about pointing people to Christ while showing tangible mercy in the wake of disaster.

JACEY DAVISON ORDAINED AND INSTALLED IN GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Jacey Davison was ordained and installed as associate pastor of church planting

sent out by Cedar Presbyterian in Jenison, Michigan, on Friday, May 29, 2025. Rev. Dr. Doug Felch preached on "The Peter Principle of Church Leadership." Rev. John Terrell presented a charge to the minister. Rev. Steve Igo presented a charge to the daughter congregation, Ascension OPC, and the mother congregation, Cedar Presbyterian. After a day of prayer and fasting, an excellent dinner was graciously provided by the fellowship committee of Cedar Presbyterian. A graduate of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Davison completed two internships: at Grace Fellowship OPC (Zeeland, Michigan) and at Cedar Presbyterian prior to ordination. Ascension OPC now meets for weekly Sunday worship in Grand Rapids.

DAVID CHILTON RETIRES

Excerpted from a resolution of presbytery

The Presbytery of the South expresses its gratitude to God for the gift he has given in the ministry of Rev. David E. Chilton. Ordained in 1998, Mr. Chilton served as missionary evangelist to Germany until 2004, when he began serving at Reformation OPC in Oviedo, Florida. His wisdom and pastoral manner greatly aided the presbytery on the visitation committee. His integrity was evident in his many years as auditor. His leadership was essential as he augmented numerous sessions, including Covenant Reformed in Ft. Pierce, Holy Trinity in Ft. Lauderdale, Bay Haven in Tampa, and Prince of Peace in Madisonville.

Mr. Chilton served faithfully as associate pastor of Reformation for nearly

At Luke Gossett's April installation as church-planting pastor of Ascension OPC in Birmingham, AL (center, bow tie)



At Jacey Davison's May ordination as church-planting pastor of Ascension OPC in Grand Rapids, MI (center, yellow tie)



Dave Chilton (right) at general assembly

two decades while working much of the time in full-time employment outside of the church. In his last three years before retirement, Mr. Chilton stepped out in faith to serve the presbytery as its regional home missionary. With enthusiasm he threw himself into the work of Prince of Peace in Madisonville, where he and Wendy relocated to be an effective witness in that community, helping that mission work grow and mature. Mr. and Mrs. Chilton have been models of finishing the course and keeping the faith. Their wide variety of gifts has provided an inestimable blessing to the church.

UPDATE

CHURCHES

- On April 25, **Providence OPC** in Southfield, MI, transferred to the PCA.
- On May 31, the Presbytery of Ohio dissolved, at its request, **Knox Presbyterian Church** in Mount Vernon, OH.
- On June 20, the Presbytery of Philadelphia dissolved **Grace Presbyterian** in Middletown, DE.

MINISTERS

- On April 25, **F. Luke Gossett** was installed as an evangelist to serve as organizing pastor for Ascension OPC, a mission work in Birmingham, AL.
- On May 19, **Stephen E. Lauer** was installed as a pastor of Covenant OPC in Tucson, AZ.
- On May 23, **C. Phillip Hollstein** was installed as an evangelist to serve as church planter for Prince of Peace

Presbyterian in Madisonville, LA.

- On May 30, **Kevin T. Godsey** was ordained and installed as a pastor at Radiant OPC, a church plant in Peoria, IL.
- On May 31, the Presbytery of Ohio dissolved the ministerial relationship between **Jeremy J. Logan** and Knox Presbyterian Church.
- On June 1, the pastoral relationship between **Jeffery A. Landis** and Covenant Presbyterian in San Jose, CA, was dissolved upon his retirement.
- On June 13, **Dr. L. Charles Jackson** was installed as pastor of Wilmington Reformed in Wilmington, OH.

MILESTONES

- Former OP minister **Dr. Jack D. Kinneer**, 72, died June 21.
- Retired OP minister **Michael Frank Frangipane**, 82, died June 22.

REVIEWS

Perfect Priest for Weary Pilgrims: A Theology of Hebrews, by Dennis E. Johnson. Crossway, 2024. Paperback, 216 pages, \$24.99. Reviewed by the editor, Danny E. Olinger.

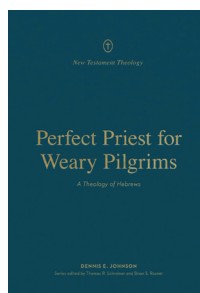
In *Perfect Priest for Weary Pilgrims*, Dennis Johnson admits that as a younger Christian, even as a student at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, he found the Epistle to the Hebrews daunting. After nearly a decade of pastoral experience at Grace OPC in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, and Beverly OPC in Los Angeles, Johnson accepted a call to teach at Westminster Seminary California. As a professor, he confesses that he fell in love with Hebrews, especially its Christ-centered, redemptive-historical understanding of the Old Testament combined with pastoral warmth through its heartfelt exhortations. It was this type of ministry, Christ-centered and humble, that he sought to pass on to his students, and that is reflected in the pages of this book. His

words do not overpower the message of Hebrews, but rather seek to communicate that Jesus is the perfect priest for sinners: one who secures salvation to the uttermost for those who are pilgrims searching for rest in the wilderness that is this world.

The book divides into seven chapters: The Wilderness Pilgrimage of the People of God; The Historical Trajectory of Redemption and Revelation; The Interpretation of Ancient Scripture; The Divine-Human Mediator; Jesus's Priestly Qualifications and Tenure; Jesus's Once-for-All, Conscience-Perfecting Sacrifice; and Persevering Faith through Congregational Solidarity. Little gems of insight are found throughout. For example, in the opening chapter, Johnson states that the destination that Hebrews calls "rest" in chapters 3 and 4 drawing upon Psalms 95 is elsewhere in Hebrews described as "the city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10), the heavenly city that the patriarchs greeted from afar (11:13–16), and the "lasting city" for which the believer hopes (13:14). Believers look to Christ for this comfort as they find themselves "today" in the wilderness and not yet possessing "God's rest" in full.

Another strong chapter is the one on Jesus as the divine-human mediator. There Johnson argues that the Christological motifs found in the rest of the New Testament are present in the thirteen chapters of Hebrews.

The motif of the Son's eternal deity and his role as creator of all things are taught in Hebrews 1 as well as John 1 and Colossians 1. The motif of the Son's true humanity, marked by his weakness and suffering, temptation and obedience, is seen



CORRECTION

On page 5 of the July issue, J. Mark Moody incorrectly appeared as "M. Joe Moody."

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Pastor: Armor Bible Church in Orchard Park, New York, is seeking a pastor with a humble fear of God and a heart to shepherd and care for our congregation. He should be established in the Reformed doctrine and eager to encourage and equip God's people, through God's Word, for service in God's kingdom. Please contact search@armorchurch.org to apply.

Pastor: Bethlehem Reformed in Freeman, South Dakota, is seeking a full-time pastor. Located in southeast South Dakota with about fifty members, we are looking for a pastor with strengths in preaching, leading worship, teaching, and shepherding the congregation. To apply, contact ewentz@fairmfg.com. For more information, visit www.bethlehemreformed.com and experiencefreemansd.com.

in Hebrews 2, 4, and 5, in addition to the four Gospels. Hebrews 1, 2, 5, 7, 10, and 13 present the motifs of the messianic sonship of Jesus and his movement from humiliation to glory in order to save his people; these motifs are also found in Jesus's words in Luke 24, the sermons in Acts, in Romans, and other Pauline Epistles.

Reading *Perfect Priest for Weary Pilgrims* will strengthen your confidence in the unity of Scripture and renew your awe in the majesty of Christ.

***The Mythmakers: The Remarkable Fellowship of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien*, by John Hendrix. Abrams Books, 2024. Hardcover, 224 pages, \$24.99. Reviewed by Judith M. Dinsmore, managing editor.**

The author of this young adult graphic novel, John Hendrix, mixes a teenager's enthusiasm for Narnia and Middle Earth with a professor's enthusiasm for instruction and a believer's intimacy with doubt, loss, and transformative faith. The resulting story of the friendship between Lewis and Tolkien, while too ambitious in scope at points, is beautifully portrayed.

Hendrix, a professor of visual arts at Washington University in St. Louis, movingly depicts Christ's redemptive work inside the catastrophes of this world as the reader learns about Lewis's and Tolkien's childhoods, the devastation of war, their academic work, Lewis's wrestling with the Spirit in his conversion, their profound support of each other artistically during the time of the gathering of the Inklings and, tragically, the coldness that came into their relationship.

Two figures, a wizard and a lion, act as the reader's Virgil at each chapter's opening. They make approachable discussions of literary genre and

Epic" to explain what a myth does fall flat for those with a high view of Scripture; Genesis rests on a pillar in the hall alongside texts like *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Joseph Campbell is later approvingly cited. That section, not central to the book, would be a good opportunity for discussion with young adult readers. "Portals" transport the reader to the back pages, where the lion and wizard interact with the learned Dr. Thistle (based on Dorothy Sayers). I read *Mythmakers* for book club, and we were divided fifty-fifty as to whether the lion and wizard (you can spy them on the cover) were delightful guides or a bit overdone. No teenagers were present however, and perhaps, as the book's target audience, it is their impression that ought to carry the day.

The gorgeous art pulls the reader into the experiences of both writers: how the Dead Marshes in *The Return of the King* are

a revisitation of Tolkien's experience at the Battle of the Somme in World War I; how a walk in the woods deep in conversation with Tolkien and mutual friend Hugo Dyson brought Lewis into a clarity of conviction that Christ was the only "myth" who entered history; and how the inn, The

Eagle and Child, was both refuge and refinery for the great minds who met there.

Part of the allure of literary biography is to bring famous writers back down to size as "real" people. Hendrix's medium, in



nineteenth- and twentieth-century research into myth and legend. Lewis and Tolkien shared a fascination with Norse mythology and both wanted to write a myth for the disenchanted postwar world. Yet how different were their methods: Hendrix contrasts Tolkien's careful creation of a logical fantasy world in Middle Earth with Lewis's use of key images to create Narnia, borrowing more from allegory and fairy tale.

Hendrix's attempt when the wizard and the lion enter "The Hall of Myth and



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contrast, is especially fit to portray what is, to borrow from Lewis, more real than real: the wonder of an otherworldly grace that changes the story. Once fractured, Lewis and Tolkien's friendship was never restored in this life—but Hendrix points us to the restoration that is to come.

***Union with Christ: The Benefits of His Suffering and Glory*, by Lane G. Tipton. Reformed Forum, 2025. Paperback, 130 pages, \$16.99. Reviewed by the editor, Danny E. Olinger.**

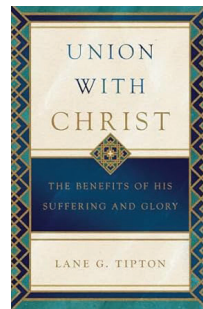
Lane Tipton states that, although *Union with Christ* is a stand-alone book, it advances the thesis of his earlier book *Foundations of Covenant Theology*. In that volume, he argues that the glory of the triune God forms the key subject matter of Scripture. When God created the heavens and the earth, his glory-presence sanctified the invisible heaven as a temple-dwelling. The covenant of works (Gen. 2:7–18) put before Adam the hope of full communion with God in this Spirit-filled realm upon successful completion of the probation, but Adam transgressed God's word. Standing guilty before God because of his sin, Adam's hope was tied to a second covenant in the form of a covenant of grace that promised life and salvation by faith in a Messiah. Jesus is the promised seed who will crush the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15), clothe his people with his image (Gen. 3:21), and pass under the sword of judgment to ascend the mountain of the Lord (Gen. 3:24).

In *Union with Christ*, Tipton builds upon the significance of Jesus as the second and last Adam who, by his obedience to the point of death and his resurrection from the dead, has attained the heavenly goal

forfeited by the first Adam's sin. In ten short chapters, Tipton moves from Christ's humiliation and exaltation in "redemption accomplished" (*historia salutis*) to the believer's union with Christ in his humiliation and exaltation in "redemption applied" (*ordo salutis*). A Spirit-worked faith union with the crucified and ascended Savior brings his benefits—including justification, sanctification, and adoption—to the believer.

Each chapter has systematic, biblical-theological, and confessional elements. Systematically, Tipton gives great weight to the dogmatic insights of Geerhardus Vos and John Calvin. One example of this is Tipton's use of Vos and Calvin to establish that union with Christ by faith is a legal union. Tipton appeals to Vos to support the biblical teaching that the righteousness of Christ in his suffering and exaltation supplies a judicial feature to the union bond and that the bond lies in being reckoned in Christ by the judgment of God. Tipton then turns to Calvin to support Vos's claim that the legal fellowship given in union with Christ is not found in the believer, but in the objective righteousness of Christ. He quotes Calvin,

We do not, therefore, contemplate [Christ] outside ourselves from afar in order that his righteousness may be imputed to us but because we put on Christ and are engrafted into his body—in short, because he deigns to make us one with him. For this reason, we glory that we have fellowship of righteousness with him. (59–60)



In terms of biblical-theology, Tipton leans heavily on Vos again and adds the insights of Richard Gaffin Jr., Herman Ridderbos, and John Murray. One example here is the discussion of sanctification in Christ as an irreversible and ongoing condition. In exegeting Romans 6, Gaffin and Ridderbos speak of the indicative, the irreversible condition of being dead to

sin and alive to God in union with Christ, and the imperative, the ongoing growth in death to sin and life to God in union with Christ. Tipton notes that Murray makes the same point with his teaching that there is a definitive aspect to sanctification and a progressive aspect to sanctification. The exhortation of Romans 6:12, "Let not sin

therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions," is that since you are dead to sin in Christ (irreversible condition), continue to be dead to sin and do not let it reign.

Confessionally, Tipton references Westminster Shorter Catechism 23–28 extensively in the discussion on redemption accomplished and 30–35 in the discussion on redemption applied and declares that Westminster Larger Catechism 65, 66, and 69 present the classical Reformed view of the nature of union with Christ in relation to the benefits of that union.

Tipton argues in closing that the suffering and glory of Jesus Christ is at the heart of the church's greatest practical benefits. "Jesus abides with his church in her suffering, heals her with his cross, raises her with his life, and comforts her with the comfort he himself has received" (111).