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**THE  
STANDARD  
BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

*Special Issue:*

***Missions and Evangelism***

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Volume 85 ◆ Number 16

# Christ in Heaven

*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

Hebrews 2:9

**I**n just a few days we will be observing, as the church of Christ, Ascension Day. This is forty days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Most of the church world does not pay attention to this day, but if it were not for the ascension of Christ into heaven, all that was accomplished before would be in vain.

Very appealing to us, therefore, is the confident statement, "We see Jesus." He was seen by the church in the old dispensation, but not as we see Him now. They saw Jesus in the types and

shadows that were given them. In the temple they saw and were assured that someday God would tabernacle in the flesh when Jesus would come. They saw the king sitting on the throne in Jerusalem, witnessed the priest sacrificing in the temple, and heard the Word of God from the mouths of the prophets. All this reminded them that the day was not far off when their great King would come, who at the same time would be the perfect High Priest and the greatest of all Prophets. But as long as He had not come, they saw Him only imperfectly, and they continued to long and pray for His day and for the better things to come.

But we see Jesus as He is exalted with power at the Father's right hand in the heavens. Our eye of faith is fixed upon Him who is crowned with glory and honor at the Father's right hand. The very

sight of Him thrills our souls with present joy and blessed hope for our future glory with Him. In all our anxieties and cares, we can always know and profess that we see Jesus as only we today are privileged to see Him.

This glorification of Christ could come only by way of humiliation. This could only be by the grace of God. As God's Son He was holy and without sin. Tender compassion filled His soul as He came to save His people from their sins. Filled with God's grace He came to us

in the weakness of sinful flesh. His whole life on earth was one of humiliation. He was born in poverty and despised among men. His own family did not understand Him, nor did His disciples. He was

rejected by the whole world, as seen by the betrayal by Judas, Peter's denial, His condemnation

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*Rev. Miersma is pastor of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church in Loveland, Colorado.*

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by the Sanhedrin, and His being sentenced to death by the worldly magistrate. All this culminated in His being nailed to the cross and even being forsaken of God.

All this He bore willingly because He came to bear the wrath of God against our sins and to bear that wrath away. He was the Good Shepherd who gave His life for His sheep, that He might ransom them from sin and death and bring them along with Him into glory. Exactly because of His suffering and death He was crowned with glory and honor. This was the reward of God to Him for the work that He had accomplished for us while He was in the flesh. This was the crowning point of His entire earthly ministry.

His glorification is that He sits at the right hand of God, radiating the glory of God, which is far more dazzling than the sun at noonday. All God's virtues shine forth upon Christ. There on the throne next to God sits Christ, with the scepter of authority in His hands. All the authority of God is entrusted to Christ, so that Christ carries out all the work of God in all His wide creation. Obviously all power is given to Christ in heaven and on earth, and thus we behold Him today with the eye of faith.

We understand very little of that great fact, that God has entrusted to Christ all power in heaven and on earth. He is Lord over the angels and saints in heaven, and over the devil and wicked in hell. He is Lord also over the sun, moon, and stars, as well as over the entire earth and all its creatures. On the earth He is Lord over the wicked that rebel against Him, and over the church of which He is the head.

This glorious ascension of Christ certainly had its effect, in heaven, in hell, and on earth. In heaven, first of all, which had its own tragic history. All the angels had been created good. But under Satan many of them fell, caus-

ing a breach in the angelic host. The devil and all his angels were placed under arrest, to be brought to trial when Christ would come.

The faithful angels had a very personal interest in the coming of Christ, for they then would be united in perfect harmony under Him. Eagerly they longed for His coming and watched intently the development of history. Gladly they brought their messages to the saints on earth, for in that way they, too, were serving toward Christ's coming. No wonder they sang for joy in the presence of the shepherds on that wonderful night that Jesus was born. Readily they came to comfort Him at Gethsemane. They needed no encouragement to go forth to announce His resurrection. And they gave full vent to their pent-up feelings when they accompanied Him as Victor from battle and brought Him to the Ancient of Days, from whom Christ received the authority to sit at God's right hand in the heavens.

For the saints already in heaven there was also enrichment. They had entered heaven with the promise that God would send the Savior to merit salvation for them. Meanwhile, the devil entered into heaven as the accuser of the brethren, saying that they had no right to be there. But when Christ came, that accuser was cast out. The right of the saints in heaven was sealed by the death and exaltation of their Head, Jesus Christ. They are now with Christ in glory in intimate fellowship with Him. Indeed, Christ is in heaven, and His saints rejoice in that forevermore.

Christ's exaltation was no less felt in hell, the place of everlasting defeat and despair. All through the old dispensation, the devils had the power to assault those who were on earth. Satan attacked our first parents in Paradise. After the Mother Promise was given, he exerted all his effort to prevent the coming of Christ. To no avail, for in the fullness of time He came. During the life of Christ on earth, Satan

tried to have Him killed. Finally, he brought Christ to the cross, and it looked as if Satan had succeeded. However, while the devil bruises the heel of Christ, the Christ stamps down on his head, crush-

ing that head forever. The power of darkness is condemned, and Christ is victorious over all His foes.

This victory is announced in hell, when Christ ascends into heaven. Having been condemned, those in hell know that they have but a little while before their death sentence will be executed. All their fuming rage against the church today results from the fact that they know that their cause is lost. Knowing this they put forth a desperate effort to wipe out the cause of Christ from the earth. Yet, when these powers of darkness have served their purpose, they will be sent to hell, where their death sentence will be fully executed. Their torment and despair will be intensified by the exaltation of Christ as Lord over all.

And, finally, the exaltation of Christ means that His power and authority also extends over the

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That fact is now  
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Therefore, the exaltation  
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particularly for us  
as His church that is  
still on the earth.*

earthly creation. God through Christ causes the sun to rise and to set; He sends the rain, the earthquakes, and the floods. He has power over the nations, so that in spite of themselves they serve His purpose toward the coming of the Lord. The nations rage and the people imagine a vain thing, but God has set His Son in heaven as Lord over all. While the world is making the measure of its iniquity full, Christ is preparing to come again and to take His own unto Himself.

For Christ as exalted Lord is Head of His church. Christ is there for the sake of His people. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. That fact is now established be-

yond dispute. Therefore, the exaltation of Christ has its rich and blessed significance particularly for us as His church that is still on the earth. We see Jesus crowned with glory and honor! What else can that mean than that our Savior is in heaven, and that as our Savior He has all power entrusted to Him to work out our salvation?

As our Savior He instructs the angels, in order that they, too, in their own way, may serve toward the ingathering of God's church. As Savior, He controls the ragings of Satan and of the wicked, so that their wicked attempts to destroy us can only be turned to our welfare. We are in the midst of the battle against all the

forces of darkness, but we stand victorious, for we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us. As our Savior, He provides every good thing and turns all things for our sanctification and for our ultimate glorification. "God is for us, who can be against us?"

And this same Lord blesses us with every spiritual blessing from heaven. We have His Spirit in our hearts. We are made into sons of God. And if sons, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Now we suffer with Him for a little while, to be glorified with Him forever. In that confidence we wait for His return and His final glory in the new creation.



## Editor's Notes

Prof. Russell Dykstra

### Special Issue: Missions and Evangelism

**P**rior to His ascension into heaven, Jesus left specific instructions to His church about her calling in the world after He assumed His place at the right hand of His Father. The church was commissioned to send forth the gospel to the ends of the world. Jesus promised that He would pour out His Spirit upon His church in order that the whole of the church—all believers—might be faithful witnesses of Christ. Accordingly, the church that is obedient to the risen Lord is busy with the work of missions and witnessing in various ways.

The Protestant Reformed Churches, in obedience to the King of the church, sends out missionaries in America and abroad. Local congregations are likewise busy in evangelism. This tiny

denomination of fewer than 8,000 souls seeks to be faithful both to the purity of God's truth and to its proclamation wherever God gives opportunity. We do not despise the day of small things.

The editors decided to publish a special issue that would highlight the ongoing work in denominational missions and local evangelism. Thus we asked our missionaries to write about their respective labors, giving an overview of how the field got to the point that it is today. We asked evangelism committees to give a snapshot of their activity, noting especially endeavors about which they were particularly excited. In addition we asked Rev. Stuart, of the Covenant PRC of Northern Ireland, to describe his congregation's significant ventures on the Internet.

The desire is, first of all, to

inform. The hope is that by these accounts we encourage each other to ever more zeal and faithfulness. The purpose is also to give the readers concrete knowledge, enabling them to perform their indispensable part, namely, to pray for the work. We are excited about the articles submitted, convinced that they will do all of that, and more. It should also make us bow in humble thanksgiving to the Lord.

A hearty thanks goes out to all the writers.



The response of the missionaries and committees was such that their articles filled most of the space for this issue. For this reason we decided to postpone the scheduled editorial. Look for the preview of the 2009 Synod in the June 1 issue.

—RJD 



# Our Labors in the Philippines

Rev. Richard Smit

**H**aving recently been installed as foreign missionary for the labors in the Philippines, I have been given this opportunity to provide some information concerning the work of our churches in the Philippines. This is an area of our work as a denomination in which I have been involved since 1996 to one degree or another, and now in which I have the privilege to be involved as missionary. We trust that the following brief overview will give you a better understanding of the direction, the challenges, and the burden of our mission labors in the Philippines, so that your prayerful support may be more meaningful.

## A Brief History of Our Labors to Date

We may divide the history of our labors in the Philippines to the present time into two main stages.

We may call the first stage of our labors in the Philippines the "developmental stage." This began roughly in 1995 and continued until 2001. Our involvement in the Philippines began with the work of Peace PRC's Evangelism Committee. Peace had correspondence for some time with several people throughout the islands. When Peace realized that there was substantial work to be done and that this work might be better served by a possible missionary, they gave the work over to

the Foreign Mission Committee to continue and develop. As part of that ongoing work, and with our synod's approval, the FMC oversaw the sending of delegations in order to assess whether the Lord was giving to us a place of labor in the Philippines. The delegations visited, preached, lectured, and conducted Bible study meetings in such places as Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Capalonga, Daet, Davao, Jose Panganiban, Labo, and Manila. Our first delegation, Rev. Arie den Hartog and Rev. Allen Brummel, labored for several weeks there in the Fall of 1997. Since that visit, six more delegations were sent in this developmental stage of work. Having developed the contacts as far as possible by periodic delegations, the FMC proposed to Synod 2001 that a missionary be called to carry on the labors. Synod 2001 approved the calling of a missionary to labor in Manila as well as with the other contacts that we had at that time.

We may call the second stage of our labors in the Philippines the "missionary stage." In the Fall of 2001, Rev. A. Spriensma and Mr. Allen Brummel visited the mission field while Rev. Spriensma was considering the call to serve the saints there. Later, he accepted the call to labor as missionary with our contacts in the Philippines. In order to prepare for his move to the field, he visited the Philippines in the Spring of 2002 with Mr. Gene Van Bommel, elder in the Doon PRC, the overseeing congregation for our Philippine missionaries. Rev. Spriensma and his family moved to Manila

in July 2002, and he concentrated his labors with the group of saints whom we know today as the Berean Protestant Reformed Church. Through Rev. Spriensma's labors, the church was instituted as a beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ on November 20, 2006. In addition to his labors in the Berean PRC, Rev. Spriensma conducted weekly Reformed doctrine studies with pastors of the Bastion of Truth Reformed Churches and periodically visited, lectured, and preached with, to, and for pastors, churches, and contacts in other areas, including Bacolod and Inayauan, on the island of Negros. Rev. Spriensma laid down his labors in the Philippines in the Spring of 2007, having been directed by the Lord to serve in the Protestant Reformed Church in Kalamazoo, Michigan. At present, the mission work will continue in the "missionary stage," until such time the Lord grants growth towards the next stage.

Since the Spring of 2007, the Lord has preserved the work so that it still cries out for the presence of laborers to meet the needs of God's saints whom we have come to know and love in our like precious faith. In that understanding, the Doon PRC continued to extend calls for another missionary to continue our labors. After Doon extended fourteen calls from October 2006 to January 2009, the Lord provided another missionary to continue our labors.

In the interim between missionaries on the field, the churches have given up pastors for sev-

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*Rev. Smit is a missionary of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, soon to be stationed in Manila, the Philippines.*

eral weeks at a time to provide pulpit supply to the Berean PRC in Quezon City and the All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship in Gabaldon, as well as some conferences and visits to the Reformed pastors and contacts in Manila and the pastors and members in the Reformed Free Churches in the islands of Negros and Guimaras. By August 2009, pulpit supply will have been provided by the Profs. D. Engelsma, B. Gritters, and H. Hanko and by the Revs. A. Brummel, S. Key, Dale Kuiper, W. Langerak, A. Lanning, A. Spriensma, R. Smit, and R. Van Overloop. Accompanying these brethren have been officebearers and, in some cases, their wives as well. In spite of the vacancy on the mission field, this pulpit and conference supply has been a blessing to the Berean congregation and contacts, and it has been a blessing to our own churches by having some of our ministers and members become concretely acquainted with the needs and the scope of our labors in the Philippines.

### A Sizable Mandate

The scope of the workload that our missionaries must continue in the Philippines has been laid out in detail in the call letter that the Doon PRC and the FMC gives to the ministers who have considered the Philippine mission call. For your information, the list of labors expected of our ministers sent over to labor in the Philippines consists of the following items:

1. to provide preaching of the holy gospel twice on the Lord's Day, including Heidelberg Catechism preaching;
2. to give catechism instruction to the youth;
3. to lead Bible studies;
4. to provide pastoral care among the members of the Berean Protestant Reformed Church in the Philippines (Quezon City);
5. to conduct the admin-

istrative work of the mission field;

6. to help the Berean PRC continue her work in the All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship in Gabaldon;

7. to continue to develop contact with the Bastion of Truth Reformed Churches and their pastors;

8. to continue contact with the Reformed Free Churches and pastors in Inayauan and Bacolod City;

9. to be available for the instruction of these contacts and others in the Reformed Faith; and,

10. to bring to the heathen by all fit and lawful means the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners.

The primary focus of the present missionary's labors is items 1 through 5: the Berean Protestant Reformed Church and its needs and her own church extension labors. There is an urgent need for a minister to fulfill the pastoral work of the Berean congregation. While that is the main focus, there may be some time to scratch the surface of the labors of items 6 through 10 as time and other God-given limitations permit.

That raises the question: can the work of items 1 through 10 be sufficiently fulfilled by one laborer in Manila? The above list vividly demonstrates the rationale behind the need for a second missionary to fulfill the labors together: one being responsible for items 1 through 5, and the second being responsible for items 6 through 10. The labors and territory in which the labors of items 6 through 10 should be fulfilled are too broad for one minister. Just items 6, 8, and 9 involve Reformed friends and contacts on other islands, requiring additional travel time, time devoted to diligent correspondence, and significant time to prepare worthwhile and solid instruction classes or conferences

when visiting our friends for a period of time. Hence, with the presence and labors of a second missionary, the work with the surrounding contacts, pastors, churches, and even possibly with those who have had no contact with the true gospel in their generations, can be more effectively and faithfully fulfilled. To this goal, the Doon PRC continues to call a second missionary to serve in our labors in the Philippines.<sup>1</sup>

The division of the work between the co-laborers is not an absolute separation, so that one missionary may not assist the other in his area of labor. Rather, the FMC envisions that the co-laborers, although given these initial two areas of responsibility, will cooperate where needed and encourage one another together in the complete set of labors in the Philippines.

### The Desired Goal

As we continue for the present time in the "missionary stage" of our work, we labor with the expectation, the Lord willing and with His blessing, of growth into the third stage of our involvement in the Philippines. We may call this the "full sisterhood stage." This is the stage at which the Berean Church would be in a relationship with the PRCA similar to that which the Covenant PRC in Northern Ireland currently enjoys.

Growth into this stage involves understanding the implications and duties involved in being a spiritually mature sister of the PRCA and the PRCNI. Growth into this stage involves some necessary preparation. Furthermore, it is our prayerful desire that, if the Lord wills, there may be churches in the Philippines, united together themselves

<sup>1</sup> Just before going to press, we heard the good news that Rev. Daniel Kleyn, pastor of First PRC Holland, accepted the call to serve in the Philippines. —ed.

in a federation, who together may be united in the Reformed faith with the PRCA and the PRCNI.

That is the desired goal, but it is one that is entirely dependent on the Lord's will and blessing. Fundamentally, our goal is, as the apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 9:22, that by the preaching of the Word "some" may be saved. We do not have grand schemes for great revival. We have the apostle's realistic view that the "some" of God's choosing and saving might come to know the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our work is the faithful proclamation of His Word and Truth, which is necessary for the Christian to believe. And we labor in the hope that God will set His seal of approval upon our efforts, with the twofold fruit of all faithful, distinctive, and antithetical preaching of Christ's death and resurrection: the hardening of the unrighteous in the world and the carnal seed within the church world, and the gathering of those whom God has ordained unto eternal life.

Our hope is that God will so gather His people through our labors, that there may be formed Reformed churches with faithful officebearers who may as lighthouses shine brightly among the Philippine islands for the salvation of God's people from spiritual darkness and shipwreck unto the everlasting harbor of peace.

### Some Necessary Preparation

In order to prepare for this work, the FMC adopted a "Program of Preparation," which was designed to prepare our missionaries for effective and long-term

service in overseas mission fields where there are significant differences in customs, prosperity, language, history, and other significant cultural elements. While the task of missions is the preaching of the gospel, it is good for the missionary to know to a good degree where this task will be

*We do not have grand schemes for great revival. We have the apostle's realistic view that the "some" of God's choosing and saving might come to know the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

done and to whom he will be preaching. The missionary cannot preach in a vacuum, but rather must preach the Word of God to His people in their particular places and situations. Effective mission work is served well by some time of preparation and becoming familiar with the mission field before the missionary settles under the complete workload on the mission field.

With that in mind, our churches, through the FMC, require that our foreign missionaries take the time to know to a good degree the culture into which they will enter, to get a significant grasp of the principal foreign language of the field, to familiarize himself with the needs of the field, to grow in the principles of biblical and Reformed missions, and to be aware of current and unbiblical mission trends in the church world. At present, I am learning Tagalog, auditing two missions-related courses at Dordt College (Sioux Center, Iowa), reading extensively according to a long list of missions-related books assigned by the FMC, corresponding regularly with contacts on the field, and making all the necessary and many preparations for the move to metro Manila.

In addition to FMC's "Program of Preparation," there are two other necessary elements of preparation, not to be overlooked. First, recently on March 19 in a special worship service, I was installed as foreign missionary in the Doon PRC. Not only must a missionary have the Lord lay that internal and inescapable burden on his heart to go and serve God's saints in the place where the Lord sends, but he must also have the sending of the churches. The apostle Paul needed that, according to Acts 13:1-3. I also needed to be sent, and to be assured in my heart that I have been sent by the Lord and His Spirit, through the church, to serve His saints in the Philippines whom we have come to know and love in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, with that necessary and indispensable anointing of the Spirit, I preached my first sermon as missionary for my calling church on March 22 on John 13:12-17 under the theme, "Washing the Feet of the Saints." By His powerful example, Jesus taught His apostles, and also all His harvest laborers, the proper spiritual posture to be used when serving His saints. Especially is this important because for us, from a very wealthy, technology-laden, Western culture, and from a long-standing Reformed tradition, it is a real temptation to approach a mission field, such as the Philippines, in the posture of superiority, as though we are quite something or by our own power and strength we have learned and maintain the precious jewels of the Reformed faith. We must fight that temptation. We must labor, knowing our own need to be washed by the blood and Spirit of Christ from our sin and unbelief. Knowing what Christ has done to us, then in the power of His death and in dependency upon His Spirit to stoop down, to live with the saints in their troubles and Philippine struggles, and to




wash their feet with the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

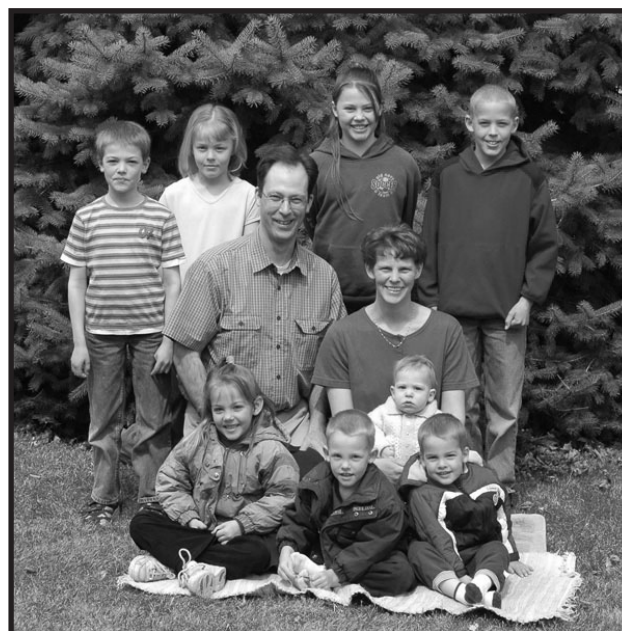
### The Encouraging Hope

However, when we think of the workload, with its challenges, and, on top of that, the many changes that must take place in the next year for me and my family, the task is made to appear impossible. And, humanly speaking, it is. And so it will remain, apart from the grace and Spirit of Christ.

Nevertheless, the Lord does not send us into His harvest alone or let it depend upon us or our labors. He sends us forth with His Spirit and His sure promises. He sends us forth with the encouraging truth that all those whom He has ordained to eternal life shall believe (Acts 13:48). He assures us that all His elect must come to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (II Pet. 2:9). Of all that the Father has given to Christ, He shall lose none (John 18:9). Knowing that the Spirit of

Christ is in sovereign control of the direction of the gospel (Acts 16:6, 7, 9), we may be assured that the Lord will continue to sanctify us for faithful service and use our small, weak, and sin-spotted labors for the gathering of His eternally chosen church, also within these 7,007 islands of the sea that form the Philippines (Heidelberg Catechism, Q/A 54). The Lord will send forth His Word and accomplish His blessed purpose, which is ultimately the glory of His great name (Is. 55:11-13) and the praise

of the glory of His wondrous grace (Eph. 1:6). 



#### Smit family:

Rev. and Mrs. Richard Smit (center),  
with their children (oldest to youngest):  
John, Rebekah, Jay, Irene,  
Rosalyn, Seth, Carl, Ryan

## Mission Work in Pittsburgh

Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma

### The Goal of our work

**W**hen Southwest Protestant Reformed Church called and sent me to labor in Pittsburgh it was with a specific goal in mind. I was sent to preach the gospel for the purpose of establishing a Protestant Reformed Church here. Calling sinners to repentance and faith is intrinsic to this labor, of course, just as it is in the established church. It is important in my la-

hors, therefore, to call people out of the darkness of unbelief and into the light of salvation.

But what happens after this takes place? Quite obviously those who are brought to salvation are not now left to fend for themselves. They must be nurtured in their faith and brought to a knowledge of the truths of Scripture. That also is my work as a missionary. Neither is this nurturing of new believers to be done apart from the goal of establishing a Protestant Reformed Church. After all, it is also the calling of all those who believe to join themselves with the church institute in this world. Together with my calling church and the

Domestic Mission Committee, we labor diligently therefore to establish a Protestant Reformed Church here in Pittsburgh.

When the church engages itself in foreign missions, there are three important goals toward which the missionary and the church labor before a mission church is organized into an instituted church. The mission church must be self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting. When these goals are reached, the mission church is ready to strike out on its own.

Though the labors on a domestic mission field are different in many ways from that on a foreign field of labor, nevertheless

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*Rev. Bruinsma is Eastern Home Missionary of the Protestant Reformed Churches, stationed in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*



I am convinced that the three "selves" of foreign missions must also be applied in a particular way to the labors that I conduct here in Pittsburgh.

The Lord has truly blessed the diligent labors of our churches in Pittsburgh over the past ten years. Presently, we have six families (excluding the missionary family) and five individuals. We have two more families in regular attendance, and by the time this article is published, another individual will have moved to Pittsburgh to join himself with our group. The pressing question at this point in our labors is: Are we ready for organization? The answer to this question varies with every field of labor, and is not always that clear-cut. Let me give you a run-down of the labors we are performing here according to the standard of the three "selves" of mission work.

#### **Labor within the mission fellowship**

Before I would recommend organizing, I would in good conscience have to answer the question: Is the group here in Pittsburgh self-propagating? This goal is more comprehensive than merely having young families who are bearing children, though that is important too. This goal involves also the promise of the covenant. God promises His church that He will establish His covenant with believers and their children in their generations. A church cannot be considered to be self-propagating until such time as there is evidence that this promise is being carried out in the mission fellowship. Are children being born and baptized there? Are young people interested in making confession of faith and coming to the table of the Lord? Are godly marriages being established and new families being added, not only from without but from within? Is there a healthy organic life evol-

ing within the Fellowship as a whole. Do the families function together as a whole, as a body of believers? These questions need answering in the affirmative if a mission is ready to be organized into an instituted church. At this stage in our development there truly are evidences of these blessings, but they are only beginning to reveal themselves. We hope to see more of them in the near future.

In connection with this there is the whole matter of instruction in proper family life. What is the calling of husbands and wives toward each other? What is the calling of parents and children within the family structure? Some families in the mission are new to all of this. They have not received in the past a godly example or instruction in these all-important areas of family life in the church. More time is needed to accomplish this.

The second matter in this connection is the need for the mission group to be self-governing. In order for this to take place, the men of the mission must be instructed in Protestant Reformed church government. For that reason, we have formed a Steering Committee of men who are capable of making decisions for the mission. Also, we hold a class for instruction in the Church Order prior to every Steering Committee meeting. After all, if the mission fellowship is going to be a congregation in the Protestant Reformed Churches, the men in the church will have to be able to function properly with the rest of our churches. We continue to labor in this whole area.

The third matter is a delicate one to determine: the mission must be self-supporting. I say this is delicate because we have congregations in our denomination that are about the size of twenty families and are on subsidy. If this is the case, how large ought a mission fellowship be

before organizing? Do we wait until there are thirty families in the mission before organizing? Obviously not! Is this really a consideration, then, that ought to enter into organization? I believe that it is. If a mission fellowship is too small to be able to contribute heavily toward its own financial support, organizing too early can be a threat to its own existence. When on subsidy, a small congregation feels the need to ask for as little financial support as possible from the denomination lest it become a burden. In the past, in these newly-formed congregations, the first part of their budget to be cut is that of evangelism work. Yet, this is exactly the part of their budget they need to maintain! Certainly numbers does enter into the question of organizing, if only from the point of view of finances.

Our mission here in Pittsburgh is involved in lectures, seminars, and workshops on various subjects. We advertise heavily on the radio, since this is an effective tool in Pittsburgh. We are involved in publishing brochures, easy-to-read pamphlets, and doctrinal studies that are being used in the area. We advertise in local papers and community magazines. Much of this work is supported by our churches through our mission fund. We are so thankful for this financial support! All of these projects, so vital for our witness in this large city and for growth from without, cost money! At this point, given the size of our Fellowship, we understand that we could not do all of this if we were "on our own."

#### **Labor outside of the Fellowship**

But there is even a larger picture that must be drawn of our mission work in Pittsburgh. As a missionary I have been involved in labors in and around the Pittsburgh area too. These labors do not affect the mission


fellowship here in eastern Pittsburgh directly. But there is an integral relationship between these labors outside of the Fellowship and those within. First, the Pittsburgh Fellowship is involved in these labors. They are a part of them. We know that we are one lone work here in relative isolation from the nucleus of our churches. How wonderful it would be if another work or two could be found in the area in and around Pittsburgh that could perhaps end in the organization of another congregation nearby! The saints here are deeply aware of this need too.

In the next couple of months I will be visiting individual contacts within an hour or two of

Pittsburgh. Most of these contacts are found in eastern Ohio. I have been asked to speak for two conferences: one in Bedford, PA (two hours east of Pittsburgh), and one in Millersburg, OH (two hours west of Pittsburgh). Once a month I preach for a small church in Franklin, PA (an hour and a half north of Pittsburgh). It is a blessing in itself to be a part of the labors in these places. But these labors also require for me the support and care of our churches in general. It is our fervent prayer that God will use these contacts and opportunities as a means to open up new areas of labor around our grand city, and to put us in contact with other Reformed churches and saints!

These are the many concerns we have in all our labors.

Ah, yes, that nagging question—Are you ready to organize? Perhaps in the near future, if the Lord of the church continues to bless us as He is now, we will organize. But I hesitate! In my mind, success of a mission work is not that it reaches the stage of organization. Mission work is a success only if that newly-organized congregation continues to grow and thrive in the years following its organization. It is in that hope I continue to labor in the gospel here in Pittsburgh.

God bless us in our all of our evangelism efforts. 

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## The Sioux Falls Mission

Rev. Allen Brummel

**T**he work in Sioux Falls, South Dakota has its origin in the early 1980s, when the Reformed Witness Committee (RWC) of the area Protestant Reformed churches in Northwest Iowa and Southwest Minnesota began working toward the goal of a Protestant Reformed witness in Sioux Falls. Sioux Falls was a growing city offering many vocation opportunities for young people. In May of 1981 the RWC decided to take up labors in Sioux Falls, SD. The committee held Bible studies and lectures and discussed ways to promote the

gospel in Sioux Falls. The Doon Consistory became the supervising consistory for the work in 1987 and started evening worship services on November 1, 1987 with a rotation of supply from the area Protestant Reformed pastors, who preached three services on those Sundays. But, due to various factors, the worship services ended on July 10, 1988. In November of 1990, at the request of Doon Consistory, the RWC started a Bible study in Sioux Falls. Rev. Michael De Vries, pastor of Edgerton at that time, led the Bible studies until they were discontinued on December 20, 1993 due to a lack of outside interest.

Through the years more members from the congregations in Iowa and Minnesota moved to

Sioux Falls for work opportunities. Rev. Key addressed the matter with the RWC at their March 21, 2005 meeting, encouraging them to renew work in Sioux Falls, beginning with a Bible study. He was of the conviction that there was good potential for ongoing work there. At the July 18, 2005 meeting of the RWC, the Edgerton sub-committee reported that they had met with a few couples in Sioux Falls and were planning to start a Bible study. Rev. Daniel Kleyn was planning to lead the studies, but when he took the call to Holland, Rev. Key stepped in with Hull's approval.

The Bible studies started in September of 2005. Most of the time of the first meeting was spent deciding how to promote the Bible study. The group de-

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*Rev. Brummel is a home missionary of the Protestant Reformed Churches, stationed in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.*

cided to send a letter to all Protestant Reformed members and former members, as well as some other contacts in the Sioux Falls area, explaining the purpose of the Bible study and inviting them to join us. Over the next few months we gained a few more for the Bible study, and had an enjoyable time of fellowship and spiritual instruction. Rev. Key led the studies until December of 2006.

Already in May 2006 the group expressed its desire to the RWC to become a mission of the Protestant Reformed Churches with regular preaching services. Because the RWC is a committee representing three congregations, it took several months before the request worked its way through the area church councils and was approved. A September 25, 2006 letter came from the Bible Study group to the Domestic Mission Committee (DMC) expressing the fact that they now had the approval of the area councils/consistories and were requesting the DMC's assistance in establishing a church extension work in Sioux Falls.

After sending a delegation to meet with them at one of the bi-weekly Bible Study meetings, the DMC was convinced that there was a solid core group in Sioux Falls, and that they were ready to be a shining light in their community. The DMC delegation provided a recommendation that the DMC "immediately look for and send to Sioux Falls a man to work with this group, beginning worship services with them, leading Bible studies and teaching catechism classes, and working on developing contacts in the area." The recommendation passed, and immediately the DMC requested of Candidate Spronk to move to Sioux Falls and take up the beginning of the work there. Edgerton was asked and agreed to be calling church of the field.

One of the first activities

of the group was to choose for themselves the name Heritage Protestant Reformed Fellowship. A steering committee was appointed, and plans were made for the beginning of worship services at the Holiday Inn in downtown Sioux Falls. Worship services began on January 29, 2007, with Rev. R. Kleyn of the DMC preaching in the morning and Rev. D. Overway, pastor of Doon PRC, preaching in the afternoon. Rev. Spronk's family found a place in the Fellowship and his labor was much appreciated, until he left in July of 2007 to serve as pastor of Peace PRC. Immediately the DMC and Edgerton Consistory were able to get a commitment from Rev. Kortering to assist in Sioux Falls until December 16 if necessary. Rev. and Mrs. Kortering spent ten weeks laboring in Sioux Falls and developed a close attachment to the work and to the people. He established a good foundation, especially in the way of stirring up the Fellowship in their need to be active in personal witnessing.

My family and I arrived on November 1, 2007. In January of 2008 the first members of the Fellowship were received by Edgerton. Edgerton received the core group of 5 families and 7 individuals (18 confessing members and 6 baptized children) into membership in the mission under Edgerton's oversight. As the months progressed, other families and individuals were added, until now, without my family, the Fellowship numbers 13 families, with 27 confessing members and 7 baptized children. Two more children are expected in the next months, and a couple of addi-

tional families are interested in joining the Fellowship.

We know that the most important aspect of the mission work is faithful preaching. God is pleased to build His church not through novel, man-centered gimmicks, but through the preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I study and apply the Word to myself first and then bring God's Word to the Fellowship each week, with assurance that "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18).

I attended a class last June at Sioux Falls Seminary on the subject of missions. While the subject matter of the class required much discretion, I learned valuable information about missions in general, as well as Sioux Falls in particular. One emphasis of the professor was on the necessity and effectiveness of

personal witnessing. He pointed out, on the basis of numerous studies, that over 80% of church growth comes from personal contacts and invitations from the members. Only about 1% of growth comes through the influence of a minister or missionary, and less than 1% through advertising or special evangelistic efforts. We witness these statistics ourselves, as personal contact has been the reason for most of our growth. I continue to preach on witnessing and try to be an example to the members. The members receive this instruction well, and while no one finds it easy, we are trying to promote the gospel through our life and walk.

We make our presence known in Sioux Falls through various mediums, including our Web site [www.reformedsiouxfalls.org](http://www.reformedsiouxfalls.org), two yellow-page advertisements,

*God is pleased to build His church not through novel, man-centered gimmicks, but through the preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*



the Argus Leader newspaper, promos and tags associated with the Reformed Witness Hour radio broadcast, and television ads. We benefited greatly from a professional seminar on advertising that gave us many good ideas as to how to get our presence established in Sioux Falls. We were encouraged to make use of passive advertising, which includes print, as well as intrusive advertising, which involves radio and television. Three elements were set forth as important in that regard—the reach, the frequency, and the consistency. In July we entered into a contract with KSFY (ABC) TV to air forty-two thirty-second commercials each month. They informed us that the most effective advertising is that which floods the market for a specific time period. Therefore, all forty-two of the ads run in one week per month. The creative design team met with us to discuss our mission work, the message we

wanted to send, and the people that we were seeking to target. After analyzing our situation, the KSFY team proposed that I be aired in the spots with a brief biblical message, believing that what made our mission stand apart in Sioux Falls was our expository preaching. We have benefited much from the professional advice of the KSFY team and their ideas for promoting our work. With the help of the KSFY production team we have now created three advertisements, each containing a brief biblical message and promoting our Fellowship. People are seeing them, and our name and presence is being established in the community. The KSFY team plans to meet soon with our Web site development committee to suggest technical ways that we can increase the traffic on our Web site.

We believe that it is very important to follow up our contacts, therefore as missionary I both write letters and make phone calls

to individuals who attend our worship services. The members of the Fellowship are outstanding at warmly greeting and gathering information on visitors. We've found that most visitors do not feel intimidated but appreciate the personal interest. We desire to build on that and eventually establish an e-mail list to which we can send regular newsletters, devotionals, and updates.

We are excited about the work that God is doing here in Sioux Falls. We are planning a lecture in July to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> birthday of John Calvin, and we continue to plan for future seminars to which we can invite the public. I am thankful for our more experienced missionaries. I have benefited from their ideas and look forward to continuing to grow with their help.

"But my God shall continue to supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).




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## Covenant of Grace PRC, of Spokane, WA

*Rev. Thomas Miersma*

**T**he work in Spokane, Washington began with contacts made in the early 1990s. An independent congregation, Sovereign Grace Reformed Church, held conferences in Spokane on the doctrine of the covenant, with lectures given by Professor H. Hanko and Rev. C. Terpstra in 1992. I attended this

conference as part of my vacation while pastor in Edmonton, Alberta and spoke at a second conference on preaching and the offer in 1993, along with Rev. C. Haak and Rev. A. denHartog. Members of our Immanuel PRC in Lacombe, Alberta and several members of Lynden PRC were present as well. These contacts were developed by our Lynden PRC congregation during 1994, and we also, as churches, sent pulpit supply.

In December of 1994, I accepted the call to serve as home missionary, based initially in

Alamosa, Colorado. I continued to maintain the contacts in Spokane over the next several years, while at the same time laboring to form a mission base in the East in Pittsburgh. When it became clear that the work in Alamosa was not prospering and Pittsburgh had become the base for the Eastern Home Missionary, the focus of the work in the West shifted to Spokane. We moved the mission base to Spokane in April of 1999.

The Lord blessed the work with consistent slow growth and development, and confessions of faith and baptisms took place

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*Rev. Miersma is Western Home Missionary of the Protestant Reformed Churches stationed in Spokane, WA.*

under Protestant Reformed instruction from 2000 through 2002. These included the Tash family, Matthew Pfefer, Mary Schutz, Ryan and Sarah Lathrop, and the Morris family. After some upheavals in the mission work in 2002, in 2003 most of those who had been our initial contacts in Spokane left us as churches. Those, however, who had been gathered by our work continued with us and the mission field was reconstituted. While one family moved to Michigan, the Lord also continued to add others (Edwards, Duerr, Desta, Bosold) to the mission fellowship. When the mission fellowship was reconstituted, it took the name Covenant of Grace to set forth its distinctive character as a Reformed and Calvinistic group.

In 2003 the Fellowship also began meeting in a storefront location with a higher degree of visibility than the church building we had been renting. In 2007 we moved to a small office building that is set up as a church on the inside. This matter of having a visible presence has had a significant impact on drawing families and individuals to the worship services. It is one of the things that we should learn in our mission work from the work here. The other means to draw people into the Fellowship have consistently been the use of the Internet, with an extensive Web site, and a rather large Yellow-Pages advertisement. This, and the signage on the building, have been the primary means of bringing people into the Fellowship. We have, over the years, tried other tools, such as flyers, mailings, billboards, radio ads, broadcasting the *Reformed Witness Hour*, and various lectures and conferences.

The congregation in Spokane consists of families and individuals who do not come from Reformed, conservative Presbyterian, or Calvinistic backgrounds. Many come from homes with un-


believing or nominally-Christian parents. This has meant that the labor has had to focus not only on gathering individuals into the Fellowship but also on instructing them in the Reformed faith in detail, so as to bring them to confession of faith or adult baptism. Confession of faith itself is only a beginning, and the labor has also been to bring to maturity, especially preparing men in the developing congregation for office, who could sit at our assemblies. This is an important aspect of the work if a church is to be formed and instituted. It is really the calling to make disciples and teach men to observe what Christ has commanded, Matthew 28:19, 20. Mission work and evangelism do not consist merely of gathering people into the worship services. That is only a small and initial part of the work of missions. The instruction given is not just in formal classes, but consists of spending much time visiting in the homes, answering the issues and concerns of each individual and family in their particular place and their particular need.

The non-Reformed background of the Fellowship in Spokane (now a church) makes it, in certain respects, unique in the history of our mission work, which traditionally has focused on people of a Reformed or Presbyterian background. The members of the Covenant of Grace Protestant Reformed Church of Spokane are very diverse in their ethnic backgrounds and reflect the diversity of the population of the United States. Another striking feature of the congregation here is that it consists largely of young couples and young families

in their childbearing years. It is particularly striking that among these young families here, God has brought husbands and wives together to the Reformed faith, rather than only one partner from a spiritually divided household. This has been a great blessing in the work in Spokane.

Over the course of 2008 we moved toward organizing the Fellowship into a church institute. This was brought together in December of 2008, and the formal request for organization presented to Classis West in March of 2009, which granted permission to organize. The Fellowship went to classis with eight households, five and a third families (as synod counts families for assessments), and with ten children. There is also another young couple working toward confession of faith and adult baptism at present. Moreover, at the time of bringing the request for organization to classis, a number of new families

have also begun attending from the Post Falls, Idaho area, just over the border from Spokane.

With the organization of Spokane as a church, the work of missions, though not evangelism, comes to an end. The Covenant of Grace PRC must now call its first pastor as a congregation. Loveland, the calling church, has asked synod to release it from being a calling church for home missions after almost fifteen years of labor. My labors under Loveland as a missionary also draw to a close. It is with much thanks to God in Christ that we now rejoice also in a new sister congregation in our churches, a spiritual bridgehead in the Inland Northwest for the spread of the glorious gospel of sovereign, free, and irresistible grace. 

*Mission work and evangelism do not consist merely of gathering people into the worship services. That is only a small and initial part of the work of missions.*

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# Cast Thy Bread...Upon the World Wide Web!

Rev. Angus Stewart

**T**he Web site of the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church (CPRC) in Northern Ireland is our most cost-effective and international form of witnessing. It bears its testimony day unto day and night unto night, for the Internet never sleeps. Whereas it is too much to claim that "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard" (Ps. 19:3), we do at least have items in over a hundred foreign languages (especially Italian, Portuguese, German, Russian, Spanish, Afrikaans, Dutch, French, Filipino, and Ukrainian). Many are the mornings when I turn on my computer to find an encouraging e-mail from halfway around the world or even a new translation or two in my inbox!

There is much about a Web site that suits a Word-based church. Our text pages contain articles expounding the Word and the audio section contains sermons preaching the Word. Both serve doctrinal evangelism, bringing the rich, distinctive, antithetical message of the biblical and Reformed faith. This is why our translators choose to render our materials into their own languages. What point is there in translating the Arminian "gospel" of Christ died for everyone and God loves everyone and wants to save everyone? This stuff is (sadly) already out there.

Liberal and modernist churches, which (correctly) no longer feel that they have an important and vital message, do not need or bother to produce a Web site (or, at least, one with much on it).

*Rev. Stewart is pastor of the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Northern Ireland.*

What do they have that is worth saying? Just fluff and mush and social events and (left-wing) political commentary. But we want to shout the Reformed faith from the rooftops, so that the living and powerful Word of God spreads.

## History

The Web site of the CPRC, then the Covenant Protestant Reformed Fellowship (CPRF), began in late December of 2003 as [www.cprf.co.uk](http://www.cprf.co.uk). Our first webmaster, a member of the CPRF, found a good Web hosting company from which we bought Web space and domain names. He worked long hours and even late into the night to put the materials I sent him online. The Web site grew quickly. Sadly, our webmaster developed some strange views and left our fellowship, but we are indebted to him for all his hard work.

Our second webmaster, Martyn McGeown, served for almost a year, before beginning training for the ministry at the Protestant Reformed Seminary in Michigan. Along with other Web site work, Martyn transferred a good number of old sermon series from audio cassettes to electronic format. My wife, Mary, is our third and current webmaster. She has changed the appearance of the Web site and has overseen its enlargement, especially the languages page.

## Languages

The idea of our languages page ([www.cprf.co.uk/languages.htm](http://www.cprf.co.uk/languages.htm)) came to me through a Brazilian named Felipe Sabino. Felipe e-mailed me to ask permission to translate some of our materials into Portuguese, so I asked him to send me a copy of his translations (when he was finished) to

put on our Web site. On Felipe's Web site there were already Portuguese translations of writings by various Protestant Reformed ministers, so I requested them too. The PRC Web site contained some translations of PR material in Dutch, Spanish, German, Russian, Slovakian, etc., and I found a few other PR items in foreign languages on other Web sites. This was a start.

Then I spent some time searching the Internet for our ecumenical creeds (Apostles', Nicene, Chalcedonian, and Athanasian) and our Three Forms of Unity (Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, and Canons of Dordt) in other languages. Later, I located some of our liturgical forms in different tongues, or had helpers translate some of them. The Declaration of Principles (adopted by the PR Synod of 1951) is a key document; we now have it in Italian, Russian, and German.

We began to offer free books for translations, and friends and new contacts took us up on it. One of our translators, Francesco De Lucia from Italy, even moved to Northern Ireland to join our church. By these translations into various languages, our Protestant Reformed churches, ministers, and doctrines have become a little better known throughout the world. The beginnings of a PR mission in the Philippines involved the PRC Web site in English. Maybe the Lord will use the Web site materials in various tongues to open up other doors in the future.

## Uses

What is *on* the CPRC Web site indicates what Web surfers from all around the globe can *do* with it. If they know English,



they can, for example, listen to audio sermons, speeches, and interviews; watch on-line debates; read articles and quotes; order free pamphlets; buy books, tapes, CDs, and DVDs; learn about special lectures and our Reformed Witness Hour broadcast; etc. They can even obtain directions to Ballymena Protestant Hall, where we meet each Lord's Day, as did a Lithuanian couple who attended a Sunday morning service recently. For those who do not know English, their options are obviously much more limited. But our 1,200 or so pieces in 110 other tongues are at least a start.

Our Web site has been of use to us in many ways. We have made friends from all around the world and have invitations to stay with saints from every continent, though I doubt if we will ever be able to take them up on it! People have attended PR churches and mission works in North America and some are planning to come to the Calvin Conference in Grand Rapids (3-5 September).

Through our Web site, I gained an opportunity to debate a Church of Ireland minister about Mel Gibson's Romish movie, "The Passion of the Christ," on the BBC's Hearts and Minds TV program. People have subscribed to our monthly *Covenant Reformed News* and/or our weekly church bulletin. Many kilograms of Reformed Free Publishing Association books and PRC pamphlets have been posted out through on-line orders, and inside each book or pamphlet goes a little CPRC sticker giving our Web site number, for you never know where that literature might end up.

The Web site is, of course, of use to those CPRC members who use computers, both for themselves personally (e.g., if they miss a service through sickness, they can listen to the sermon later on the Web) and for witnessing to others. Our Web site has had a hand in people joining our

church. Especially it enabled one lady (in the privacy of her own home) to find out more about us before committing herself to attending our services regularly. It is also an encouragement and a tool to the saints in Limerick in the Republic of Ireland, with whom we are working (cf. [www.limerickreformed.com](http://www.limerickreformed.com)).

### Work

Our Web site, of course, involves a lot of work: adding new articles, sermons, bulletins, and translations; eliminating typos and developing existing articles; advertising our upcoming sermon titles and special meetings; standardizing and improving the layout; and (soon) providing updates and pictures of our new church building.

The Web site also makes more work, such as, answering e-mails containing questions and objections. Many of my responses refer my correspondents to the relevant articles or audios on the Web site. To this end, we have created what we call "Resources" pages, so that the various sermons, articles, pamphlets, books, etc., on a particular subject (e.g., Calvinism, cessationism, eschatology, marriage, and prayer) are gathered together in one place for easy reference. We plan to add more "Resources" pages in the future.

With some time and effort, we could produce some short Christian talks of up to ten minutes each that could go on YouTube for free. Once our church building is up—next year (D.V.)—we hope (like several PR churches) to be able to broadcast our services live on the Internet. There are people all around the world who are especially interested in biblical audiovisual materials on the Web.

Along with the various resources of the PRC (books, pamphlets, etc.), the support and encouragement of the saints in the CPRC and the labor of earlier webmasters, my wife, Mary, is

of special help with the church Web site. She has the necessary technical skills, and we can work together on two computers in the one house (since much of my day is spent at home).

A developed CPRC Web site is particularly important to us because we wish to reach out to people in the British Isles and Europe and, God willing, establish a Reformed denomination.

### Future

With schools, universities, and industries using computers more and more; with Bill Gates and others pushing to get more computers into China (population 1.2 billion); and with various high-ranking figures even claiming that every child has a "right" to access to a computer, there are many indications that computers (and thus the World Wide Web or perhaps some modification of it) will become an even more important means of communication in the days ahead.

The medium itself, like paper for books or airwaves for radio, is neutral. It is the content that is key. Pornographers employ the World Wide Web to promote their filth, and gambling syndicates use it to make money through people's covetousness. Evolutionists, humanists, Muslims, communists, and Romanists, etc., are all spreading their propaganda against the Lord Jesus Christ using the Internet. We, on the other hand, have the opportunity to spread the glorious Word of life, especially as it has been developed in the Reformed tradition and in the PR churches.

Thus we cast our bread... upon the World Wide Web, with the confidence that we shall find it after many days (cf. Eccl. 11:1). We do not know which means of witness "shall prosper, either this or that" (v. 6), but we know that it is God who "giveth the increase" (I Cor. 3:6).



### Edgerton, MN; Hull and Doon, IA PRCs

**E**dgerton, Hull, and Doon Protestant Reformed Churches are maybe rather unique in that, for almost as long as the three churches have been in existence, they have combined a good deal of their evangelism work. The Reformed Witness Committee has three members from each church, along with one sitting elder present from each. The ministers of the three churches are advisers. One of the elders is president and leads the meetings. The meetings are rotated among the three churches, with the minister of the hosting church present at the meetings held in

his church. Each congregation also has a separate sub-committee consisting of the three regular members plus two extra men who are to meet between the regular RWC meetings. The ministers attend these meetings as advisers. These sub-committees then bring suggestions and proposals to the next regular RWC meeting.

The Reformed Witness Committee has sponsored many lectures throughout the area over the years, one of which is the annual Reformation Day Lecture. We also have another lecture scheduled at Hull in July.

The RWC has conducted a regular Bible Study at Dordt College for many years. In the past we held Bible Studies in Sioux

Falls, the last of which was discontinued when the group there became a mission fellowship.

We maintain a bulk-mailing permit and in the past have sent out large mailings all around the country. We maintain contact with various people throughout the country with an active Corresponding Secretary who handles requests between meetings.

We place our denominational literature in various libraries, and we post notices and advertisements about lectures and worship services around the communities.

May God grant blessings on the feeble labors done in His name.

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### Faith PRC, Jenison, MI

**T**he Evangelism Committee of Faith Protestant Reformed Church gives thanks to God for blessing our denomination with the resources and zeal to spread the gospel message of the Reformed faith both in the United States and abroad. In the past few years, our churches have begun to recognize digital media as a key resource for evangelistic efforts. In particular, the Evangelism Committee of Faith PRC has found the Internet site [www.sermonaudio.com](http://www.sermonaudio.com) to be one of the most effective means for distributing the Word of God. During the past few years we have posted over 250 sermons preached in Faith PRC to this site, as well as various other speeches sponsored by the Evangelism Committee. These audio materials, which are freely available for download, have been accessed by thousands of listeners in over 40 countries

around the world. Based on the ability of this resource to reach believers in the most far-flung regions, we encourage other churches in the PRC to consider its use as a tool for evangelistic outreach.

Some of our most actively downloaded materials on [www.sermonaudio.com](http://www.sermonaudio.com) have been the lectures from the Depression Seminar we hosted in the fall of 2007. In response to this overwhelming interest, we have produced a pamphlet based on these speeches, which is now available under the title *Dealing with Depression: a Christian Perspective*. We are currently distributing copies of this pamphlet to our sister congregations in the PRC, and hope that other members find it to be a helpful tool and resource in reaching out to those who are struggling with depression or other psychological hardships.

We have also begun a new

program called *Faith & Life*, in conjunction with the Reformed Witness Hour, to distribute their messages throughout the local community by means of audio CDs. Individual CDs containing two sermons are freely available in several area restaurants, and are replenished on a monthly basis to provide recent gospel messages to interested parties. We have been encouraged by the rapid disappearance of CDs from the display racks, and look forward to expanding this program more widely to include other West Michigan restaurants or businesses. We welcome suggestions for new sites that would be willing to allow us to distribute CDs on their premises, and covet the broader support of other members of the PRC in this endeavor. May our risen Lord continue to bless the efforts of our denomination to spread His fame throughout all nations.

## First PRC, Grand Rapids, MI

**A**t First PRC, Grand Rapids, we as Evangelism Committee have certain activities that we continue to do on an annual basis, while looking always for new and challenging activities by which we can engage and encourage the members of our congregation in the work of witnessing and evangelism.

The following is a brief summary of our more recent and ongoing activities.

During the summer of 2006, we sponsored a summer class and studied the book *Tell the Truth*, by Will Metzger. This summer, we are again planning a summer series, beginning June 17 and continuing for eight weeks. We are planning, this time, to study Ted Tripp's *Shepherding a Child's Heart*. Typically, besides our own congregation, we invite the other PRC congregations from the Grand Rapids area and encourage our congregation to invite any friends they think would benefit from such a class.

During the past winter months, our Evangelism Committee sponsored a series of Sunday-evening programs for our congregation. The program followed a light lunch and provided an enjoyable way to end our day of worship. Recent programs included inviting the Reformed Witness Hour Committee to come and present their work to our

congregation. With the continuing advancement of technology, the work of the Reformed Witness Hour Committee continues to change. How the various members go about their work to produce the program each week was explained.

At another recent Sunday-evening program, the AIM (Active in Missions) committee presented a program to our congregation. They reviewed some of the projects they have been involved in and some of their plans for the future. As both AIM and the Reformed Witness Hour are committees of First PRC, these were both very worthwhile programs to keep our congregation informed of the ongoing work.

First PRC Evangelism Committee is also involved in jail ministry at the Kent County Jail. Currently we have six men who go into the jail in groups of three every other month on a Sunday afternoon. Typically, we have opportunity to meet with three different groups of inmates at different locations in the jail. We usually spend about forty-five minutes with each group, during which time we open and close with prayer, sing a few songs, and give a 25-30 minute message, which is generally well received and generates many comments and questions. The current sheriff is very agreeable to this work, which gives us freedom in what we can bring in the content of our message.

During the past couple of years, we have published a book by Rev. J. Kortering, *Evangelism in the Established Church*. This was initially a series of articles written by Rev. Kortering for the *Standard Bearer*. Also, Rev. A. Spriensma wrote *For God and Country*. This piece was published in pamphlet form. Both of these are available for purchase from First Church Evangelism Committee.

Our Evangelism Committee has also taken on the task of redoing the church Web site. This is nearly finished and we hope to have a finished product to review in the next few weeks. Part of redoing the Web site has involved uploading sermons onto [www.sermonaudio.com](http://www.sermonaudio.com). This too has shown itself to be a useful tool the Lord has given us to use in the work of evangelism.

Funding for our committee and its projects comes from a collection at an annual summer singspiration that we sponsor, as well as several collections during the course of the year. Typically, any books or pamphlets we produce and sell are sold at cost or given away to the members of our congregation to encourage them in evangelism. This is our goal and purpose as an Evangelism Committee—we do the organizing and promoting, but as a committee of the congregation, we seek to encourage all of our members in their own calling of personal evangelism.

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## First PRC, Holland, MI

**T**he work of church evangelism has many challenges. Especially for churches with evangelism committees, it seems that part of the challenge is helping the members of the congregation in their witness and not simply doing that work in their place.

Another challenge is attracting and reaching those from the

community. It seems that too often an evangelism event is used strictly to edify the members of the denomination and not to bring the truth to those outside our churches. While edifying the existing body is good, it is not evangelism.

With these challenges in mind, First PR Church of Holland has been active in two unique

areas. They are its Spanish literature program and its work at the Holland Rescue Mission.

Our work on producing Spanish literature began in the early 1990s. The desire was to produce Protestant Reformed literature and distribute it among the Spanish-speaking population of Holland.

One of the early works was



a Spanish version of "The Faith and Practice of the Protestant Reformed Churches." This was a joint project of Holland and the Domestic Mission Committee (DMC) of the PRC. Later the DMC would help us produce the book *Todo El Que Quiera*, which is Rev. Hoeksema's *Whosoever Will*, which was translated by Emilo Manjo, a member of one of the Reformed Presbyterian Churches in Spain.

Over the years we have been in contact with different translators who have translated other pamphlets and booklets into Spanish. Some of the earlier items were translated by Christine Romano, in Flushing, New York, and later items translated by Paula Meagher, in Bolivia. Later this year we will publish a great translation by Marcelo Sánchez, a series of articles on God's Word, written by Rev. Ron Hanko.

As mentioned above, the intent was to distribute the pamphlets locally, but the Lord has had other plans. The demand over the years for literature in Spanish to other areas of the US and to Latin America has surprised us all. Ministers, church members, seminary students, and prisoners have received many tracts and booklets to distribute to their neighbors and fellow pastors. We distribute the nine PRC titles that are in print, and

also copies of the confessions and commentaries by Calvin and Hendrickson that we purchase from the CRC World Literature catalog *Libros Desafíos*. Other titles are available on our church Web site and the BRF Web site. Recently we have been sending our literature to a pastor in Mexico who distributes them to his little congregation and to twenty pastors and laymen that are working in his presbytery.

In the late 90s, our church was approached by the Holland Rescue Mission to conduct a chapel service that is required attendance daily for the men who are staying there. The Holland Rescue Mission is a Christian-based homeless shelter providing discipleship and counseling programs. It operates at two locations, one for men only and another for women and children and intact families. Our congregation committed to leading the men's chapel once a month.

Recently the Mission decided to revamp their programs of working with other churches. The idea is to lead these people into a church family during their stay. This new approach is in recognition of the fact that many were passing through the Mission, and then later returning, their lives a mess again because they were without the continuing guidance and direction of a local church.

The new approach is to have a congregation involved in the work of discipleship on a weekly basis in a Bible study, mentoring hour, special music night, or similar event. This allows the people to see and become involved with a congregation on a weekly basis for twelve weeks at a time.

Recently our consistory approved an Evangelism Committee proposal to conduct a focused study on the Heidelberg Catechism at the Mission. This is planned for the twelve Mondays in April through June. A men's Bible study group will make up the core from our congregation that will lead the men at the Mission in the study. The Catechism was chosen for its basic, structured format, with its emphasis on the comfort the believer has in Christ.

These men need that comfort. They are men from broken families. Some have histories of drug and alcohol dependency or abuse. Others are in poverty because of wasteful spending, often as a result of substance abuse, legal problems, or divorce. These people carry a lifetime of guilt—guilt that we as Christians by grace have been able to lay at Christ's cross. We know the comfort of belonging to Christ. It is our hope to lead some of these "publicans and sinners" to our Lord and the comfort and salvation that only He can give.

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## Georgetown PRC, Hudsonville, MI

**T**he Georgetown PRC Evangelism Committee's theme for 2009 is "Equipping the Congregation." Our committee is using diverse means to accomplish this equipping. Some of these are: Summer Bible Memory Program, neighborhood canvassing, Georgetown PRC Radio Program,

our Web site, and Young People's Serve Projects.

### *Summer Bible Memory*

The Bible Memory Program is a delight for the Evangelism Committee to oversee because excitement for evangelism can exist only when the Word of God is exceedingly precious to His people. We are eager to bring the

Reformed faith through Scripture to our church by commemorating John Calvin's 500th birthday. On June 7, the Lord willing, Rev. Haak will kick off "The TULIP must BLOOM" Memory Program with a series of sermons on the five points of Calvinism. We also hope to celebrate this quincentenary by serving cake—with tulips on it, of course—on July 10. Our

prayer is that the Spirit will make the Word as it is manifested in the Reformed faith written “with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond” through eternity upon the hearts of those who participate this year!

#### *Neighborhood Canvassing*

We plan a neighborhood canvas as well again, an activity that is useful for informing the neighborhood of where we are, when we hold services, where to check us out on the Web, and what we believe. Our ability and enthusiasm in this area need improvement. How many of those in our vicinity know us to be a church filled with hearts that are passionate for Christ? The answer could be summed up as: more need to know. In looking ahead to the future church, our

youth, we are planning to involve the young people in this project for the first time this year and are praying that the Spirit will incite them with enthusiasm to “go and tell what the Lord has done.”

#### *Georgetown PRC Radio Program*

Our church services are broadcast Sunday afternoons at 3:00 P.M. on WFUR 1570 AM. After two years of broadcasts we have developed a regular listening audience. This provides a wonderful opportunity for the preaching of the Reformed truths to be heard in our broader community.

#### *Webpage*

In 2008, we began broadcasting our worship services live online. Users can click on our “Sermon Audio” icon and listen

to our worship services in real time. Following the service, our system automatically archives the service into our online library. Future plans involve installing a video system in which we can stream and record our services in video.

#### *Serve Projects*

The summer of 2006, our EC hosted a Serve Project in which twenty-three young people and five chaperones volunteered to work at Rehoboth Christian School in New Mexico. We completed numerous projects, such as painting, building, sweeping, spreading stone, etc. This Serve Project resulted in a diverse learning experience and rich spiritual growth for all. A DVD of this project is available via Georgetown PRC Library.

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### **Grace PRC, Standale, MI**

**T**he Evangelism Committee of Grace Protestant Reformed Church strives to serve the Lord by promoting the spread of the gospel within our own congregation, our community, and throughout the world.

The committee’s primary outreach to spread the gospel in our community has been through work with *Christianity on Campus*, a student organization on the campus of Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan. During the school year, this group meets weekly for a Reformed Bible study. The Bible study is often led by a minister—but has also been led by teachers from the area or by one of the student-members themselves. Currently the group is studying the Gospel of John, and is being led by a GVSU student who is pre-

paring to enroll in the Protestant Reformed Seminary. The role of the Evangelism Committee in the group is to give continuity from year to year (since there are constantly new members joining and others graduating), support them with funds for advertising and organizing special events, and to make any resources they need, such as leaders or study materials, available to them. Over the past twelve years, this group has been a blessing to many students who desire a serious, doctrinal Bible study on a secular university campus.

Another outreach that the committee has pursued is making our sermons and literature available on our Web site. The Grace PRC Web site was recently overhauled to make it easier to use. The new site features live audio streaming of every worship ser-

vice for anyone on the Internet to hear. Every sermon is also added to an online archive that allows visitors to download and listen to a sermon at any time. Our sermon archive is also available via an iTunes podcast on the Web site and in the religious section of the iTunes directory. This podcast allows users to download new sermons automatically to their computer each week and listen to them on their computer, iPod, or MP3 player. In addition, we have added a call-in phone system for members of our congregation without Internet access to listen to live sermons from home.

Another service that the committee offers is the reading of the *Beacon Lights* onto tape and CD. This service is a great benefit to many saints who are blind or visually impaired.

### Hope PRC, Walker, MI

**T**he Constitution of the Reformed Witness Committee of Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Walker, Michigan, states:

This Committee shall labor on behalf of the congregation of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church to disseminate our distinctively Protestant Reformed views, based on the Word of God and the Reformed confessions, among those in this area

and also among those outside of the scope of our churches elsewhere.

Our Committee has for the past eight years held a summer lecture Class Series in June and July over a four-week period. These class series have been led by Prof. Hanko on a variety of timely subjects and have been well attended. Opportunity is given throughout the lecture for questions and discussion of what was taught. This work has been very beneficial for many members of our own congregations in their

daily walk but also for many outside of our churches, as the lectures are available on CD and DVD. We are also exploring the possibility of publishing some of these lectures in a pamphlet or book format for wider distribution.

Our Committee also has a correspondence committee that continues ongoing contact with individuals or groups who have requested pamphlets and spiritual nourishment. Some of our correspondents receive CD/DVD copies of our sermons on a regular basis as well.

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### Hudsonville PRC, Hudsonville, MI

**T**he Hudsonville Evangelism Committee has transitioned over the past few years to using the technology that God has provided. In the past we maintained a sizable mailing list, which has slowly shrunk. We send monthly, to about 50-60 people throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and even India, the small pamphlets written by Rev. Stewart and Prof. Hanko. Although this is a good way to witness to the truth, we have been focusing more on the Internet. We now make our sermons available on *Sermonaudio.com*. Since we began in March 2007, over 6000 sermons have been downloaded. We see this as an excellent way

to witness to the truth of God's Word. We have also updated and improved our church's Web site, which includes making available live broadcasts of our worship services via streaming audio. Not only is this helpful for members in our own congregation who cannot attend worship services because of sickness, but this is a way for others in the community to hear what our worship services are like.

Believing it is important for our congregation to witness in the Hudsonville community, our committee is sponsoring, for the second year in a row, a spring conference. Last year we had a good turnout for three messages on the subject, *God and Marriage*. This year Rev. Eriks and Rev. R. Kleyn will address the Christian

and finances, using the theme, *Unchanging Truth in a Changing Economy* (May 1 and May 8). Even if not many visitors come, we believe this is an opportunity for some visibility in the community, which God may use sometime in the future.

In the coming year, our committee plans to focus on encouraging the congregation in its witness by personal contact. Recently we distributed to all the members of our congregation the small book written by Rev. Kortering, *Evangelism in the Established Church*. We are in the beginning stages of planning a seminar for the congregation on witnessing. It is our desire that God use us to speak of His wonderful works in our community (Ps. 40:5).

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### Kalamazoo PRC, Kalamazoo, MI

**I**n the fall of 2008 the Kalamazoo Protestant Reformed Church Evangelism Committee discussed ways in which to let our church be known in our community. We also discussed the importance of getting the

whole congregation involved in this matter. In January's meeting, the committee decided to ask one of the missionaries to give a speech on the importance of evangelism. Missionary Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma graciously agreed to come to Kalamazoo on March 18, 2009. His speech title was "Principles and Practices of Evange-

lism." The speech told not only how evangelism is the official work of the church (I Cor. 1:17 and Mark 16:15), but also how it is the calling of every member of the church (Acts 8:4 and I Pet. 3:15), and that this evangelism must be Reformed. On March 21, 2009 Rev. Spriensma gave a speech on "Finding Our First



Love.” The speech emphasized the necessity of letting our light shine, and how important it is to have our Bible in our hands and to know the Bible thoroughly when talking to others about it. At the end of Rev. Spriensma’s speech, the Evangelism Committee distributed copies of three different case studies, and we divided the audience into three groups to study them. After about 30 minutes of group dis-

cussion, we reassembled and a spokesperson from each group gave their assessment of the handling of the situation and told what they thought should have been done and said as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. The night was well attended and very inspirational. The Evangelism Committee is currently making a pamphlet “Getting to Know Us” (patterned after a pamphlet that the Pittsburgh saints made),

which tells about our church, our stances, location, and what time our church services are. We also discussed how to distribute the pamphlets, and other ways of getting the word out, which may consist of other means: mailings, radio, CDs, DVDs, etc. This fall, the Lord willing, we will invite the community to a lecture, to celebrate with us our 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an organized church.

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### **Randolph PRC, Randolph, WI**

**I**n carrying out our mandate to bear witness to the gospel in our community, Randolph PRC’s Evangelism Committee is involved in several ongoing projects.

1. We supervise the congregation’s Web site.
2. We sponsor lectures twice a year, to which we invite members of the immediate and broader community. Occasionally these have been held in other cities, to try to draw an audience that would not otherwise travel to Randolph.
3. We pay for the broadcast of the Reformed Witness Hour on radio station WFDL in Waupun.
4. For the last several years,

in August, we have sponsored a booth at the fair in Alto, WI. We have considered doing the same at two county fairs and one other annual farm show, but have not yet done so.

5. Three times a year we send out a mailer to every postal address in Randolph and three other surrounding communities. These address a current topic from a biblical perspective, or some doctrine essential to Christianity and the Reformed faith. For instance, the theme of our January 2009 mailer was “Sin: The Reason Why We Need Christ.” Our upcoming one is entitled “Creation *Ex Nihilo*” (“out of nothing”). We’ve also treated various aspects of the doctrine of God, and the issues of the DaV-

inci code, storms (in God’s providence, this one appeared weeks before last year’s tornado in the area), homosexuality, yoga, and the 2008 presidential election.

We do our work in the consciousness that God’s Word does not return to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases (Is. 55:11). So, while we do get negative response to our work at times, particularly from the community mailings, we strive to do our work faithfully. And, while we often wonder what more we can do, especially in a community such as ours in which people’s opinions of the PRC and Reformed truth are formed and not easily changed, we trust God to use our weak means to fulfill His will.

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### **Trinity PRC, Hudsonville, MI**

**T**he Lord has given much work to the church in the spreading of the gospel and the witness of the Reformed faith, and many means to carry out that work. This is evident to all of our congregations, and here at Trinity PRC it is no different.

The work of the Trinity Evangelism Committee began about eight years ago. Following the mandate of our Constitution, we have been busy in the spread of

the Word that is preached in our church, to the local community and to the entire world.

Many means have been employed in the witness of the truth. These include the use of the Internet, the printed page, public lectures, neighborhood outreach, and participation in Reformed and Presbyterian conferences.

The Internet has been used in three ways for the spread of the truth, the first being the weekly live broadcast of the church services in our congregation. In ad-

dition to this being a value to our own members, we regularly have listeners from outside our denomination and have had contact from some frequent listeners.

The second is our membership in a site called [sermonaudio.com](http://sermonaudio.com). This site is a library of over 230,000 sermons, which the listener can download and listen to free of charge. Trinity currently is broadcasting more than 520 sermons on this site, with almost 65,000 sermons downloaded to date. These sermons are down-

loaded worldwide, in over 120 countries, the most active being China. This site also allows us to advertise our literature, which people can order off the site. There is also a blog section in which people can comment on different subjects. These two features have been very conducive to generating interest in and contacts for Trinity PRC.

The final way in which the Internet is used is by placing ads on Google. We advertise several items, but the most successful is the advertising we do for a speech given by Rev. R. Kleyn entitled "Jesus Christ in the Movies." Trinity gets about 200 visitors to our Web site a month as a direct result of these ads. Most of these visitors come from India.

Trinity has also embarked on various publishing ventures. We have published two pamphlets: *The Unconditional Covenant in Contemporary Debate*, by Prof. Engelsma, and *Jesus Christ in the Movies*, by Rev. R. Kleyn. We have also worked together with the British Reformed Fellowship

in the publication of two books: *Keeping God's Covenant*, by Profs. Engelsma and Hanko, and *The Five Points of Calvinism*, by Profs. Engelsma and Hanko.

The work that Trinity has undertaken in the local community has included a booth at the Hudsonville Fair, with Hudsonville PRC. This booth is stocked with Reformed literature, CDs, and DVDs that are distributed for free, and is manned by members of the congregation. In addition to this, we have held public lectures on timely issues and have gone door to door handing out literature and inviting the local community to worship with us. All this work is, of course, done in the service of the preaching in our church weekly, with the goal that neighbors will come to worship with us.

The Trinity Evangelism Committee has also co-sponsored a booth with the RPFA at the Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology. Last year's topic was "Precious Blood: Christ's Atoning Work." This year the topic was "Right with God: The Doc-

trine of Justification." These conferences give us the opportunity to distribute our literature and sermon CDs and DVDs to the broader Reformed and Presbyterian church world, and enable us to present our distinct Reformed view on the topic being presented. The other opportunity this affords us is the interaction with guests at the conference.

The fruit that God has given upon our work thus far is the contacts that we have been able to make with people throughout the world. We currently have 137 contacts in the USA and 38 contacts internationally. It is our prayer that we may continue to develop these contacts with the goal that God is honored through our witness; believers encouraged in their personal spiritual growth; and, if the Lord pleases, some are brought into our churches. We thank God for the Reformed faith that has been graciously given to us, and we pray that we remain faithful to the calling set forth in Matthew 28, until our Savior returns on the clouds of glory.



## News From Our Churches

Mr. Benjamin Wigger

### School Activities

In a continuation of school news from our last issue of the "News," we can report that on March 30 an Association to investigate the feasibility of providing a PR high school education in Randolph, WI was formed, with 25 charter members, of which four men were elected to the first board. Continue to remember this work in your prayers.

Eastside Christian School in Grand Rapids, MI welcomed guests to an evening of beautiful

sacred and classical music featuring Eric and Christa Phelps on the cello and piano at Georgetown PRC in Hudsonville, MI on Saturday, April 18, at 7 P.M. They were joined by the Trinity Men Singers in a benefit concert for Eastside. A free-will offering was taken.

March 27 must have been a good day to schedule a school program, or at least we hope it was, since three of our grade schools did just that. Hope Christian School in Redlands, CA hosted their annual Spring Program that evening. Adams Christian School in Wyoming, MI presented their all-school program, "The Trinity" at Bethany United Reformed Church, followed by a

dessert social at Adams that same evening. Finally, the students of Covenant Christian School in Lynden, WA scheduled their annual school program, "In the Beginning God," for the same evening.

On March 20 the 3rd to 8th grade students of Faith Christian School in Randolph, WI presented their Science Fair. The display of project activities included a launch of hot-air balloons and a test of various bridge models designed by the students. The 8th grade class also sponsored basketball knockout, ping pong, and scrabble tournaments, in addition to a light supper for their guests that evening.

*Mr. Wigger is a member of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.*

### Evangelism Activities

The congregation of the Southeast PRC in Grand Rapids, MI continues to support their Evangelism Society through regular collections. This support has made it possible for the continuing audio recording and distributing of the *Standard Bearer*. The recordings are done by Mr. Jim Noorman, and the distribution to about 25 blind people around the world, by Mr. Tim Hoving. Southeast's Evangelism Society is the only place where this service is offered. The society has now decided to offer these audio files at their church's Web site [www.southeastprc.org](http://www.southeastprc.org).

The congregation of First PRC in Holland, MI began a class on the Heidelberg Catechism at the Men's Building of the Holland Rescue Mission on April 6. These meetings will be held for twelve consecutive Monday nights.

### Congregation Activities

The Hudsonville, MI PRC presented their Easter Concert on Sunday evening, April 19.

The Trinity Men Singers concert was held at Trinity PRC in Hudsonville, MI following Good Friday worship services, April 10.

The congregation of Georgetown PRC in Hudsonville, MI enjoyed a concert provided by their choir after their Sunday evening worship service on April 19.

The congregations in Canada hold their Good Friday worship services in the morning since that Friday is a national holiday in Canada. The Wingham, Ontario PRC held their Good Friday service at 10:30 A.M. followed by a short break for refreshments and then a time of fellowship singing praise to God.

There was a singspiration held at the parsonage of First PRC in Edmonton, AB, Canada following their evening worship service on Resurrection Sunday, April 12.

The choir of the Loveland, CO PRC presented their Easter program after their evening service on April 17. A collection was taken for Loveland's organ fund.

The Building Committee of Hope PRC in Walker, MI recently reported to their congregation that they had received the necessary funding from their members to get started on their parsonage, study, and garage addition. The Building Committee was in the process of obtaining permits and anticipated starting the project near the end of April.

### Young Adult Activities

The Young Adults of the Lynden, WA PRC sponsored a pancake breakfast and bake sale fund-raiser on April 11 at Covenant Christian School, with proceeds going to help defray costs for this summer's Young Adults Retreat. Breakfast-goers were also encouraged to bring along a rake for some quick springtime clean up of the school yard.

The Young Adult Society of the Grandville, MI PRC were favored with a special presentation given by Hussein Wario, a member of the Byron Center, MI

PRC, on March 24. Grandville's congregation was also invited to attend. Hussein is a former Kenyan Sunni Muslim who was converted to the Christian faith and has since authored the book *Cracks in the Crescent*. Hussein talked a little about the journey the Lord has led him on.

The Young Adult Society of the Faith PRC in Jenison, MI hosted a speech/discussion entitled, "Accepting God's Will in Prayer." Open discussion followed a speech by Rev. A. Lanning, pastor at Faith.

### Minister Activities

On April 6, Rev. R. Kleyn, pastor of Trinity PRC in Hudsonville, MI, flew to Tasmania, Australia with his twin brother, Steven. While there, Rev. Kleyn gave four speeches at the Annual Family Camp of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church congregations of Tasmania (a camp Rev. Kleyn attended every year growing up), on the subject of "The Bible and Personal Finances," as well as preaching for one service on April 12. They returned home on April 16. 

## Announcements

### July 2009 SUMMER CLASS SERIES

"The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit"  
Prof. Herman Hanko

at Hope Church, Walker  
on each Tuesday in July at 7:30 P.M.

Sponsored by:  
The Reformed Witness Committee  
Hope Protestant Reformed Church  
1580 Ferndale Ave. SW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49534

To pre-order CD or DVD sets of the series,  
please contact Ryan Morris at  
[hoperwc@gmail.com](mailto:hoperwc@gmail.com) or (616) 457-4676



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**PRC**  
**Family Conference**  
**Edmonton, AB, Canada**

**July 3-5, 2009**

Held at Parkland  
Immanuel Christian School:  
21304-35th Ave. NW  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
The Evangelism Committee  
of First PRC  
of Edmonton Alberta, Canada  
is holding a Family Conference

July 3-5, 2009 following the topic:

**"Calvin and the Christian Family Life"**

**Prof. David J. Engelsma: "Calvin's Influence on the Family"**

**Prof. Barrett L. Gritters: "Calvin on the Catechizing of our Children"**

**Rev. John P. Marcus: "Calvin on Family Discipline"**

For more info visit our Web site: [www.edmontonprc.org](http://www.edmontonprc.org).

Plan to attend.

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

With thankfulness to God, we rejoiced with our parents,

**MICHAEL and RUTH ELZINGA,**

as they celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on April 27, 2009. We are truly thankful to God for the Christian upbringing they have given us, as well as the many sacrifices they have made in raising us in His fear. They have been a wonderful example of patience and trust in God through both trials and joy. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless them in their marriage and give them many more years together.

"And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me" (Jeremiah 32:40).

- \* Phil and Stacy Lenting  
Hannah and Nick
- \* Tim and Schareane Elzinga
- \* Sherry Elzinga
- \* Gerald and Deb Feenstra  
Brice

Grandville, Michigan

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

We rejoice with our parents and grandparents,

**GREG and VICKI  
VAN OVERLOOP,**

who celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary on May 11th, 2009. We thank our heavenly Father for providing us with parents and grandparents who give us covenant instruction and have raised us in the fear and glory of His name. We pray that God will continue to bless their marriage and their lives together in the years ahead. "All the faithful to His covenant shall behold His righteousness; He will be their strength and refuge, and their children's children bless" (Psalter 281:4).

- \* Ross VanOverloop
- \* Bryant and Dee VanOverloop  
Sydney and Ashlyn
- \* Jordan and Alyssa VanBaren  
Jenison, Michigan

**CALL TO SYNOD!!**

Synod 2008 appointed Georgetown Protestant Reformed Church, Hudsonville, Michigan, the calling church for the 2009 Synod.

The consistory hereby notifies our churches that the 2009 Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America will convene, the Lord willing, on Tuesday, June 9, 2009 at 8:30 A.M., in the Georgetown Protestant Reformed Church.

The Pre-Synodical Service will be held on Monday evening, June 8, at 7:00 P.M. Rev. Kenneth Koole, president of the 2008 Synod, will preach the sermon. Synodical delegates are requested to meet with the consistory before the service.

Delegates in need of lodging should contact Mr. Gerald Kuiper, 4830 Greenmoor Ct., Hudsonville, MI. Phone: (616) 669-5427.

Consistory of Georgetown PRC  
Gerald Kuiper, Clerk.