

REVIEW: Pamela York's *Lay Down This World* (CD) by William Edgar

New Horizons

IN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MAR 2013

Unwilling Infertility

by Doug and Susan Felch

ALSO

EMBRYO ADOPTION

by Gabriel Fluhrer



Contents

FEATURES

- 3** UNWILLING INFERTILITY
By Doug and Susan Felch
- 6** EMILY SARAH TRACEY
By Stephen J. Tracey
- 8** EMBRYO ADOPTION: A CHRISTIAN OPTION
By Gabriel Fluhrer

DEPARTMENTS

- 10** FOREIGN MISSIONS
Running the race in Karamoja
- 12** CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Living with early infant loss · Four favorites · Out of the mouth ...
- 14** HOME MISSIONS
Tulsa, Okla. · San Antonio, Tex.
- 16** STEWARDSHIP
The people of the Lamb · Thank Offering report
- 17** PRAYER CALENDAR
- 19** NEWS, VIEWS, REVIEWS

NEW HORIZONS

IN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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The historic Congregational Church in Limington, Maine, became a congregation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church on September 30, 2011, when it was received into the Regional Church of New York and New England. The pastor of this church, which dates back to the earliest days of the United States, is Leonard Gulstrom. Is there any other congregation in the OPC that can trace its roots back earlier than 1789?



DOUG AND SUSAN FELCH

Unwilling Infertility

Among all the moral and social issues that surround reproduction, the one that probably gets the least attention in our culture, and especially in the church, is infertility. This is true even though the problem is remarkably widespread. According to the Mayo Clinic, 10–15 percent of married couples are infertile. This is a sizable minority, and it provides both the opportunity for ministry and the need for sensitivity within the church of Jesus Christ.

For many, the inability to have children is a deeply painful, unspoken, and hidden sorrow. It may only occasionally rise to the surface, but it is a sorrow that carries with it persistent hurt and sadness.

We ourselves are childless and have had the opportunity through the years to speak with couples, and especially with women, who struggle with infertility. These thoughtful, sincere Christians deeply long to have children of their own and to fulfill the stewardship of being parents. Their sense of emptiness, grief, and failure at not being able to conceive or to carry a pregnancy to term can be both excruciating and debilitating.

We know this is so because they have told us, and we have shared their sorrow. However, many churches, and even close Christian friends, may be unaware of these struggles and may be particularly insensitive to women who have experienced a persistent, unmet longing for motherhood. Our purpose in writing this article is to offer some counsel both to those who are suffering from infertility and to the church community at large.

OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

To the couples who are infertile: don't deny that this is a hard providence. Face up to this disappointment head-on and acknowledge it before the Lord and others. However, realize that you are not without options. In response to infertility, many couples seek medical treatment or pursue adoption.

Both of these are appropriate options and should be seriously considered. Although having children is not the only reason God instituted marriage, it is one of the blessings that he promises, so to be denied this blessing is a real disappointment. It is completely appropriate for infertile couples to feel that "something is wrong" and to want to do something to address the problem.

This is, in fact, what God calls us to do in the world. As his image bearers, we recognize the good gifts that God has given, we experience and name the pain of fallenness in many areas of life—including infertility—and we look for ways, through God's grace, to right those wrongs. As Christians, we understand that we are not the victims of circumstances, but are called, as we love God and neighbor, to make difficult situations better and to address deep and legitimate longings.

Since both medical treatments and the adoption process are often stressful, time consuming, and expensive, it is important that Christian couples who pursue either of these options have the counsel of their pastors and elders and the support of their church community. There are ethical issues to be sorted out, particularly with certain types of fertility treatments; there are practical concerns that arise as treatments or the adoption process gets under way; there are many emotional ups and downs when the medical treatments are unsuccessful or the adoption process falters. In each of these areas, couples should expect that their church community

will surround them with warm, thoughtful counsel and love. Families, pastors, elders, and deacons may also need to consider what financial resources the church can provide to help either with medical treatments or with adoption.

When we became aware, fairly early in our married life, that we were not simply “pre-children,” but were being unsuccessful in conceiving, we began to talk seriously with our doctors. The first few rounds of medical tests were inconclusive, and we were then faced with a decision: should we commit ourselves to investing considerable time, expense, and emotional energy in a quest to become pregnant? At the time, we were living in North Carolina as essentially self-supporting home missionaries, we had minimal insurance, and we were deeply involved in a new church plant and a local Christian school. We were also told that we would not be seriously considered as potential adoptive parents until we had pursued at least some additional fertility tests and treatment.

After a great deal of thought and prayer, we decided on a third option: to welcome any children that the Lord might give us and simultaneously to commit ourselves, in an intentional way, to investing in other people’s children rather than in medical treatments or adoption. This has meant being actively involved in the lives of young people, both in pastoral ministry and now as professors at two different Christian colleges. It has involved becoming informal mentors to young people at church or school and especially reaching out to international students. This was then, and it has remained, a satisfactory solution for us.

But it may not be a satisfactory solution for everyone.

Some of Doug Felch’s “children” at Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Mich.



That is why we began this article by talking about medical treatment and adoption. In God’s good providence, infertility may be the means by which orphaned children are brought into loving homes. Or it may be the means by which couples learn, through the strenuous course of waiting to conceive, to be patient and to rely fully on God. Whatever “solution” infertile couples pursue, however, there are both promises to claim and temptations to avoid.

TEMPTATIONS SURROUNDING INFERTILITY

Perhaps the biggest temptation is to consider infertility a tragedy that has somehow escaped God’s notice. But 1 Corinthians 10:13 tells us that our difficult circumstances are not unique. They are common; others have faced similar troubles and persevered. But better than that, God promises that he will not permit us to be tempted beyond our strength. This

means that our circumstances are tailor-made, that the providential circumstances in our lives are not accidental, that all things ultimately work together for good.

We can’t always see that ultimate end, but right here and now, as we allow God to comfort us in the middle of our sadness, we find that he brings to us others who also need to be comforted. Paul begins his second letter to the Corinthians with these words: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” The ministry of comfort is one that we can best extend only after we ourselves have suffered and found comfort in God. Infertile couples know a particular kind of sadness; they are then gifted

Susan Felch’s “children”: Senior Seminar group from Calvin College



to comfort others who find themselves in similar circumstances.

Another temptation is to think that infertility is the hardest child-related trial to bear, particularly if your church community is full of families with lots of small children. But a moment's consideration will open your eyes to other adults who may also find it hard at times to sit in a sea of happy families: single people who long to be married, those who are divorced or widowed, parents whose children have renounced the faith or have simply drifted away from the gospel—not to mention the weary mother who has averaged four hours of sleep a night for the last two weeks. Recognizing our own sadness, loneliness, and need for comfort can make us more attentive to those around us who also need encouragement.

A third temptation is to permit the desire for a child to become idolatrous. Children are a blessing from the Lord; they are part of the “good” of this world, of creation. But they are not the ultimate good. Having a child will not fulfill your deepest longings. Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in God, Augustine said many years ago. And human hearts have not changed in the subsequent centuries. When any of the good things that God has made assume an ultimate status in our lives, they become idols. This is a temptation we must avoid. Please do not misunderstand. We raise this issue with great tenderness. It is not wrong to deeply *desire* to have a child, to pray for a child, and to take earnest steps to conceive or adopt a child. But we must never let our desires become a *demand* that God answer our prayers according to our own plans and desires. To move from desire to demand will only increase the sorrow of infertility, rather than relieve it.

A fourth temptation is to covet other people's good providence in this area. It may be hard at times to feel happy when you hear of yet another friend who has become pregnant. But the command not to covet is, positively, the command to love. God gives us the grace to love him enough to be content with our circumstances and to love our neighbors enough not to covet their good providence, but instead to rejoice in it.

OPPORTUNITIES SURROUNDING INFERTILITY

Infertility, however, does not just bring temptations; it also brings opportunities and joys. Whether you decide to commit yourself permanently to other people's children or whether you are temporarily infertile as you wait to conceive, adopt, or even marry, you can use your childless state for God's glory and the good of his people. God's promise that he will make the barren woman to be a joyful mother of children (Ps. 113:9) is not just a nice rhetorical statement. Rather, it has a number of concrete applications.

Consider the opportunities of being childless. We've already mentioned that you are now in a position to comfort those who are experiencing sorrows of their own. There are others. You may have resources to invest in time-consuming or

even difficult ministries, without worrying that such ministries may jeopardize your own children. You can travel to, or live in, countries where Christians are persecuted; you can be the nonparental presence in the lives of restless teenagers; you can spend hours preparing lessons and teaching classes in your local church; you can open your home to troubled people; you can provide adult conversation for the harried mothers of toddlers. For many years, for instance, Susan taught a graduate-level Bible study for young mothers, complete with free childcare; it was her contribution to the task of good parenting. The point is that we have love to give, and we ought to give it. This is true, not only for those who are unable to have children, but also for those who find themselves single or alone against their will.

CHURCH MINISTRY TO CHILDLESS COUPLES

Infertility also provides an opportunity for mothers and fathers in the church to become more sensitive to those who are not parents. Church members who are around those who are childless might share their children with them (although this is not meant to manipulate them, even gently, into providing free babysitting!). Just as married families with children ought to be hospitable to those who are single, so they should also take steps to include childless couples in their family outings.

There are other ways to be sensitive. Baby showers can sometimes be difficult events for an infertile woman, since the conversation often focuses on the experience of pregnancy and childbirth. Making an effort to introduce other topics of conversation, understanding when someone chooses not to attend a shower, or even acknowledging their awkwardness with a smile or a hug are simple ways to show love. Pastors can be careful to include applications in their sermons that are not predicated on family life or simply to acknowledge from the pulpit the blessing of having congregants from all walks of life. Fellowship committees can make sure that not every event is family- or couple-oriented. Invitations to dinner should regularly include singles, couples without children, the widowed, and the divorced.

If these suggestions sound a bit mundane, that is okay. Infertility is not a crisis event that one deals with and then “gets over.” Rather, it is one of the persistent sadnesses and disappointments that we face in this life, but which we learn to bear, and indeed to rejoice in, as we live day by day in the company of God's people. It is in this daily exercise of love for one another that we grow in grace and that we learn together that we are all, indeed, barren mothers whom only God can make to be the joyful mothers of children. ◻

Doug Felch, an OP minister, is a professor at Kuyper College; Susan, his wife, is a professor at Calvin College. They quote the NIV.



STEPHEN J. TRACEY

Emily Sarah Tracey

Emily Sarah Tracey was stillborn on June 6, 1987. She was our first child. Sharon went into labor at thirty-six weeks. We knew Emily would not survive the birth. We had known from the eighteenth week that Emily suffered from anencephaly (a defect in the development of the neural tube). For eighteen weeks, Sharon carried that little life within her, knowing we would not bring a baby home at the end. I am still overwhelmed with admiration for my wife's quiet courage and the dignity with which she carried our little Emily.

It is now a quarter of a century since Emily's birth, and I am still lonely for her. I am afraid even to write this, since my words often end as tears. I write this with the encouragement of Sharon, my wife. It may be that this will encourage a mother or father, a doctor or nurse.

The first thing we wrestled with was the shock when we went in for our first ultrasound. We were full of life and joy, skipping into parenthood. A cold blade cut through us. It was plain to see that there was an abnormality. We were sent home and told to return the next day to make arrangements to terminate the pregnancy. It was the British National Health Service. One did as one was told. We cried. We felt numb. We cried.

Sharon spoke plainly. She said that since this was all the life God was giving our baby, we had no right to take it away. We cried. And she was right. So we made our decision not to abort. In the short term, it was the harder decision, for it meant extending the sorrow for several months. We cried.

Not everyone agreed with our decision. Some felt that since there would be no life outside the womb, there was no sin in "terminating the pregnancy." But it was never merely a pregnancy to us. It was always a child. Sharon's GP, who had cared for her all her life, clearly let us know he did not agree with our decision. He, thankfully, was not typical. God brought several wonderful nurses and doctors across our path.

They treated us, and Sharon particularly, with great gentleness and dignity.

I clearly remember the day Emily was born. A midwife and nurse delivered her. The nurse cried, but said nothing. But I have not forgotten that she cried with us. Before we had a chance to see anything, the midwife placed a little hat on Emily's head. She handed me my little girl, but with that little hat she had done her best to make it easier for us. It was a small thing, but it was gentle and thoughtful. I have not forgotten.

Not long after Emily's birth, we received a letter inviting us to the genetics clinic. We were not sure we should go. We felt labeled, and perhaps we were afraid of genetics. But we went and found ourselves under the care of Professor Norman Nevin and his team. It was folic acid. His work showed that higher doses of folic acid reduced the risk of neural tube defects.

I began to learn the nature of grief. I wanted to know if people felt what I felt. I picked up a copy of *A Grief Observed*, by C. S. Lewis, and found him saying, "No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear." And, "No one ever told me about the laziness of grief." I grasped hold of the words *no one ever told me*. I too felt that shock.

I found my way, over the years, to poems on grief, especially on the loss of children. I grasped hold of Wordsworth's

The Tracey family at the wedding of Anna Tracey and Tim Muether (October 6, 2012): Nathaniel, Stephen, Sharon, Anna, Tim, Joshua, and Mark



poem, “She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways”:

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

It was not difficult for me to change “Lucy” to “Emily.”

Robert Frost’s painful poem, “Home Burial,” captured the agony of burying a child. I have felt no pain like that day. I carried a little coffin, myself. My father turned to me as we approached the grave, and, hardly able to speak through tears, he asked, “May I carry her?” Years later we buried my father-in-law in the same grave. I was unprepared for the pain of that open grave. I have begun to learn, not simply what it means to mourn, but what it means to be poor in spirit. I am frail, of the earth, easily crushed.

I have begun to learn the nature of faith. God says, “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD” (Lam 3:26). It may not seem clear to others, but from that point onward, each time my wife was pregnant, I was full of fear. I was afraid of grief. I was afraid to carry that pain again. I was afraid to place that grief on the children God had given us. It was in the crucible of that pain that I began to learn to trust God, day by day. I would say things like, “Did you take your folic acid today?” The answer was always the same: “Yes, dear.” Sharon was always well ahead

of me in faith, and that faith was never reckless. Hope and quiet waiting are not easy. God graciously granted us four children, a daughter and three sons. I was like the man crying, “I believe; help my unbelief.”

I have begun to learn the nature of providence. Not only is it “good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.” In the very next breath, Jeremiah also says, “It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth” (Lam. 3:27).

I could not see how it was good for me. But now that I am older, I might say that it was good for

me. I could say it prepared me for pastoral ministry. I could say it helped our marriage. I could say it pierced my pride. It probably did all those things. I do know it made me cling to the truth “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). It made me cling to this truth: “It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him” (Lam. 3:22–25).

It also made me cling to this truth: “But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies” (Lam. 3:32). God is good. We are always more loved than we love.

Above all else, I have learned there is grace to help in time of need. In childlessness, miscarriage, stillbirth, living with disability, or anything else in life or death, God’s grace is sufficient. □

The author, a native of Northern Ireland and a graduate of Queens University, Belfast, is now pastor of Lakeview OPC in Rockport, Maine. He quotes the KJV. Norman C. Nevin taught medical genetics at Queens University; now retired, he is a proponent of intelligent design and the editor of Should Christians Embrace Evolution? (reviewed in the March 2012 issue of New Horizons, pp. 12–13).



GABRIEL FLUHRER

Embryo Adoption: A Christian Option

One of the most encouraging developments of late is the surging interest in adoption among Christians. From the “Together for Adoption” conferences to a growing number of publications on the subject, increased attention is being given to this important matter.

Also demanding more attention from Christians are the questions of bioethics. The rapid advances in medical technology have caught the church somewhat off-guard. Biblically informed answers are needed for these questions.

What do adoption and medical technology have in common? When it comes to embryo adoption, much in every way. In this article, I want to offer both personal testimony to the wonder of embryo adoption and, more importantly, a defense of its scriptural feasibility.

Shortly after the birth of our first child, my wife and I learned we would no longer be able to have children. As you might imagine, it was crushing news. But, since our conversion, both of us had been committed to adopting children. The adoption door was just being opened sooner than we had planned.

We knew very little about adoption, but we learned a lot quickly. Perhaps the most fascinating thing we learned was that we were candidates for the relatively new field of embryo adoption. The situation is fairly easily explained. Since the growth of in vitro fertilization (IVF), there are literally hundreds of thousands of embryos left over from such procedures. Many of these are simply discarded.

This is where the agency we worked with, Snowflakes, enters the picture. It facilitates the adoption of embryos that have resulted from IVF. I would encourage you to visit their website (<http://www.nightlight.org/snowflake-embryo-adoption>) to see how embryo adoption works. We connected with Snowflakes and began the journey of adopting our embryos.

Since current state laws (rightly, in my judgment) allow for only two embryos at a time to be transferred to a woman, one of the (many) things that made Snowflakes attractive was their commitment to the preservation of embryos that were adopted but not transferred. For example, the remaining embryos that we adopted legally belong to my wife and me. The adoptive couple, working with Snowflakes, can choose to attempt another embryo transfer, store the embryos, or put them up for adoption.

And so it was, in December 2010, that our precious daughter was born, one year to the day after we adopted her as an embryo. While she is not our biological child, she is ours by adoption. She is one of the Lord’s rejoiced-over covenant children!

The whole world of embryo adoption is strange to many (it certainly was to us!) and presents a host of complex questions. However, since the Bible clearly teaches that life begins at conception (Ps. 139:13–14), embryo adoption seems to me to be an outstanding opportunity to put our theology of life into practice. Since the pool of candidates for embryo adoption is relatively small, it may seem to be a minor issue. Are there not children already born, orphaned or needing a home, who deserve our attention more than frozen embryos?

But that implicit choice presents a false dichotomy. As believers, we ought to use all our available resources to serve children who need adoptive families, whether born or unborn. Since we believe that life begins at conception, we have a duty before the Lord to care for the little children, wherever they are found.

After all, the Lord declares that he himself is the primary advocate of widows and orphans (cf. Ex. 22:22–24; Ps. 10:14, 18; 68:5; Isa. 1:17; Jer. 49:11; James 1:27). Thus, the biblical testimony is clear on two matters related to embryo adoption. First, life begins at conception. From that moment, nothing less than an image bearer of the living God is being formed. Second, it follows that embryos, being image bearers of God, are not to be discarded as so much unused property. Embryo adoption, informed by a biblical doctrine of life, challenges the pragmatism of many modern medical decisions.

Let me therefore urge two things. First, embryo adoption reminds believers of their duty to consider adoption in every form. It will do us little good to complain when homosexual couples are allowed to adopt children when we ourselves refuse to adopt those same children. The failure to adopt is a blight upon the church and a shame upon our heads as Christians.

Ancient pagan Romans were both fascinated and repulsed by the willingness of Christians to rescue their unwanted children, many of whom had been abandoned to die by exposure. And while the “baby wheels” of ancient Rome do not scar our metaphorical city gates, the sheer number of children who are up for adoption in a given city bears eloquent, if not damning, testimony to the modern church’s failure to imitate the cloud of witnesses that has gone before us.

Let me speak a word to younger Christian couples here. I do not say this to shame you, but to encourage you. I have seen young couples (yes, even in Reformed churches) that wait extended periods of time to have children. The reasons they give are largely financial. Moreover, I have rarely heard such couples consider adoption. After all, if they feel unsure about having their own biological child, it is not surprising that they would be unwilling to adopt someone else’s.

We need to challenge this mind-set. Our marriages ought to be a picture of Christ’s love for his church—and God’s love for the fatherless. Orphans ought to be welcomed into our churches and our homes. We not only should ask the Lord to

bless us with “our own” little ones, but also ought to pray that God would give us the privilege of caring for those whom the world discards.

Second, and more particularly, let me encourage couples that are considering IVF to consider embryo adoption instead. Yes, there are complex and perhaps troubling questions that arise when a couple undertakes embryo adoption—this no one denies. But the clear command to care for God’s image bearers ought to be uncontroversial. Embryo adoption presents an opportunity to care for those who, for whatever

reason (some good and some bad), are simply being stored until they are discarded. Should not Christians who have been providentially placed in the situation of considering IVF also consider caring for orphaned embryos? Let us weigh our actions carefully.

I have not aimed at a self-righteous tone in this article. My own selfish thinking regarding adoption shames me. Rather, I have sought to encourage believers to consider adoption in general and embryo adoption, if possible, in particular. If you are providentially hindered from adopting, there is much you can do. Get involved with the local adoption agency. Reformed believers manage many of these agencies—an extra blessing! So pray. Give money. Support couples who are seeking to adopt.

Finally, let us all remember that we are adopted children by the amazing grace of God. I am always struck by the words of J. I. Packer: “If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his father.” Orphaned by the world, we have been rescued by the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit. And now the Spirit of adoption cries “Abba! Father!” in us. So important was the doctrine of adoption to our forefathers, that they included a separate chapter in the Confession on the subject. All Christians, as adopted, beloved children of the living God, ought to be fundamentally oriented toward adoption. ◻

The author is pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian Church in Cary, N.C.



Gabe and Callie Fluhrer with daughters Garner and Anna

Running the Race in Karamoja

JAMES D. KNOX, M.D.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

—Hebrews 12:1–2

Recently I went running in the foothills of Mt. Kadam, the mountain in our backyard here in Nakaale, South Karamoja. I found some new trails that I had never been on before. I was able to run up and down some hills, through a swamp (I basically got stuck in the muck, with no “what to do,” as they say here, but to go on)—enjoying the beauty of God’s creation after a recent rain. It was 6:30 a.m., but people were already out working in the fields with their cattle, gathering firewood for the day, or just hanging out. It has been four years since I first started running in Karamoja, and I still keep thinking, “I am running in Africa!” What a privilege this is!

Yet, what difference does running make in Africa? It definitely makes us think about many aspects of “the race” that we are undertaking here as a mission in Nakaale. Please pray for us in the Orthodox Presbyterian Uganda Mission as we seek to run the race faithfully as God gives us the strength and abilities. Please run the race with us through your prayers and support. It is important to remember that this race is not a sprint, but a marathon that requires endurance. As we



discipline our bodies for the furtherance of God’s kingdom in Uganda, we must wrestle with how the medical work of Akisyon a Yesu (“Compassion of Jesus”) Presbyterian Clinic (AYPC) will most effectively adorn the gospel race set before us as a mission.

It was a great privilege to be on furlough in the U.S. for almost seven months in 2012—thinking, praying, and talking with others in the church about this question. We devoted a lot of time to preparing mentally for our return to this race with a clear understanding of our “what to do,” so that we might press on toward the finish line and the prize without getting stuck in the muck.

There are many aspects to the medical work that we are pursuing here in Karamoja, and we have tried to weigh each one carefully to make sure that they will adorn the gospel and help in running the race. Please pray with and for us in the following areas as we run this race at AYPC:

1. Pray for us as we work through the implications of having a new, enlarged building for the clinic in 2013.

2. Pray that we can grow as a clinic as we pray and share the Word with our patients. The ministry of the Word and prayer are the tools that the Lord has given to Christians for our race. Pastors Al and David come regularly to the clinic to preach while the patients are waiting to be seen. We have been trying to pray with as many patients as possible. How can we pray better with patients, improve our attitude toward and treatment of patients overall, and proclaim the gospel more effectively? How do we become increasingly conscientious about adorning the gospel in our everyday work at the clinic, even before we move into the new facility?

The process of praying with patients can be rather humorous. For some reason, while the patients can often understand the medical questions that I ask,

they are regularly unable to understand the question, “Do you want me to pray for you (or your child)?” when I try to ask it in the Ngakarimajong language. Some just stare at me. Others ask the translator, “What did he say?” Sometimes my translator says back to the patient (while smiling), “What? Don’t you understand Ngakarimajong?” This makes everyone laugh. We definitely need prayer for our language acquisition, specifically that we might be able to pray more with patients.

Often our prayer is a simple prayer in the local language, as exemplified here:

<i>Okoe Ekapolon,</i>	Dear Lord,
<i>Toyakaun kapei ka</i>	Be with [Peter].
<i>[Petero].</i>	
<i>Kitangaleu akuwan</i>	Heal his body.
<i>keng.</i>	
<i>Kiterereng ekitoi</i>	Allow the medicine
<i>kitiya a nakuwan</i>	to work well.
<i>keng ejok.</i>	
<i>Inak inges ayenun</i>	Let him know
<i>Yesu Ekalakunan.</i>	Jesus, the Savior.
<i>Nugu daadang elipi</i>	All this I pray in
<i>ayong a lokiro</i>	Jesus Christ’s
<i>a Yesu Kristo, Amen.</i>	name, Amen.

The responses are varied. Some patients do not respond at all. Other patients will repeat each sentence (I think that this is from a Catholic influence in the area). A few patients will smile and say, “Thank you.” (I do not remember ever having such a positive response to the offering of medicines.) Sometimes I wonder if it is the first time that the patient has ever heard the name of Jesus. May God bless even these feeble words!

3. Pray for us as we deal with very sick patients who are the children of some of our clinic staff:

a. Lomongin Markson works as a night guard for the clinic. One day his five-year-old son, Lokapel, was brought to the clinic extremely weak, very jaundiced, and with severe malaria. In this community, jaundice is usually thought to be a sign of yellow fever, which is a terrible disease spread by mosquitoes. It can often be difficult to educate patients and their



families that it is necessary to treat the underlying cause of the jaundice and not immediately think that the patient has yellow fever (which can be fatal). Thankfully, Lokapel was taken to the district hospital, where he received the antimalarial treatments, and, within a few days, was back playing with his friends. The Sunday after he was able to return to Nakaale, he came to church (he is not regularly present in church). After the service, he came up to me and gave me a hug when I picked him up. His dad said that he wanted to come so that we could see how much he had improved. May he grow to desire being an active member of the body of Christ! While this turned out to be a great encouragement along the way, it is a good reminder that we need to continue educating the patients, pointing them not only to the medical treatments, but also to the spiritual nourishment from Christ.

b. Pedo Paul works as a groundskeeper (“slasher”) at the clinic. Over the past several months, his two-year-old son, Losike, has been repeatedly contracting pneumonia and other illnesses, including malaria. He has been found to have extreme anemia on multiple occasions. Losike’s hemoglobin was 2 g/dl (normal is at least 12 g/dl). It surprised me that he was even alive. He had a seizure while in

the clinic. Losike’s mother was crying loudly; she thought that he was dying. Thankfully, we were able to administer an anticonvulsant while we prepared to take him to the district hospital, and, more importantly, we were able to pray with the family. The district hospital actually had blood on hand for a transfusion (which is not always the case), and therefore we drove to the hospital. Once at the hospital, we had to find a staff member to care for him, wait while they split the bag of blood in half (so that it could be used for a second patient), and then finally begin the transfusion. In God’s providence, Losike was seen at the clinic again, and his mother stated that our prayers were answered (his hemoglobin was recently above 12 g/dl). The Lord was gracious to Losike. May he come to know Christ as his Savior!

As you read about some of the obstacles, challenges, and encouragements along this race, we again ask you to pray with and for us. Please pray for God’s wisdom and grace to run the race with endurance and fruitfulness in the Spirit of Christ, “looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Thank you so much for running with us in this work for God’s kingdom.

Living with Early Infant Loss

JOHN W. MAHAFFY

A couple with three small children had been worshipping with us for several weeks when I heard that the wife was in the hospital following a miscarriage. I was a very young pastor serving my first charge, but of course I visited them in the hospital.

Their response, when I expressed sorrow at their loss, took me aback: “We already have three children and didn’t want any more. We’re fine.” I read a psalm and prayed, but left with a sense that something didn’t fit in the way they were (or were not) dealing with the death of their unborn child. I felt at a loss as to how better to bring the comfort of God’s Word to them.

That was more than thirty-five years ago, but I wish that I had been able to read *Little One Lost: Living with Early Infant Loss*, a new book by Glenda Mathes, before meeting with them. I wish I could have given them a copy, saying, “You may not want to read this right now, but at some point this little book may help bring the comfort of God’s Word to you.”

Granted, people deal with loss in different ways, but minimizing grief usually delays healing. Mathes has written a greatly needed and most helpful book, which skillfully knits her story and those of others together with clear explanations of scriptures that bear on the loss of an infant. She writes, “The unfulfilled anticipation of new life lost before birth—like a tender bud pinched by an early frost—is what makes the loss of a pre-term infant so piercing. Yet society often minimizes such loss. We live in an abortion-accepting society that has hardened its collective heart to the loss of prenatal life.” However, she continues: “Even the loss of the

littlest one is the loss of a real person. Each child is unique, created in God’s image. Such a loss rips a hole in the parent’s heart and leaves an aching void” (p. 17).

The chapter “Knit Together” gives a superb overview of the way in which the Bible treats even little ones, before and after birth, as valuable persons, made in God’s image. The book then moves on to recount stories of grief surrounding the loss of little ones, each unfolding the hope and comfort that the Scriptures give.

In twenty-seven short chapters, which move quickly, but flow much more deeply than a casual glance reveals, Mathes deals with difficult decisions that have to be made, and focuses on the mother’s sorrow. She also discusses the grief of the father and of any children in the family, as well as of the broader community.

Mathes provides helpful suggestions on what not to say to a grieving parent, as well as advice on how to provide comfort in concrete ways. In dealing frankly and gently with grief compounded by abuse or by sinful actions on the part of parents, she always points to the forgiveness that Christ offers.

“Covenantal Comfort” is summarized in chapter 15, but underlies the whole book. Readers of *New Horizons* should recognize that the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms share a similar view of God’s covenantal faithfulness as the Three Forms of Unity, the solace of which she beautifully unfolds in

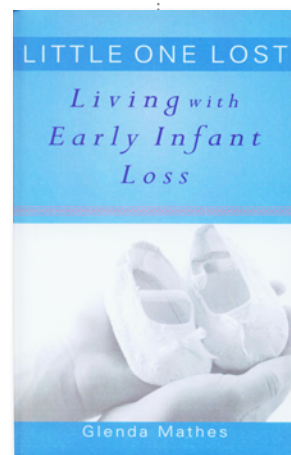
“Confessional Comfort.”

Grief and guilt are complex. Mathes warns against secular counseling, which “will fail to bring the comfort of God’s forgiveness into the equation.” She also appropriately cautions against forms of Christian counseling that may be “too simplistic, blaming personal sin for every emotional problem” (p. 105). She keeps unfolding the comprehensive forgiveness found in Jesus Christ.

Regarding sufferers, even Christian sufferers, who are angry at God, the author quotes a Christian counselor who properly expresses the goal that Christians deal gently with grieving persons, helping them “come to a place where they see God’s providence, accept it, and still believe that it is good” (p. 119). Although Mathes does not encourage venting anger at God, the idea that “God is big enough to handle their anger” seems to me to be neither fully biblical nor truly helpful.

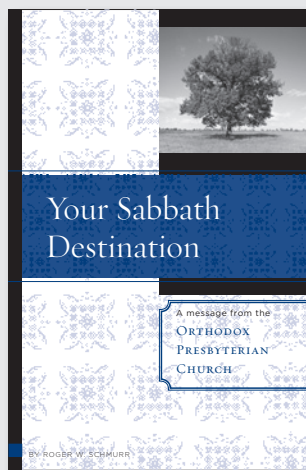
Every pastor ought to have a copy of this book. Elders and deacons, who come alongside grieving members, need to read it. Purchase a copy for your church library, and encourage people to read it. Give a copy to grieving parents to read when they are ready.

Although the targeted readership of *Little One Lost* is the covenant community, Mathes points so clearly to Jesus, the source of comfort, that this sensitively written book may be an appropriate gift even to a griever who does not yet know the Lord. “No matter how traumatic the



loss, no matter how much or how little it is grieved, believers have hope of a glorious future. We look to that future with hope that is firmly based on God's sure promises for a future free from pain and sorrow. Our future existence will not be as vague spirits floating in the clouds. When Christ returns, we—and our covenant children—will be reunited with our original bodies, glorified in a way far beyond our imaginings. God the Father sent His Son to atone for all our sins. He sends His Spirit to comfort us in our sorrows. . . . He holds before us the hope of an existence free from grief and full of joy” (pp. 134–35).

The author is pastor of Trinity OPC in Newberg, Ore. Little One Lost: Living with Early Infant Loss, by Glenda Mathes (Reformed Fellowship, 2012), is a 144-page paperback, with a list price of \$10.00.



Find your sabbath rest in eternity in this lively 15-page booklet. Order at store.opc.org (using PayPal) or CCEsec@opc.org (to be invoiced). Price \$1.00 (75¢ per copy for ten or more); free shipping on U.S. orders of \$35.00 or more.

Congratulations

The Shorter Catechism has been recited by:

- Leah Schnyders (Harvest OPC in Wyoming, Mich.)

Four Favorites Stimulating Biographies

1. J. N. D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth*. Cornell, 1995.

Who cannot like a story involving clerical commandos who force ordinations, a pastor who rants about people who buy tickets for the circus when they ought to be in church, an emperor who kidnaps his favorite preacher, and a life that ends with two burials? Kelly vividly tells the story of John Chrysostom's life, thought, and insecurities. Along the way, we meet his network of friends and enemies, and witness the sad growth of episcopal power.

2. Bruce Gordon, *Calvin*. Yale, 2009.

Gordon's Calvin can be irritable, overconfident, and fussy. But he is brilliant and loyal, and at some point in his life becomes utterly dedicated to Christ and the cause of the Reformation. If he sees Calvin's flaws, and occasionally passes up more charitable interpretations of his actions, Gordon clearly has a profound respect and appreciation for his subject. He carefully illuminates both the development and the range of Calvin's thought. But his analysis is tedious. In bringing theology and biography together, Gordon blends the science of the historian with the craft of a good writer.

3. George M. Marsden, *Jonathan*

Edwards. Yale, 2003.

Why another book about America's most famous frontier pastor? One reason has to do with the mass of new material made available at the Jonathan Edwards Center—a resource that Marsden mines to good effect. The resulting biography is an engaging explanation of philosophy and theology that clarifies the whole of Edwards's vision, precisely because Marsden carefully explains its parts. Even if he sometimes took his own reputation too seriously, Edwards emerges from these pages as the great thinker and polemicist that he really was, and Marsden exposes the preacher's faults sympathetically.

4. Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott*. IVP, 1999–2001.

Better known for his hymns, Dudley-Smith has also authored a two-volume biography of his good friend. As is so often the case with two-volume biographies, the first volume is decidedly the best. Littered with too many acronyms and abbreviations known only to Anglicans, the book nonetheless captures the humility, energy, and creativity of this great evangelist, who attempted every good endeavor for Christ—and nearly succeeded.

Chad Van Dixhoorn

Out of the Mouth ...

While reviewing homework on creatures that live in the water, I asked my five-year-old son, "So what is it that comes out of the whale's nose (the blowhole)?" He quickly replied, "Jonah!"

—*Maria Jeantet
Anderson, Calif.*

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

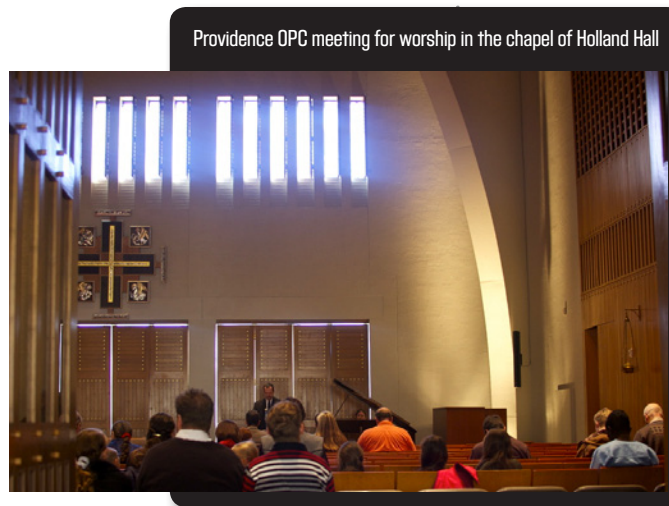
God's Providence in Tulsa, Oklahoma

Providence OPC in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is one of our newer mission works. A group of seven households began to gather in 2011. Pastor Joe Auksela, ruling elder Jerold Barnett, and Westminster OPC in Bartlesville took the group under their wing. Regular Bible studies were held for over a year. Then worship services began.

In the meantime, Jim Stevenson was completing his studies at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He was born in the Bronx, New York City, and was a child of the church. He grew up at Westchester OPC in Mount Vernon, New York, just outside the Bronx. He graduated from Geneva College and taught math for fifteen years.

When Jim was teaching near Hatboro, Pennsylvania, his family became part of Trinity OPC. There Jim's spiritual maturity, love for Christ and his church, and heart for the people of God were evident. He was elected a ruling elder in 2001 at the age of thirty-one.

In 2008, the seed to attend seminary and pursue gospel ministry, which had



Providence OPC meeting for worship in the chapel of Holland Hall

been planted by an OP pastor while Jim was still in college, finally came to full bloom. Jim, Tricia, and their four children headed to South Carolina.

As Providence OPC came to the point of being ready for an organizing pastor, Jim was seeking the place where God would have him labor. God brought them together, and in the fall of 2012 Jim began his labors at Providence in Tulsa.

Tulsa is the cultural and arts center of Oklahoma and home to 400,000 people within its boundaries. Almost a mil-

lion people live in the region. It is located in the northeastern section of Oklahoma, between the Great Plains and the foothills of the Ozarks.

Providence OPC has a number

of people who are trained and experienced musicians. The people of the mission work come from a variety of backgrounds and places of birth. They share a love for the Lord Jesus and a firm commitment to Reformed theology. They have

a strong commitment to holy living and want to see the third use of the law—that is, the law as a rule of life for believers—present in the ministry of the Word.

The people in this developing body love one another and love to be together. After gathering for worship in the chapel of Holland Hall (a K–12 private school), the people move to someone's home for a fellowship meal. The chapel is great for worship, but there is no space for fellowship meals or Sunday school.

The mission work is enthusiastic about outreach, and is praying and watching for the Lord to provide more growth. Worship attendance is now in the thirties and includes thirteen children.

Please pray that the Lord would give a plentiful harvest in Tulsa and add many people to Providence OPC. But pray that the body would be patient, trusting God's providence, as they expectantly watch for God to bring new people. Pray also that Jim will care for the sheep, minister the Word of God faithfully, and make new contacts that will lead to gospel opportunities.

Sunday evening Bible study in Tulsa



Answered Prayers in San Antonio

God has been answering prayers in San Antonio, Texas.

Andrew Moody and his family were living in San Antonio. His call in Amarillo, Texas, had come to an end. So he and his wife, Billie, had come back home, to the city where they had grown up. At first, Andrew and the family made a weekly eight-hour drive to Houston, helping to gather a group there. Andrew and Billie prayed that God would give them opportunities to minister God's grace closer to home in the northeastern section of San Antonio. They had some contacts there.

Although San Antonio is already home to Grace OPC, the city is a large place. It covers four hundred square miles. The city proper is home to 1.3 million people. It is the seventh most populous city in the United States. There is close to another million people in greater San Antonio.

God began to gather a group. Initially, people with many challenges in life, including financial struggles, were gathered into a Bible study. As the group grew to about twenty people, the Presbytery of the Southwest gave Andrew permission to begin public worship. Then the Presbytery called him as an evangelist to continue gathering the group. The denominational Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension made a one-year financial commitment to encourage the effort.

Andrew, Billie, and others began to pray that God would send visitors and add them to the group. Visitors began to show up at worship. Some found San Antonio Reformed Church (OPC) online. Others

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org.
New editions: **March 13, 27.**

A baptism at San Antonio Reformed Church



heard through word of mouth. These new visitors kept coming back. Average attendance at worship grew over the summer from the low twenties to forty. Every local visitor who came over the summer stayed. Most of them are now pursuing church membership.

Other visitors have come throughout the fall. If everyone were there on the same Sunday, the group would number in the low fifties.

Some of the new people are connected to the military. San Antonio has a large military presence, with Fort Sam Houston, Lackland Air Force Base,

Randolph Air Force Base, and several other military installations in the region. San Antonio Reformed Church is now meeting just outside the city near Randolph AFB.

Many of the new people came with challenges, as Christ drew them closer to himself. Husbands have had to come without their wives and children. Wives have come without their husbands. Some are single moms.

Andrew began to pray that God would send households with mature believers to help with the discipleship that needs to be done in the body. God has begun to answer that prayer by sending a military chaplain and his wife. He is a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He worked for a number of years with the Christian Counseling and Education Foundation near the seminary. Please join in praying that God would send other mature believers into the gathering group.

Despite the financial hardships that many face, they give regularly and sacrificially. However, this developing congregation needs a stronger financial base. Please pray with them that the Lord would provide for all their needs.

Praise the Lord for his many mercies in these early stages of San Antonio Reformed Church, and pray that he would continue to bless its development.

The congregation of San Antonio Reformed Church



The Glorious Lamb and His People

BRETT MAHLEN

“**A**fter this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Rev. 7:9–10).

What a grand picture the apostle John paints for us. He was shown a great multitude that no one could number. These people are sinners, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 5:9).

These people have come out of “the great tribulation” (Rev. 7:14; cf. 1:9). The church has been persecuted for nearly two thousand years—sometimes more severely, sometimes less. Jesus warned that the world would hate his sheep as it had hated him (John 15:18–20).

This is a cleansed multitude, washed with the strangest but greatest detergent with which anyone has ever been washed: Lamb’s blood.

They hold palm branches. This is what the people of God did during the Old Testament Feast of Tabernacles to celebrate the harvest. This multitude not only celebrates God’s resurrection-harvest, but *is* the resurrection harvest.

But the focus of this passage is the Lamb. The multitude has its priorities right: they praise God and the Lamb for the gift of salvation.

We understand that God has chosen a people for himself (Deut. 7:6). At the same time, the Lord works through means (preaching, prayer, and diaconal work) to accomplish salvation for the elect. While salvation is of the Lord, he

still works through the church. Preachers preach the gospel and pray; people hear it and are saved and added to the multitude that John saw. Similarly, when we pray for and give to missions for the further propagation of the gospel, God uses that.

On the Day of Judgment, when we see this great multitude (and see that we are a part of it), all things shall be revealed. Only in eternity will we be able to see the impact of our giving and

prayers for the furtherance of the gospel. Christ, the Lamb, will have the glory because he died to secure redemption for his people. We will have none of the glory, yet we shall see that he used our giving and prayers, so that those in the multitude might hear and be added as trophies of his grace through the work of the Spirit.

The author is associate pastor of Grace OPC in Sewickley, Pa.

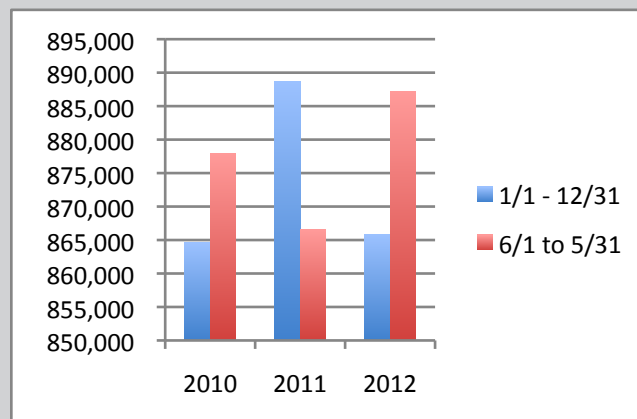
What Was the Thank Offering Total?

Since the denominational agencies of the church follow the calendar year as their basis for accounting, and since the collection of the Thank Offering comes so close to the year-end, many may be confused regarding how the totals are reported.

To help bring clarity to the confusion, we have provided a summary of giving to recent Thank Offerings, noting the specific periods of reporting.

With the aid of this chart, you can see that the results are somewhat different, depending on the reporting period. We believe that the most accurate reporting of the church’s collection is reflected in the totals that overlap years (from 6/1 of one year to 5/31 of the following year).

The Committee on Coordination rejoices in God’s goodness in the giving of his people. We thank the members and friends of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church for generously supporting your denominational ministries and helping us achieve a record Thank Offering in 2012 of \$887,141 through January 31, 2013.



NOTE: 2012 Thank Offering (6/1 to 5/31) only through 1/31/2013

March

1. **Cal and Edie Cummings**, Sendai, Japan. Pray for open doors as they seek to contact students and share the gospel. / Pray for **John Shaw** as he begins his labors as general secretary for Home Missions. / **Sarah Pederson**, *New Horizons* proofreader.
2. **Carlos and Diana Cruz**, San Juan, P.R. Pray that God would bless Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada with additional families. / Missionary associates **Adam and Sarah Thompson**, Sendai, Japan. Pray for a bold witness to unbelieving contacts. / **Doug Watson**, staff accountant.
3. **Woody and Laurie Lauer**, Numazu, Japan. Pray that God would raise up men to lead his church in Japan. / **Todd and Cheryl Bordow**, Rio Rancho, N.Mex. Pray that God would bring single adults and young couples to the OPC of Rio Rancho. / **Camden (and Erica) Bucey**, year-long intern at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, Ill.
4. **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, Fla. Pray for the discipleship activities at Keys Presbyterian Church. / **Kaz and Katie Yaegashi**, Yamagata, Japan. Pray for wisdom for Kaz as he ministers to those seeking to make a profession of their faith. / Pray for **the Psalter-Hymnal Committee** as it meets with the URCNA Songbook Committee on March 5–6 in Holland, Mich.
5. Affiliated missionary **Linda Kamer**, Japan. Pray for good relationships with her students. / **Tom and Martha Albaugh**, Pittsburgh, Pa. Pray that those attending Redeemer OP Mission's outreach events will hear the gospel and that it will prevail upon willing hearts. / **Jim Scott**, managing editor of *New Horizons*.
6. **Joseph and Carla Fowler**, Gastonia, N.C. Pray for God's Spirit to direct and empower Reformation OPC's gospel witness. / Affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne**, Urayasu, Japan. Pray that leaders will emerge at the church plant. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund administrator.
7. Retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Greet Rietkerk, Young and Mary Lou Son**, and **Fumi Uomoto**. Pray that they will be patient as they deal with age-related problems. / **Christopher and Della Chelpka**, Tucson, Ariz. Pray that God would bless Covenant OPC's membership class.
8. **Ken and Cressid Golden**, Davenport, Iowa. Pray that God would bring more core families to Sovereign Grace OPC. / **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, Lviv, Ukraine, are thankful for those who support them in prayer.
9. **Brian and Dorothy Wingard**, South Africa. Pray that the theological college students would be a positive influence in their communities. / Home Missions associate general secretary **Dick Gerber**. / **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
10. **Philip and Jenny Dharmawirya**, Philadelphia, Pa. (Indonesian). Pray that the congregation of Emmanuel Chapel will walk in unity. / **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Uruguay. Pray for spiritual growth and understanding for those attending Bible studies. / **Marvin Padgett**, acting executive director of Great Commission Publications.
11. **The Church in the Horn of Africa**. Pray that believers will find God's grace sufficient as they persevere during these challenging times. / **Brian and Sara Chang**, Cottonwood, Ariz. Pray that the Lord would bless Verde Valley Reformed Chapel with new growth.
12. **Drew and Sonya Adcock**, Williamsport, Pa. Praise God for additions to Omega OPC both by birth and by profession of faith. / Pray for the teaching ministries of affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic, as they seek to advance the cause of the gospel. / Air Force chaplain **Comelius (and Deidre) Johnson**.



Please pray for the patients and staff who hear the Word of God opened to them at the medical clinic in Karamoja (as pictured here). Pray for the members of the Mission and the believing staff to faithfully show the love of Christ in their words and actions. Pray that Karimojong hearers will be brought to life by the working of the Spirit through the Word, even as they enjoy the benefits of care for their bodies.

13. Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he visits our missionaries in Uruguay this week. / **Jonathan and Kristin Moersch**, Capistrano Beach, Calif. Pray that visitors to Trinity Presbyterian Church will desire to become communicant members. / **Carson Ryan**, yearlong intern at Lake Sherwood OPC in Orlando, Fla.
14. **Geoffrey and Sharon Willour**, Mayfield Village, Ohio. Pray for leadership development at Lake OPC. / Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Janet Birkmann**. / **Pat Clawson**, Christian Education office secretary.
15. **Mr. and Mrs. F**, Asia. Ask the Lord for wisdom for Mr. F. as he follows up contacts and opportunities to share the gospel. / **Todd and Julie Wagenmaker**, St. Louis, Mo. Pray for new visitors to come to Gateway OPC. / Pray for **Danny Olinger**, Christian Education general secretary, as he prepares for the Committee on Christian Education meeting on March 18–20.
16. **Mark and Michele Winder**, Collierville, Tenn. Pray that the Lord would provide a new meeting place for Wolf River Presbyterian Church. / Missionary associates **E. C., T. D., and E. H.**, Asia. Pray for their witness in the classroom. / **Jan Gregson**, office manager and assistant to the director of finance.
17. **Mr. and Mrs. M.**, Asia. Pray that more men will become interested in studying for the ministry in this land. / **Chad and Katie Mullinix**, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Pray for growth in grace and the knowledge of Christ at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church. / Navy chaplain **Bryan (and Shelly) Weaver**.
18. **Ben and Sarah Miller**, Long Island, N.Y. Praise God for his financial blessings to Trinity Church. / Missionary associates **Mr. and Mrs. C.** and **T. L. L.**, Asia. Pray for their outreach programs. / Pray for **the Subcommittee on Ministerial Training's** approval today of interns and mentoring churches for 2013.
19. Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson**, participating in a series of church leadership training seminars in Colombia. / **Brad Hertzog**, Queens, N.Y. Pray for leaders to be raised up and brought in to Reformation Presbyterian Church.
20. **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, Ill. (downtown). Pray that God would bless the weekly Bible studies of Gospel Life Presbyterian Church. / Pray for missionary associates **Erika Bulthuis** and **Emily Pihl**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they maintain busy teaching schedules. / Army chaplain **Kyle (and Laurel) Brown**.
21. **Bob and Martha Wright**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for completion of the new clinic construction. / **Stephen and Catalina Payson**, Mifflinburg, Pa. Pray that Providence OPC will be fervent in prayer and faithful in worship. / **Rodney King**, chairman of the Subcommittee on Internet Ministries.
22. **Doug and Kristi Bylsma**, Beamsville, Ontario, Pray for new visitors and members at Living Hope Presbyterian Church. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that they will have opportunities to minister to the nearby communities. / **David (and Karen) Koenig**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Orland Park, Ill.
23. Missionary associates **Leah Hopp** and **Jesse Van Gorkom**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Leah as she carries out her administrative responsibilities for the community health work. / **Roberto and Marieta Laranjo**, Lowell, Mass. Pray that God's elect will be brought in to Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira.
24. Home Missions staff administrator **Sean Gregg**. / **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray that believers will faithfully attend the worship services held in the local churches. / Pray for short-term missions coordinator **David Nakhla** as he develops improved policies and procedures to enable the OPC to respond better to future disasters.
25. **Al and Laurie Tricarico**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the care and development of Nakaale Presbyterian Church. / **Jeremiah and Elizabeth Montgomery**, State College, Pa. Pray that God would send new families to Resurrection OPC. / **David (and Jenna) DeRienzo**, yearlong intern at Second Parish OPC in Portland, Maine.
26. **Sacha and Martina Walicord**, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Pray for the selection of church officers at Knox Presbyterian Church. / **James and Jenny Knox, M.D. and R.N.**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Jim as he provides leadership to the medical work. / **Mark (and Karissa) Soud**, yearlong intern at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, Ariz.
27. Pray for missionary associates **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they assist the Uganda Mission. / **Everett and Kimberly Henes**, Hillsdale, Mich. Pray for the session and building committee as Hillsdale OPC's new facility is set up. / Pray for **George Cotten-den**, stated clerk of the General Assembly, as he prepares for the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations, which meets tomorrow and Friday.
28. **Kent and Laurie Harding**, Doniphan, Mo. Pray that the people of Sovereign Grace Reformed Church will continue to grow in their understanding of Reformed doctrine and practice. / **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for those who assist in the teaching ministries at St-Marc Church.
29. Missionary associate **Debra Blair**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for effective ministry to unbelievers in the upcoming outreach activities. / **Tim and Joanne Beauchamp**, Bridgton, Maine. Pray that God would provide stable finances for Pleasant Mountain Presbyterian Church. / **Justin (and Hannah) Rosser**, yearlong intern at Matthews OPC in Matthews, N.C.
30. **Brandon and Laurie Wilkins**, Crystal Lake, Ill. Pray that God would bring new growth to Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church. / **Ethiopian Reformed Presbyterian Church**. Pray for the training and spiritual growth of elders in local congregations. / **Jeremy (and Maricruz) Boothby**, summer intern at Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church in Amarillo, Texas.
31. **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for wisdom as church leaders minister to the needy in Haiti. / **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, Tex. Pray that God would bring some to faith in Christ through the outreach and evangelism of San Antonio Reformed Church. / **Geoff (and Heather) Downey**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, Pa.

UPDATE

Churches

• On November 24, the Presbytery of Connecticut and Southern New York organized **Trinity Church** in Huntington, N.Y., formerly a mission work, as a new congregation in the regional church.

Ministers

- **Matthew W. C. Barker**, formerly associate pastor at Emmanuel OPC in Kent, Wash., was installed as pastor of Grace Reformed Church in Walkerton, Ind., on December 10.
- **Dale T. Hanaoka** was installed as a teaching elder at Branch of Hope OPC in Torrance, Calif., on April 1, 2012.
- **David C. Innes** was installed as a teacher at Trinity Church in Huntington, N.Y., on November 24.
- **Benjamin W. Miller**, formerly the organizing pastor, was installed as pastor of Trinity Church in Huntington, N.Y., on November 24.
- On January 5, the Presbytery of Ohio dissolved the pastoral relationship between **Joseph Puglia** and Covenant Presbyterian Church in Mansfield, Ohio, and released him to the Rocky Mountain Presbytery of the PCA.

Milestones

- **Linda Kay Story**, 64, the wife of Pastor Allan Story (Pflugerville, Tex.), died on December 29.

LETTERS

CONFESSIONS

Editor:

To ignore the past would be to elevate one's own time period and self above all others. But another problem lies at the other end of the continuum. That problem is the tendency to elevate another time period as well as select groups from that era above ourselves. When we do that, we put too much weight on the

confessions, so that, whether intentionally or not, we treat them as the Scriptures.

When we have no esteem for confessions, we may have a problem with narcissism, while having too much esteem for them could show an addiction to authoritarianism. In either case, we run the risk of committing idolatry.

Carl Trueman does well in his article on confessions (in the February issue) to alert us to the problems of neglecting our confessions. However, we must also be aware of the dangers of putting the confessions on a faulty pedestal.

Curt Day
Bethlehem, Pa.

Editor:

As a person who spent over half his life in a "Bible only," independent church before I entered into OPC membership, I found the issue on church confessions most interesting and agreeable. However, confessions have sometimes produced stultified, doctrinaire, and boring congregations that fail to attract the unchurched community around them. Spiritual pride can produce a demand for excessive theological precision at all times, and result in criticism of using things like the Narnia Chronicles in an outreach program.

Roland Lindh
Fort Washington, Pa.

REVIEWS

Lay Down This World: Hymns and Spirituals, by Pamela York. Published by Jazzful Heart Music, 2012. CD, 57:13 playing time. Reviewed by Prof. William Edgar.



have not listened to Pamela York's splendid new album. When they do, they will

Jazzing up the hymns? Some might cringe at the idea. That is probably because they

understand that these traditional songs are full of rich musical possibilities. York is an excellent jazz pianist, right up there with the best of them. Her technique is rich, but her imagination is richer. And the sidemen on this new CD are doing far more than keeping up. They have joined the conversation. Jazz is indeed conversational. Collective improvisation, when it works, which it certainly does here, is a marvel.

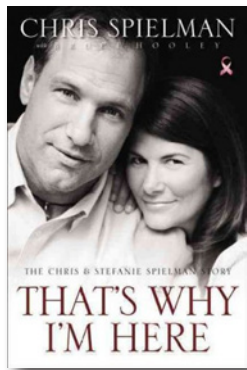
The album generously renders eleven hymns and spirituals, put together in a great sequence, so that not only are they individually shaped, but the programming keeps the interest level high to the end. Have you ever heard *A Mighty Fortress* as a jazz waltz? It works. What about *Be Thou My Vision* with Bill Evans-like changes (chords)? Gorgeous. When *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* is introduced, so is the trombone, and we are in New Orleans. *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me* is pure gospel. So are *Ain't That Good News* and *Deep River*. This album is full of feeling—or rather, feelings—since Pamela and her friends qualify each song into a unique emotional sensibility. These familiar tunes are done worshipfully (she created many of them in church) and joyfully (possibly inducing some listeners to dance with gladness). All music lovers should own *Lay Down This World*, for they will be blessed by it. Thank you, Pamela York!

* * *

That's Why I'm Here: The Chris and Stefanie Spielman Story, by Chris Spielman with Bruce Hooley. Published by Zondervan, 2012. Hardback, 224 pages, list price \$24.99. Reviewed by editorial assistant Patricia E. Clawson.

This book is a shift from the theologically Reformed books usually reviewed in *New Horizons*. The author—a former NFL linebacker—worked on Sundays and is evangelical rather than Reformed.

Near the beginning, Spielman's story highlights his football career—the first high school athlete to grace a Wheaties box, a two-time All-American linebacker



from Ohio State, and a veteran of eleven seasons with three NFL teams. Known for his “Tasmanian Devil” drive, Spielman was the first in the

locker room and the last to go home. He left the field only to have his spine fused, and then worked hard to get back on the field.

His intense focus on football emphasizes the enormity of his decision to step away from the Buffalo Bills for the 1998 season to care for his wife, Stefanie, after she was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of thirty. Thus began his twelve-year role as primary caretaker and supporter of Stefanie, his high school sweetheart and a former model. This move brought national attention, giving the couple a platform to raise awareness and more than \$10 million for breast cancer research. It also brought their faith into the public arena.

A remarkable woman, Stef battled through five bouts of cancer and was pregnant with the last of her four children after she was diagnosed as Stage IV. She refused a recommended abortion and became the first cancer patient to carry a baby to term while taking Herceptin, a cancer-fighting drug.

So why share their story here? First, unlike many “cancer books,” this one is written from the caretaker’s perspective, giving an intimate glimpse into the struggles of those who care for the stricken. It tells how Spielman told his children that their mother’s battle would soon be over and how he helped them adjust after she

Correction

On page 22 of the February issue, the book review of *A Christian’s Pocket Guide to Baptism* should have been attributed to OP pastor Daniel J. Dillard, not Daniel P. Clifford.

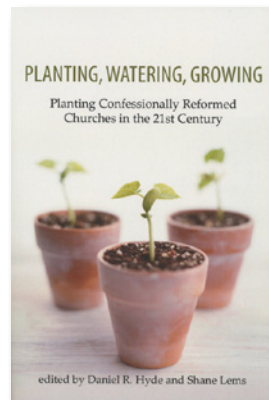
went to glory in 2009. More importantly, this is an honest account of their simple yet solid faith in God through the best and worst of times.

Chris, now an ESPN college football analyst, tells how he curled up in a ball in his car’s backseat, crying to God, when Stef’s cancer went to her liver, marking the start of her final battle. He tells about writing Bible verses on his daughter’s arm to encourage her after her mother died. The book is interwoven with Bible verses that God used to help their faith grow.

You don’t have to love football or be dealing with breast cancer to appreciate this book, which is a stirring love story between Chris and Stef and their gracious God. One woman thanked Stefanie for all she had done for breast cancer awareness. Stef responded, “Don’t you understand? That’s why I’m here”—the title of this book. Reading their story helps us to appreciate how God works in others, which can encourage our walk as well.

* * *

***Planting, Watering, Growing: Planting Confessionally Reformed Churches in the 21st Century*, edited by Daniel R. Hyde and Shane Lems. Published by Reformation Heritage Books, 2011. Paperback, 310 pages, list price \$20.00. Reviewed by OP regional home missionary Stephen D. Doe.**



It was with anticipation that I picked up *Planting, Watering, Growing*. Planting confessionally Reformed churches is not easy,

because deep ignorance of history or of the Bible, a focus on this world and its pleasures, and a fascination with fads challenge Reformed church planters. Here this book helps. Its twenty-one essays come from pastors in a denomi-

nation with which the OPC has close fraternal relations, the United Reformed Churches in North America (URC). This nearness is especially seen in the appreciation the editors and many of the writers express for the manual produced by our own Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, *Planting an Orthodox Presbyterian Church (POPC)*. Also, one of the essays comes from Eric Tuininga, now an OP missionary in Uganda.

Daniel Hyde, who pens four of the articles, has become increasingly well known in Reformed circles through various publications of help to churches. The best-known contributor is Michael Horton of Westminster Seminary California, who authored two of the essays and the foreword. All of the men involved are or have been church planters, so we can expect them to speak with both Reformed conviction and practical experience. We are not disappointed on either count.

The strongest essays are the ones that provide the scriptural and confessional “big picture” for church planting. For example, Brian Vos’s opening essay lays a biblical foundation for church planting, and Daniel Hyde provides a fine exposition of Acts 16. However, I found many of the essays to be stimulating.

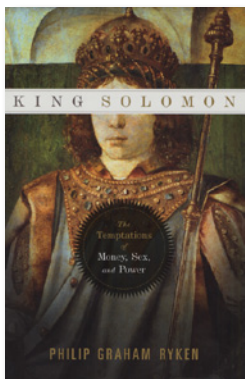
Although the audience is intended to be larger than the URC, the framework for the writers is the URC, its Church Order, and the Three Forms of Unity. Many of the practical admonitions, like those on “becoming a welcoming church” or the need for the church planter to balance his calling with care for his family, fill out the much briefer comments in *POPC*. One particular difference from OPC church-planting methodology, though, is the way in which the oversight of new mission works is handled. What role does the presbytery (read *classis*) play in oversight? Are there ways for a church plant to be established, other than a consistory (read *session*) of an organized church becoming its overseeing body? In church-planting discussions, these things could be explored.

This book is not “trendy” in terms of church-planting techniques. The authors

all place emphasis on Word and sacrament, are strongly confessional, and regard presbyterian church government as the normal means that God will bless to grow his church, rather than seeing such things as obstacles to church planting. To this the OPC can gladly say, “Amen!”

* * *

***King Solomon: The Temptations of Money, Sex, and Power*, by Philip Graham Ryken. Published by Crossway, 2011. Paperback, 254 pages, list price \$16.99. Reviewed by Pastor David Harr.**



King Solomon lived life in the superlative. God made him the wisest of all men. His wealth qualified him as one of the richest men in history. He

built one of the most important buildings, namely the temple. Even his sin was super-sized as he sank into great depravity and apostasy in his old age. A detailed study of his life does not prove boring.

Philip Ryken’s recent book examines the eventful life of Solomon through a careful exposition of the opening narratives of 1 Kings. The book is an adaptation of Ryken’s sermon series on 1 Kings that was originally preached to the congregation of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, where he served as senior minister before he became president of Wheaton College. The resulting book is a rich and useful study of an important figure in God’s story of redemption.

One of the greatest strengths of this work is its Christ-centeredness. Jesus himself compared himself to the Israelite king when he declared, “Behold, something greater than Solomon is here” (Matt. 12:42). Ryken again and again points the reader to the King who is greater than Solomon. Whether the discussion is focused on Solomon’s wis-

dom, his temple building, or his depths of depravity, the surpassing glory of Christ is proclaimed with richness and clarity.

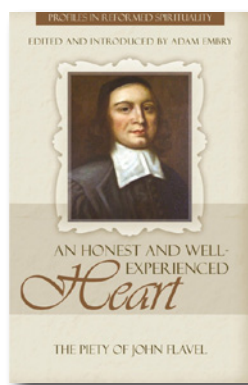
In pointing his readers to the Lord Jesus, Ryken manages to avoid the pitfalls that often ensnare Reformed preachers. For example, the texts of 1 Kings are not misused as mere springboards to biblical-theological themes. The reader is treated to careful exposition of the texts of 1 Kings by one of the best scholar-pastors of our day. One leaves each chapter with a detailed understanding of that particular passage of God’s Word.

Ryken is also careful to apply the Word specifically to the lives of his readers. As the subtitle suggests, the ever-present temptations of money, sex, and power are themes woven throughout the book. But Ryken also uses his pastoral skill to exhort readers on wisdom, leadership, worship, and repentance. The expositions challenge God’s people to be grace-empowered doers of the Word.

This book will prove useful to God’s people in a variety of contexts. The expositions, along with the study guide in the back, make it a great resource for an adult Sunday school class or Bible study. Preachers will also find it a helpful aid in sermon preparation.

* * *

***An Honest and Well-Experienced Heart: The Piety of John Flavel*, edited by Adam Embry. Published by Reformation Heritage Books, 2012. Paperback, 145 pages, list price \$10.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Jeremiah Montgomery.**



a brief summary of Flavel’s life and

This is a fine little book. Embry’s aim is to introduce us to the piety of John Flavel, a seventeenth-century English Puritan. First, he provides

ministry. Second, he presents a selection of passages culled from Flavel’s published writings.

Embry divides his selections into four sections. These deal with Christ’s rule in the heart, the Christian’s duty to keep his heart, the Christian’s life experience (seasons of the heart), and how we discern our hearts. Each section contains devotional gems as well as practical helps.

The first section reminds us that the gospel is not just true doctrine, but good news. In the gospel, God opens his heart to us and ours to him, so that “all men may now see that God has been designing and contriving for their happiness in Christ before the world was.” Flavel uses potent imagery to describe “armies of convictions” overcoming “paper walls” in a sinner’s heart, until finally the report of his conversion “sets the whole city of God rejoicing.” Such vivid metaphors fire the imagination and stir the soul.

The second section exhorts us to guard our hearts amidst the many distractions of daily life. Flavel urges us to employ self-examination and divine meditation. At least once a day, we ought to inquire of our hearts, “O my heart, where have you been today?” Yet self-examination is pointless without biblical instruction: “It is the slipperiness of our hearts in reference to the Word that causes so many slips in our lives. Conscience cannot be urged, or awed, with forgotten truths.”

The longest section is the third, which deals with seasons of the heart. Flavel provides sound pastoral counsel to those coping with the death of a child or of a spouse—both of which he experienced. He is particularly helpful when dealing with personal struggles with such things as anger, doubt, and preparing for one’s own death.

In the fourth section, Flavel calls us to discern the condition of our hearts. The question is not, “Am I free of sin?” but rather, “Do I hate sin? Do I desire to be free of it?” Flavel warns us against morbid introspection, even as he calls us to honest assessment of our affections.

The picture of Flavel that emerges from this book is that of a minister who

is concerned to promote experiential Christianity—a faith firmly rooted in the Word, yet warmly resonating in the affections. This is not just the piety of John Flavel. It is the gospel revealed in Scripture and summarized in the Reformed confessions.

Embry concludes his slim volume with a guide to reading Flavel's published writings. This is a fine parting gift for those—such as this reviewer—whom he has persuaded to undertake the endeavor.

* * *

***Hired 'Right' Out of College: From Classes to Career*, by Garrett Miller. Published by Dog Ear Publishing, 2012. Paperback, 144 pages, list price \$14.95. Reviewed by Joel Pearce, an academic librarian and member of the URCNA.**

The college years are often seen either as an obligatory primer for the workforce focused on good grades or as an expensive four-to-six-year social outlet. Too often these are presented as the only options to high schoolers considering their futures. Garrett Miller (president and CEO of CoTria, and a deacon at Church of the Covenant OPC in Hackettstown, N.J.) presents a solution, challenging the reader to take an active role to finding one's calling.

Miller has written a readable, helpful, and hopeful book on a robust approach to the college years, though his book is not limited in application to high school and college students. He uses biblical principles and proverbs, business insight, and common sense to build his case for a fulfilling career and calling.

While acknowledging that getting good grades is important (as they demonstrate work ethic and an ability to learn), Miller stresses that they are not the only piece of the puzzle. Using the acronym AEIOU, he lays out a plan of getting involved in activities, broadening one's experiences, discerning one's internal call, and listening to others' outward call as steps to "U" being hired right.

These steps can be viewed as an inverted triangle. Broad activities and

experiences should be pursued at the outset. These include student activities, broad coursework, and a variety of summer jobs. In this discovery stage, Miller stresses that it is as important to learn what one does not enjoy as much as what one does. A student should then progress from "discovery" to "choosing." Activities and experiences should lead to "busyness with a purpose," followed by "intentional involvement." But perhaps more importantly—and this is where the book leans heaviest on biblical principles—these must be combined with the inward and outward call. Together, these steps produce evidence to build a case for one's calling.

A well-rounded discussion of pursuing one's calling and future career, Miller's book is immensely practical in encouraging the reader to put concepts into practice. That is, Miller's book is not filled with abstract concepts, but it pushes the reader to interact with the book and to evaluate oneself. Questions, prompts, and an anecdotal case study follow each chapter.

Hired 'Right' is recommended for high school and college students, their parents, and recent college graduates. It is also recommended to pair Miller's work with Kevin DeYoung's *Just Do Something*.

* * *

***Our Creed: For Every Culture and Every Generation*, by Mark G. Johnston. Published by P&R, 2012. Paperback, 124 pages, list price \$11.99.**

Reviewed by OP pastor Calvin D. Keller.

In an age when creeds are considered irrelevant, *Our Creed* is a welcome



resource for teaching the faith once for all passed down to us. *Our*

Creed is an overview of the biblical faith as expressed in the Apostles' Creed. As such, it is an excellent tool for teaching biblical doctrine. Mark Johnston shows us the relevance of this ancient creed in a refreshing way, with an excellent use of Scripture throughout. He explains, "The creed's brevity should not be mistaken for paucity. Each clause is in a very real sense the distilled essence of a truth that is much broader and deeper than it appears on the surface" (p. 113).

This book is a great antidote to the modern evangelical focus on personal experience at the expense of Christian truth. The opening chapter, entitled "Who Needs a Creed?" is a defense of creeds in general and the Apostles' Creed in particular. The following chapters then move through the confessional statements, beginning with the doctrines of God and Christ and working through the accomplishment of salvation and the goal of all things in Christ's final coming. Johnston writes, "Therein lies the logic of the creed. It tells us about God—who he is, what he is like, and all he has done through Christ—and then it tells us about ourselves and what it means to receive his salvation" (p. 110).

I was particularly impressed by the fourth chapter, entitled "He Descended into Hell." Here Johnston discusses the most controversial phrase of the ancient creed. He agrees with John Calvin that these words are really "a summary of the two clauses about the death of Christ that precede them" (p. 53). Using relevant Scripture, Johnson proceeds to develop a biblical theology of the cross and shows how this phrase is "the starkest and yet most accurate way of summing up what happened on the cross that there is" (p. 58).

Our Creed is more than a simple

A Costly Adoption?

Think about what it cost God to adopt us.

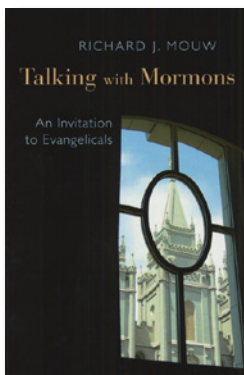
www.opc.org/nh.html?article_id=685

exposition of the Apostles' Creed. Johnston provides rich biblical teaching in the study questions that follow each chapter. This is the strength of the book. The questions and Scripture passages are well chosen and very helpful.

It would have been good to have a bit more discussion of the history of the creed, its use in church history, and its origin. Nevertheless, this book has renewed my appreciation of the Apostles' Creed. This book is a useful resource for Christian education, and I hope to use it in a Bible study at our church in the near future.

* * *

***Talking with Mormons: An Invitation to Evangelicals*, by Richard Mouw. Published by Eerdmans, 2012. Paperback, 107 pages, list price \$12.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Jody O. Morris.**



Richard Mouw is the president and professor of Christian philosophy at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. He is a self-

professed Calvinist and was once a member of the Christian Reformed Churches. He writes from an "evangelical perspective" (p. 3). He is also well known among Mormons and Mormon scholars. I appreciate the advice that he gives to evangelicals on how to engage Mormons. I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in this subject.

Mouw's "main concern" in the first part of his book is "to nurture friendlier relations with the Mormon community" (p. 43). The last half of the book deals more with engaging Mormons on theological matters.

Mouw's conciliatory tone comes out early in the book. On page 3, he describes an apology he made to Mormons "for the

way we evangelicals have often treated them." Mouw also distances himself from evangelical leaders who have spoken harshly of Mormons. He describes a presentation that Walter Martin (author of *The Kingdom of the Cults*) gave in a small church in 1965 that both he and a young Mormon happened to be attending. Mouw writes, "I came away from that encounter convinced that Martin's theological critique of Mormonism was correct on the basic points at issue. But I also left the church that night with a nagging sense that there was more to be said, and that the way to let it be said was captured in the young Mormon's complaint, 'You are not even trying to understand!'" (p. 9). Mouw offers an argument for calling Mormonism a "new religious movement" rather than a "cult" (p. 30).

As Mouw approaches the theological issues surrounding Mormonism, he asks whether there could be some Mormons who are wrong in their theology but truly Christian through faith in Christ. While he agrees they are confused about Christ, he still thinks their faith could be genuine. In making his case, he cites a footnote in which Charles Hodge expresses his belief that liberal theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher was a true Christian (p. 35).

I leave Mouw's theological reflections in the chapters entitled "The Same Jesus?" and "What about Joseph Smith?" to the discerning reader. I conclude with a question he has for the Mormon with sincere faith: "Given your obviously

OPC Women's Retreat

April 19–20 • Pittsfield, Mass.

The annual OPC Women's Retreat, sponsored by the Presbytery of New York and New England, will be held at the Lakeside Conference Center in Pittsfield, Mass. Julie Courtney will be speaking on the theme of "A Praying Life." For more information, call the registrar, Elise Pasqualino, at 518-762-2602 or e-mail her at epasqual@nycap.rr.com. (This corrects the information printed in the February issue.)

sincere love of the Savior in whom you're trusting for your salvation, is the theology you teach capable of *sustaining* that trust?" (p. 58).

* * *

***Uprooted: A Guide for Homesick Christians*, by Rebecca VanDoodewaard. Published by Christian Focus Publications, 2012. Paperback, 112 pages, list price \$7.99. Reviewed by OP member Brooke Brycko.**

The average American will change addresses thirteen times before he dies, and the rise of globalization has made homesickness a more common, intense, and even perpetual state of mind for more people than ever before. Christians are no exception to the epidemic. Homesickness affects our families, churches, workplaces, and universities, but we are often unprepared to meet this challenge in a God-honoring way. So how should Christians handle homesickness?

Positions Available

Associate Pastor: Lake Sherwood OPC in Orlando, Fla., seeks an energetic man of God to work with senior pastor and congregation in becoming better disciples of Christ. Significant preaching, teaching, and outreach responsibilities. Adherence to the Westminster Standards is required. This is an excellent opportunity to work alongside an established senior pastor and benefit from his wisdom and experience. Experience is preferred. Interested parties should contact us by April 30, 2013. For more information, see our website: www.lsopc.org. Résumés and inquiries should be directed to: Stephen C. L. Chong, 225 E. Robinson Street, Suite 600, Orlando, FL 3280; e-mail SChong@MateerHarbert.com.

NEWS, VIEWS, REVIEWS (cont.)

VanDoodewaard's book is a valuable tool for grappling with this question. She neither pampers nor downplays feelings of homesickness, but rather calls believers to show courage in the face of this potentially paralyzing emotion. VanDoodewaard's insights come from her own family's experiences with relocating many times in rapid succession. These transitions drove her to read the writings of figures from Christian history who recorded their struggles with homesickness, and she weaves their reflections throughout the book. VanDoodewaard also draws upon her work with international students, as well as her observations of uprooted family and friends.

While the book is small and does not attempt to cover the issue of homesickness exhaustively, it puts forth solid principles, demonstrating that theology is indeed practical. VanDoodewaard offers Christ-centered guidance on cultivating habits and thought patterns that tend to counteract homesickness in general. She also devotes chapters to three special circumstances: battling homesickness while

unmarried, while raising children, and while working in the pastorate.

But the book's best tactic for putting homesickness in its proper place is a doctrinal one. The Reformers and Puritans often said the main goal of the Christian life is to prepare for death, and VanDoodewaard pinpoints homesickness as a special opportunity to do just that. Paradise has been lost; we wander the earth and pine for a perfect, permanent spot to call home, because that is precisely what we were created to have. Such a home is unattainable in this life. But

when viewed through the lens of eternity, homesickness can loosen our grip on earthly things, show us the all-sufficiency of Christ in our weakness, and cause us to long instead for the everlasting home the Lord is preparing for us.

Uprooted should make the packing list of anyone who is preparing for, or has recently experienced, a move—especially students, families, and individuals in the ministry, missions, or military service—and those experiencing culture shock in a foreign country. It will fit in your suitcase, with no cramming required!

FIVE GENERATIONS

On November 25, 2012, Grace Presbyterian Church in Lisbon, New York, celebrated five generations of church membership in the family of Frances Putney, the church treasurer. On that day, her granddaughter, Naomi Teele, and Naomi's husband, Jonathan, professed their faith and were received into church membership. Their three daughters (Zoe, Ava, and Stella) were baptized by Pastor Patrick R. Severson.

Mrs. Putney is a charter member of Grace Presbyterian (formerly Lisbon OPC). When the congregation was established in 1958, her husband, the late Delmer Putney, was also an original member. Her parents, ruling elder Elmer and Elizabeth (Thompson) Akins, were also charter members. Leslie "Skip" Putney, the son of Frances and the father of Naomi, is an elder in the congregation. All five generations have lived in Lisbon, a

small town along the St. Lawrence River and the border with Canada.

Front: Ava Teele, Frances Putney, Zoe Teele; back: Stella Teele, Leslie "Skip" Putney, Naomi Teele



Planning a Short-Term Missions Trip This Summer?

Check out the many possibilities in the OPC at www.OPCSTM.org!

Need help?
Contact David Nakhla at nakhla.1@opc.org.