

# NEW HORIZONS

≡ *in the* ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ≡

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*by Patricia E. Clawson*

FEBRUARY 2018

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**LIGHT IN THE  
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## New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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The new Committee on Ministerial Care at its December 2017 meeting at Bethel OPC in Wheaton, IL. Left to right: Darren Thole, Lendall Smith, Greg De Jong, Bruce Stahl, David Vander Ploeg, David Haney, Douglas L. Watson, Clark Brooking, and David Nakhla.



# LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS OF PUERTO RICO



**JAMIE DEAN //** When dusk descends on Puerto Rico, a familiar hum rises from barrios and businesses across the Caribbean island. It's the sound of generators producing electricity for Puerto Ricans still sitting in darkness after Hurricane Maria ravaged the island in September.

By late 2017, at least a third of the territory's 3.4 million residents were still waiting for the lights to come back on.

The darkness often brings malaise. Scores of people flock to San Juan's mega-mall where power is restored and locals find a few hours of diversion at movies or restaurants like Olive Garden and Cheesecake Factory.

Life seems normal at Plaza Las Americas, but when crowds leave the packed shopping center, they make their way home along streets where traffic signals don't work and drivers take turns threading through dangerous intersections.

For many poorer Puerto Ricans, there are no trips to the mall or generators to crank on. There are lanterns and flashlights, but most of the time the sunset simply brings another dark night in the heat.

Even when widespread electricity finally returns to the island, Puerto Ricans will still grapple with the long-term effects of a storm that worsened problems already existing before the

hurricane.

It's a challenging place to do ministry, but for the three OPC congregations in Puerto Rico, it's also an important opportunity to do more of what they've always aimed to accomplish: help people dwelling in darkness to see a great light.

A recent visit to the three churches offered a glimpse into life and ministry on an island still reeling from Hurri-

cane Maria—and already anticipating the next hurricane season just a few months away.

The OPC's connection to Puerto Rico spans over a decade and began through the friendship of a Puerto Rican pastor and an OPC minister. Over time, two Presbyterian churches in San Juan asked to join the OPC. Because of pastoral connections with OPC ministers in the northeast, both churches became part of the Presbytery of New Jersey.

## **Jesús es la Verdad OPC ("Jesus Is the Truth OPC")**

On a warm winter morning in San Juan, Pastor Roberto Quinones gives a tour of Jesús es la Verdad OPC.

The congregation has renovated the storefront space into a place of worship for the twenty families attending the church. On the first floor, a small fellowship hall provides a place for churchgoers to share Sunday lunch each week.

A drive around the neighborhood shows the kinds of problems many face



in San Juan. Without electricity, the mechanic shop across the street was closed on a Saturday. A nearby pharmacy was selling only over-the-counter medicine due to shortages.

The church building escaped serious damage during the hurricane, but Pastor Quinones says members have coped with many difficulties: A 76-year-old man has been hospitalized twice since the storm, suffering from breathing a steady stream of gasoline vapors from generators running near his home.

Another member's husband has cancer, and she struggled to get treatment for him after the storm. At least two people in the church lost their jobs after the hurricane, and others working for the government fear losing their positions or benefits in the future.

Church attendance also dipped, as churchgoers struggled to take care of needy family members and coped with other complications brought on by the storm.

"Everything is frustrating," says the pastor. "People are living in lamentations."

It's a perplexing mix of problems, but Pastor Quinones says he's encouraged his congregation to remember God's sovereignty. He says a visit by Pastor Tom Church of Immanuel OPC in Bellmawr, New Jersey, was also encouraging: "He reminded us that this isn't an insurmountable problem, but an opportunity to serve."

Opportunities to serve abound, and during a visit to a nearby barrio, Pastor Quinones checks on Ada—a church member and a single mother of six children living in a low-income area. Ada learned about the church through the congregation's ministry to neighborhood children. The gospel resonated with her, and she professed faith in Christ and joined the church.

Since the hurricane, the church has helped Ada and her children with food and medicine, and they continue to monitor her needs.

During our visit, Ada pointed to a tarp covering her damaged roof. Her

landlord wants FEMA to make repairs. FEMA wants the landlord to take care of it. So Ada and her children simply wait for electricity to return, and they cope with the rain that makes its way into their home.

Despite the hardships, Ada is thankful for God's protection. She's also thankful for the church and doesn't hesitate for a moment when asked what she enjoys most about it. "The preaching of the Word," she says.

Pastor Quinones hopes the ministry of the Word will expand. Even as many people have left the island since the hurricane (Puerto Ricans are American citizens and have no restrictions on travel to the United States), the pastor hopes the church's continued presence will be a witness to those around them.

"We know that God calls us to do our work with devotion, and we want to spread the gospel where God puts us," he says. "Our goal is to be present and minister."

### **Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada ("Presbyterian Reformed Church")**

Across town, Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada has the same goal. The OPC congregation also escaped major structural damage during the hurricane,



*Ada, member of Jesús es la Verdad OPC, with two of her six children*



*Angel Carrasquillo with David Haney*

though water damaged the pews.

In the church's entryway, a map of Puerto Rico features pins showing the home locations of people who come to the church: The pins are scattered across the whole island.

The church's radio ministry has reached Puerto Ricans throughout the territory, and some travel considerable distances to attend worship on Sundays. In the predominantly Catholic country, the need for Reformed churches is great.

Angel Carrasquillo, an elder at the church, shows a room ready to be filled with thousands of Reformed titles donated to the church or collected by the church over the years. They hope to continue to be a resource for islanders hungry for sound teaching and eager for biblical worship.

Like other churches, the congregation has many older members, and Carrasquillo says they've watched young people move to the United States for education or better job opportunities.

But the congregation is enthusiastic about continuing its ministry, and hopes to reach more people close to the church. Meanwhile, they also keep an eye on a hurricane season set to begin in a few months. Carrasquillo, 68, has lived on the island his whole life, and

says he's never seen a hurricane like Maria.

### Iglesia Uno Reformada OPC ("One Reformed Church OPC")

Travel sixty miles south of San Juan to the southern coast of Puerto Rico, and you'll find the third OPC congregation: Iglesia Uno Reformada OPC sits nestled in the small coastal town of Arroyo.

The drive over a lush mountain range is beautiful, but the remnants of cleared trees reveal that the central portion of the island suffered some of the worst wind damage during the storm.

Off a narrow street in Arroyo, a building that once served as a junior high school is now the Sunday meeting space for the members of a small OPC congregation led by Pastor Bradney Lopez.

Pastor Lopez, 31, grew up in Arroyo, and he embraced Christ as Savior after visiting a Baptist church when he was nineteen years old. He pursued college and seminary, and over time, he embraced Reformed theology.

Pastor Lopez began searching for Reformed churches on the island. He discovered Pastor Carlos Cruz at the Reformada OPC in San Juan, and started driving over the mountains to attend the church with his family on Sundays.

Eventually, Pastor Lopez worked with the denomination to plant an OPC church in Arroyo in 2014. The congregation is currently a mission work of the Presbytery of New Jersey.

A hurricane is a major challenge

for any church, but it's particularly hard for a small church plant.

As the weeks wore on without electricity at home or church, Pastor Lopez and his wife, Eileen, learned to cope with homeschooling and caring for five small children, as even simple tasks turned into daylong ordeals, and weariness set in for many in the com-



*The congregation of Iglesia Uno Reformada OPC in Arroyo, Puerto Rico, with Pastor Bradney Lopez and his family in the center*

munity.

When night falls in Arroyo, the neighborhood grows dark, and Pastor Lopez turns on a generator. It's a daily ritual the family has longed to leave behind, but they're also grateful that they've gotten to know neighbors they didn't know before the storm. They hope those connections will lead to more ministry opportunities.

Like other churches, they've seen a handful of members leave for the United States. Some say they'll return when conditions improve, though it wasn't clear when that might happen.

Lopez noted that even when power is restored, coming back to Puerto Rico still won't mean coming back to their previous life.

Still, on Sunday morning, a handful of families in Arroyo gathered at the church for a rich worship service in one of the school's larger classrooms. The members sat in wooden pews, and an

elder helped to lead worship. A generator powered a fan to circulate air, and Pastor Lopez preached above the hum.

He was continuing through his study of Acts, and he exhorted the congregation to be prepared to share the gospel with unbelievers: "Our purpose as Christians is to bring people from darkness to light."

With nearby mountains visible in the distance, the light outside was darkening over the green hills, but the light of the gospel burned brightly among the small gathering of saints eager for worship.

After the service, they enjoyed fellowship over a simple meal and spoke of plans for next

week's gathering. When I left, they warmly urged me to return someday. Even after a short visit, Eileen Lopez told me: "You have a family in Puerto Rico."

The same is true for the whole denomination. Though everyone isn't able to visit, all members of the OPC have church family in Puerto Rico.

Pastor Dick Ellis, an OPC pastor in New Jersey who serves on the presbytery's home missions committee, urges the OPC to pray for these dear congregations. He encourages praying that the pastors and members would make the most of opportunities for outreach, but also that the Lord will strengthen them in hardship: "Pray that they will be steadfast and immovable . . . knowing that, in the Lord, their labor is not in vain." □

*The author, a journalist, is a member of Matthews OPC in Matthews, NC.*

# CONTEMPLATING SHORT-TERM MISSIONS?



**PATRICIA E. CLAWSON // Have you considered serving on a short-term mission trip but were unsure how to get involved? Perhaps you want your children to gain the experience but no one in your congregation is going. Perhaps your church is too small to organize and fund a trip. Should you join a presbytery-sponsored trip?**

When OP pastor Joe Keller was in college, he and his late wife, Jean, each served on short-term mission trips to Kenya and Australia respectively. He fondly recalls how they gained new perspectives on the world and broadened their interest in missions. Later, they hoped their six children would have similar opportunities. So far, their daughter Hannah has served the OP mission in Uganda three times and Rebekah and Ruth once. Catching the bug for missions, Naomi and Ruth also served on non-OP mission teams.

Those trips were far more than sightseeing. Keller, pastor of Christ Covenant OPC in Dallas, Texas, encourages his congregation's young people to go on short-term mission trips as a way to appreciate their blessings, increase their awareness and care for others' needs, and learn many ways to spread the gospel. "Short-term missions challenge the young person's level of faith and service," he said. "This

has the potential to greatly deepen their faith. Missions and serving are contagious."

To learn what opportunities are available, Keller has contacted the

their hurricane and tornado relief trips to Missouri, Oklahoma, and along the Gulf Coast.

Although Keller's church is small, the session designates specific diaconal offerings to support an individual's mission trip, and the congregation generously gives.

James La Belle, pastor of the OPC of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and his wife, Chantry, also want their seven children to serve the church through short-term missions. Both grew spiritually during their ten months in Africa. "Now it was time for our children to make the most of the OPC opportunities to serve," said Chantry. "It blessed our children to

know that they were helping to spread the gospel to children who were unchurched or young in their faith. They saw some fruit while they were there, even though it was difficult at times."

Four La Belle children have served on OPC trips, starting with River and



*The youth group from Covenant OPC in Orland Park, IL, replicating the Chapel's atmosphere for a fundraising dinner*

OPC offices and the missionaries directly, then promoted those trips to his fifty-member congregation. He and his members also have joined OP Pastor Steve Igo's large teams from Cedar Presbyterian Church in Hudsonville, Michigan, and some other churches, on

Schylie at the Quebec City English for Kids Camp. Car washes and diaconal aid helped to fund a disaster relief trip in Houston. Their session added a line item in the church budget for Schylie's current yearlong service in Uganda.

"It is a benefit for our children to meet other people in the OPC and serve alongside them," said Chantry. "It is great for them to see those who are not churched and grow in compassion for the lost. It reminds us that the call of Christ to be a light to the world reaches beyond the local church and its needs."

### Churches Build Teams

This summer, the La Belle children hope to join an English for Kids Camp in St. Georges de Beauce, Quebec. Covenant OPC in Barre, Vermont, organizes the trip, directed by team leader Olivia Durham, wife of Pastor Carl Durham. Their team of twenty includes many from other OP churches in the Presbytery of New York and New England. Working with a presbytery, which provided about a quarter of the cost annually for transportation, food, and camp supplies, has helped the seventy-five-member congregation continue this service for fifteen years. Team members pay \$200 a week, and each volunteer works with his or her session to plan how to raise the funds.

"One of our goals is to include teens from churches in our presbytery who do not have youth groups," said Durham. "We are setting up a little 'world' for a week where God reigns and people work together for his glory, harmoniously. The culture of the camp, working together on one job rather than for individual goals, is a precious opportunity, a real honor and joy."

### Presbyteries Pull Teams Together

Rather than individual churches sponsoring trips, presbyteries often step in. The Presbytery of Southern California organized their first short-term mission trip in 1987 to support their own missionary to Mexico. After that work closed, the PSC Youth Committee asked OP missionaries if they want-

ed teams sent to their fields. The Czech Republic received their first overseas team—Team Praha—in 2007. In 2008, Haiti missionary Ben Hopp also hosted the first of many teams.

The PSC Youth Committee names team coordinators, then team leaders, such as a pastor and wife or a seminarian. They recruit vets and rookies through information sent to churches and the OPC's online S.T.O.R.M. report, published by Short-Term Missions Coordinator David Nakhla. A team member's church helps to raise funds.

"Sessions who give the congregation an opportunity to support a young person on the team have, in almost all cases, provided the necessary funds,"



Jacob Davies, from Harvest OPC in Grand Rapids, with two Haitian VBS students

said former Team Praha Coordinator David Winslow. "Having the presbytery send the teams and share the blessing of doing so around the regional church shares the expense of sending team members more broadly."

Team leaders prepare members through video conferencing, discussing lesson plans, and team meetings. On the field, missionaries orient the teams.

The Haiti Mission invites teams to conduct VBS programs twice a year, with the goal of training the indigenous church members to eventually run their own programs without OPC teams, said Ben Hopp. Volunteers also complete construction projects, teach semi-

nars, and provide medical services.

Besides airfare, team members typically pay twenty dollars a day to cover food, transportation, and interpreter costs, plus incidentals. Hopp's wife, Heather, and team members prepare the meals to keep visitors healthy.

Smaller groups are asked to join presbytery teams. "The presbytery level seems the best place to work," said Hopp. "It allows a greater number of OPC churches to make a connection with the mission here in Haiti."

### A Spot for Training

The Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, New Jersey, offers intensive apologetics and evangelism training with hands-on experience. Volunteer staff promote the message of the gospel by specializing in music, drama, or support work. Weekly church teams are integrated into the daily training and evening programs.

Full-time summer volunteers raise \$2,500, while weeklong volunteers pay \$100 to cover food and housing expenses. A church group's ministry fee is \$2,000 a week, excluding food and travel expenses.

"Ideally, volunteers are fully supported by their churches, as we try to emphasize that each short-term missionary is being sent by their home church to assist with the ministry here," said Elizabeth Horst, the Chapel's administrative assistant. Others raise their support through friends, families, or out of pocket.

A survey of seventy-two short-termers in 2016 surprisingly revealed that 72 percent thought the trip costs were "just right," 21 percent thought they were "inexpensive," and less than a percent considered their trip expensive. Only three out of the seventy-two had difficulty raising funds for their trip.

For more information on OPC short-term missions, visit [opcstn.org](http://opcstn.org) or contact [OPCShortTermMissions@opc.org](mailto:OPCShortTermMissions@opc.org). □

*The author is an editorial assistant for New Horizons.*

# GO INTO ALL THE WORLD



## OPC Short-Term Missions

- [OPCSTM.org](http://OPCSTM.org)
- [OPC Short-Term Missions on Facebook](#)
- [S.T.O.R.M. Report \(Newsletter\)](#)



## 2018 Opportunities



- **Asia:** Teach English to University Students
- **Haiti:** “Team Haiti”—VBS Programs
- **Japan:** Community Center Outreach and Work Projects
- **Key West, Florida:** Evangelism Training and Experience
- **Naples, Florida:** Local Outreach and Service Projects
- **Quebec:** “English for Kids” Bible Camp and “English for Teens” Bible Camping Trip
- **Uganda:** Education Outreach to Young Children
- **San Antonio, Texas:** Local Outreach and Service Projects
- **South Korea:** Teach English to Missionary Trainees
- **Wildwood, New Jersey:** Boardwalk Chapel—Evangelism, Outreach, Drama, Music
- **Zoar, Wisconsin:** “Venture Missions”—VBS on Menominee Reservation
- Hurricane Relief Work in **Texas, Florida,** and **Puerto Rico**



**Short-Term  
Missions**

Contact: David Nakhla, OPC Short-Term Missions Coordinator  
[OPCShortTermMissions@opc.org](mailto:OPCShortTermMissions@opc.org)





## Utah 2017



“After completing the third Team Utah trip, I can easily see the fruit of our trips. First and most obviously, the OP church building in Magna is in much better shape. The office is fully functioning, there is one classroom completely ready to use, two more rooms just need trim, vast areas have been freshly painted, and a myriad of other small projects have been accomplished. While finishing the construction has been nice, Team Utah has also been an encouragement to a small congregation.”

—Courtney Habegger, team organizer



## Haiti 2017

“Dust. Mount Sinai. Peanut butter. Singing. Ten Commandments. Duck, duck, goose. A lot goes on at Vacation Bible School! Team Haiti 2017 did VBS at three different churches. The Haitian children had fun with crafts and got peanut butter everywhere at snack time. They played games with lots of dust flying, skirts swishing, and cheering for friends. They learned about love for God and neighbor. But most importantly, over 250 Haitian kids heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.” —Rose Perkins



## Quebec 2017



“Six kids were assigned to my class [in English for Kids Camp]. We read and discussed the themes of *Pilgrim's Progress* each day. As a senior citizen working with these young people, it was a challenge to keep up and keep connecting. But God did it! Each day I had the energy and ideas I needed.” —Rick Taylor

# A NEW ADVENTURE AS MISSIONARIES TO ASIA

// MR. K.



*Missionaries to Asia Mr. and Mrs. K. and their children L. (11), J. (6), and K. (2)*

I was born in 1978 in La Mirada, California, to unbelieving parents who considered the church to be a safe haven for their children. They took my brother and me to Sunday school at a local Methodist church, where I was baptized. I remember being asked to repeat the Sinner's Prayer. Though as a young child I did not know the full meaning of that prayer, nor understand what had taken place, a small seed had been planted in my life.

When I was in high school, my mother nearly died in a car accident. By God's grace, this led her to make a public profession of faith, and she was baptized. She was a new person with a new attitude and joy in the Lord. She regularly took me to Wednesday night Bible study, where the gospel was expounded from the whole counsel of God.

Later, when I was planning to go to the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), I remember my grandmother pleading with me, "Darryl, you can do anything you want when you're at college, but do one thing for me: go to church." But for me, college meant FREEDOM—I was living on my own, free from parents, free to do what I wanted. Providentially, this attitude did not last long.

I saw advertisements around campus for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship and decided to give it a try. It was not a church, but it was Christian fellowship. I will never forget the fall 1997 retreat because it was there that I consciously, as an adult, responded to the gospel call. My life was changed forever. I had a new outlook: Jesus Christ is my Lord, and he is in complete control. God is love, and he loves people from every nation, tribe, and language. I wanted to love like Christ loves. So at UCSD, where the student body was at the time more than 60 percent Asian, that meant befriending Asians and learning about and understanding their culture.

I had entered UCSD as a premedical bioengineering major because I had aspirations of becoming a doctor in order to

get rich. My plans changed. I chose a new major, psychology, and focused on learning how to help people. I also began to study an Asian language.

My days were consumed with this new language—not only studying it but taking every opportunity to speak it with anyone who even looked Asian. As a result, I earned a scholarship to study the language in Asia. While living there, I took every opportunity to share the good news with the local people. I joined with the local church in their Bible study and evangelism efforts, inviting my roommates to Lord's Day services as well as other church-related activities; I assisted with earthquake disaster relief; I made myself available to the Lord's service.

That year the Lord solidified in my heart a love for the Asian people. I began to pray for the chance to return to the Asian-language-speaking world if it was God's will.

Soon after my return to the United States and to UCSD, the Lord led me to the campus fellowship of an Asian church, Evangelical Asian Christian Fellowship. There I served as a Bible study leader and member of the club's leadership team until June 2002 when I graduated with a BA in Asian Studies. Just one month after graduation, I returned to Asia as a missionary of the Evangelical Asian Church, where I served on the leadership team of a bilingual, non-denominational church, House of Praise. In 2003, I met my wife, Anita, and we married a year later in August 2004.

During those years, my church in the United States was experiencing some struggles. At the same time, they encouraged me to get some missions training and become involved with a formal missions agency. In 2005, Anita and I joined Youth With A Mission (YWAM), where we learned about discipleship and leadership training, Bible teaching, and evangelism. We were also involved in several fruitful areas of ministry. From 2007 to 2009, our love for Asia grew when we had the opportunity to assist the YWAM work there.

In 2009, we returned to Asia to continue our work with

YWAM, transferring our membership to New Hope Church, a member congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Asia. (This is the denomination that OP missionary Richard B. Gaffin Sr., along with missionaries from other Reformed denominations in Korea, New Zealand, and the United States, labored to plant in the 1970s.) It was there that I grew in the Reformed faith and was encouraged to return to the States to attend seminary in order to gain formal theological training with hopes of returning to the mission field with a Presbyterian denomination.

The Lord led me to study at Mid-America Reformed Seminary in Dyer, Indiana, from 2012 to 2015. Anita and I became members of New Covenant Community OPC in Joliet, Illinois. I came under care of and was licensed in the Presbytery of the Midwest, later transferring to the Presbytery of New York and New England. I had the privilege of serving a summer internship in Madison, Wisconsin, where I was blessed to work with two congregations, Providence OPC and Madison Asian Christian Church. This was followed by a yearlong internship at Lakeview Presbyterian Church in Rockport, Maine, under the tutelage of Rev. Stephen Tracey. The next year, I served a second yearlong internship at First Church of Merrimack (OPC) in Merrimack, New Hampshire, under the tutelage of Rev. Dr. Allen Tomlinson.

In 2017, all these years of training and preparation culminated in my call by the OPC Committee on Foreign Missions to serve as a missionary evangelist to Asia. And it is by God's grace that I now embark on this journey as an OP missionary with the support of my wife and our three children.

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## MY STORY

*Mrs. K.*

I was born and raised in Asia. My family members practiced traditional ancestor worship. They burned incense and worshiped idols.

When I was nineteen years old, I was looking for the meaning of my life but found none. I didn't know why I existed. So I decided to play around and pursue pleasure. For two years, I thought it would satisfy me and bring me happiness, but, deep down inside, I was very lonely and empty. I felt dirty in my heart; I wished I could take it out and wash it clean. I was lost and even contemplated suicide.

In the midst of my despair, I remembered what my sister had said when she shared the gospel message with me. She told me that God made me and loves me and that he sent his only begotten son Jesus Christ to die on the cross for my sins. He was raised from the dead in order for me to have a new life. At that desperate moment, I began to pray to God, asking him to forgive my sins and to help me to know him more. I felt his love and knew that I was forgiven.

Soon after that, I began attending a bilingual charismatic church and was baptized in November 1997. God gave me a new life to live for him and to glorify him. He gave me the desire to share the gospel with the unreached world. Our church often had missionaries come to share their experiences on the mission field. Every time I heard them speak, I was touched by their testimonies.

One day, during my quiet time, I felt that God was leading me to be a full-time missionary in Asia. In 2000, I joined Youth With A Mission (YWAM) for their Discipleship Training School. During the three months of training, I learned many things about God and evangelizing in cross-cultural settings. Our team went to Asia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and Australia for three months of outreach.

In 2001, I had the opportunity to go to Israel for a nine-month program called School of Worship Jerusalem. There I learned about how to worship God in Spirit and in truth. I also learned about Jewish and Arabic cultures and some Modern Hebrew.

During the summer of 2003, I met Darryl in Asia. He was a missionary and English teacher from California. He also had a heart for missions in Asia. Soon after we married in August 2004, we joined YWAM together, seeking further missions training, and later became full-time staff members. We traveled to many countries in Asia to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In those years of ministry, we realized our need for sound doctrine and theological training. We decided to return to the United States so that Darryl could study at Mid-America Reformed Seminary in Indiana. While at seminary, we joined the OPC. During his studies and internships, our desire to share the gospel with and minister among Asian people continued. In 2017, Darryl was called by the Committee on Foreign Missions to serve as a missionary evangelist in Asia.

We are blessed with three children. L., our first daughter, was born in Asia on July 15, 2006. She went with us to Asia when she was a toddler. L. loves God and has a heart to serve others. Our son, J., was born in Asia on March 4, 2011. Our third child, K., was born in the United States on May 4, 2015. As a mother, I pray that they will grow up following Jesus and serving him as their Lord and King.

I like the quote by John Piper which says: "Missions exists because worship doesn't." My desire and prayer is to see more people in Asia worship Jesus. May God be glorified through our ministry in Asia.

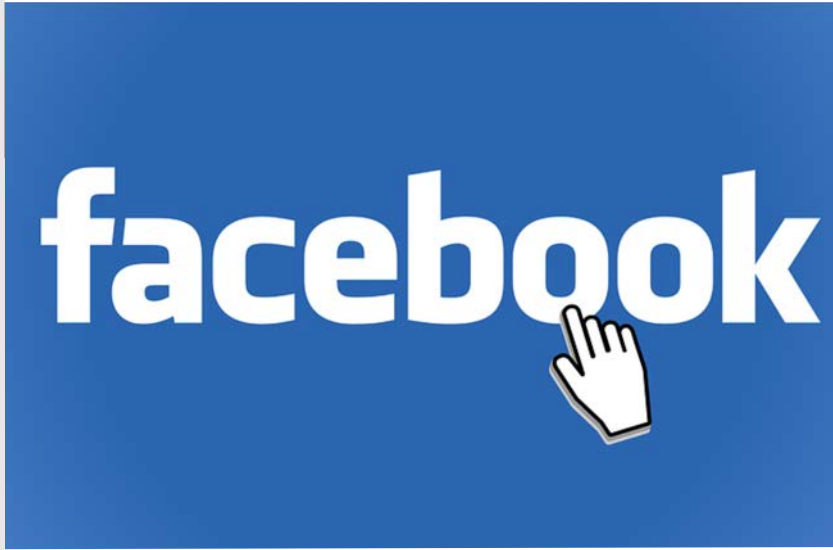
## What's New

### // Comings and Goings

After a seven-month furlough in the US, **Mr. F.** returned to Asia on January 30.

# NEW HORIZONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

// JUDITH M. DINSMORE



Churches and members who like *New Horizons* can now “like” it on Facebook. As of January 2018, any Facebook user is now able to find, like, and share *New Horizons* articles, book reviews, news items, and announcements.

## Why Facebook?

Over eighty OP churches are on Facebook, not to mention members and attendees. Putting the magazine’s content on social media is no new mission, but rather a new take on a long-standing mission: serving the denomination of the OPC. The Committee on Christian Education hopes that entering Facebook will widen the readership of *New Horizons* and give readers new ways to engage with its content while at the same time providing another platform for OP churches to connect with each other and the denomination.

## Steps to Engagement

If you are on Facebook, following *New Horizons* is simple: type in “New Horizons in the OPC” and click “like” and “follow” on the *New Horizons*’ page. This ensures that its content will pop up on your newsfeed.

If you are an administrator or editor of your church’s Facebook page, there are a few steps that you can take to engage with *New Horizons*. Hopefully, this will be a help to you as you create content for your page.

First, hit “like” and “follow” on the *New Horizons*’ page. Second, consider sharing posts from its page that are relevant to your “followers.” Third, if your church has hosted an event or celebrated an occasion and a photo album is posted to Facebook, consider tagging “New Horizons in the OPC.” (Churches that have a news item or announcement for the print edition of *New Horizons* should, as always, send it to [danny.olinger@opc.org](mailto:danny.olinger@opc.org).)

## Social Media for the Glory of God

In the digital age, social media of all kinds increasingly absorb the time and attention of Christians and non-Christians alike. Like all technological tools, it can be used for good or ill. But its pervasiveness in our lives—did you check your phone since starting this page?—provides unique challenges for the believer. In his recent book, *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You* (Crossway, 2017), Tony Reinke wrote that “we use digital distractions as a way of keeping eternity away.” Perhaps *New Horizons* can in some small way serve as a reminder of our great God while you’re scrolling through Facebook’s feed.

## MTIOPC 2018

**Attention**—OPC pastors, licentiates, men under care of a presbytery, and elders:

Enroll today for a course from the Ministerial Training Institute of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (MTIOPC).

Deadline is **February 1, 2018**.

Classes begin on **February 5, 2018**, for the following courses:

- Ecclesiology, taught by the Rev. Dr. A. Craig Troxel.

- Form of Government, taught by the Rev. Dr. Alan D. Strange.
- Homiletics, taught by the Rev. Douglas B. Clawson and the Rev. Dale A. Van Dyke.

A mandatory **Intensive Training** will be held at Harvest OPC in Wyoming (Grand Rapids), Michigan on **May 15–17, 2018**. Non-commuting students arrive on May 14. Students depart on Thursday afternoon, May 17.

Applications are available at [www.opc.org](http://www.opc.org). Go to World-wide Outreach, then Christian Education, then Ministerial Training. Click on MTIOPC.

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## PASTORAL INTERNSHIPS BEGIN HERE

Patricia E. Clawson

**What?** Orthodox Presbyterian Churches offer internships to seminarians and graduates to help prepare them to become pastors.

**Who?** OPC congregations with a pastor who has served in the OPC for at least five years may apply for a summer or yearlong intern. Seminarians who are under care of an OPC or PCA presbytery may apply for summer internships. Seminarians in their final year and graduates who are under care or licensed by an OPC presbytery may apply for a yearlong internship.

**Where?** Churches and seminarians may apply online at [www.opc.org/cce/intern.html](http://www.opc.org/cce/intern.html). Email the completed application to [pat.clawson@opc.org](mailto:pat.clawson@opc.org). Application deadline is February 28, 2018.

**When?** Intern Director Danny Olinger will interview the potential interns over the phone or in person. The Committee on Christian Education's Subcommittee on Ministerial Training then reviews all of the applications at its March 19, 2018, meeting.

**How?** To help fund the intern, churches may apply for up to \$1,200 in monthly support for a summer intern and up to \$1,400 in monthly support for a yearlong intern. The congregation in turn agrees to match or exceed that amount of support for the intern.

Approved churches with a requested intern who has been approved will notify Pat Clawson with the dates for the internship so that she may process the funding. Approved churches without a requested intern will receive applications from all approved, unattached applicants. Once a church decides on an intern, they will notify Pat Clawson with the name of their intern and the dates for the internship.

**Why?** The intern learns the responsibilities of a pastor first hand, much of which is not taught in seminary. The intern's future congregation will appreciate their labor of love.

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## ☆ Congratulations

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

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

The **Children's** or **First Catechism** has been recited by:

- **Kevin Moyer, Evalena Pinegar, and Clare Shannon**, *Bethel Presbyterian Church, Wheaton, IL*
- **Julia Stombaugh**, *Westminster OPC, Hollidaysburg, PA*

## OUR MEMBERSHIP VOWS One Person, Two Natures

Glen J. Clary

The second membership vow of the OPC refers to the incarnation of Jesus Christ. "Do you believe . . . that Jesus Christ is God the Son, come in the flesh?" When Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, the eternal son of God, the second person of the Trinity, added to himself a true and complete human nature without losing or lessening his divine nature.

Christ, therefore, has two natures; he is both divine and human. This does not mean that he is part God and part man. Rather, he is fully and completely God (100% divine) and fully and completely man (100% human). Both natures are united in one undivided and indivisible person.

In answer to the question, "Who is the redeemer of God's elect," the Shorter Catechism says, "The only redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, forever" (Q. 21). Notice it says that Christ has "two distinct natures"—a divine nature and a human nature. Even though both natures are inseparably united in one person, they nevertheless remain distinct from each other.

But, "how did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?" The Catechism says,

Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin. (Q. 22)

Thus, the eternal Son of God added to himself a true and complete human nature—a human body, soul, mind, and will. To be sure, Christ's human nature was not corrupted by sin like ours is, but that does not make him any less human than us. The Lord Jesus Christ is fully and truly God and fully and truly human.

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## ● Out of the Mouth . . .

We were reviewing First Catechism questions with my two-year-old son and asked him how we glorify God. He responded, "Patchry!" Huh? Upon questioning him, we realized that he was talking about the Gloria Patri.

—Heidi Vermette  
Round Hill, VA

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

# NOT-SO-RADICAL HOSPITALITY

// JUDITH M. DINSMORE



*Two of David and Kindra's daughters in front of their home after the Harvey flood*

Being a part of a church plant comes with a long job description for both church planter and members. The ministry involved can include everything from hauling hymnals, to park evangelism, to Sunday evening Bible studies. According to Mark Sumpter, regional home missionary in Houston, Texas, many of these activities can be grouped together into a vital category: “We are seeing that a big, big umbrella under ministry is hospitality.”

One member of Sumpter’s Bible study in Houston, David Blecher, and his wife, Kindra, were able to show extreme hospitality to their neighbors in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

## Seventeen People, Five Dogs, One Bunny

When Harvey hit Houston on Saturday, September 2, the Blechers began bailing the immense amounts of water coming down on their home. “My daughter was under the drain spout with a five-gallon bucket, and every minute it would fill up,” Kindra said. Unlike most of the homes in their old, inner-city neighborhood, the Blechers’ house has a small second story. They’ve come close to flooding before, but Harvey was a first.

While David began moving furniture pieces upstairs or putting them on bricks, Kindra texted all the neighbors she knew, first to confirm that they were all flooding as well and then to invite them into the Blechers’ second story. “The water at this point was waist-high,” Kindra recalled. “The street was a lake—as far as we could see, it was all water.”

Although everyone in single-story homes was ready to be evacuated, the crisis in Houston was so great, the EMS was only rescuing people who were truly desperate and stranded on rooftops. So neighbors started coming to the Blechers’ instead.

The first was a family from across the street with their three little girls. The parents lifted the children through the window, put their belongings in a plastic container, and waded down the street to the Blechers’ house.

Then another neighbor met Kindra at the front door “with

a desperate look in his eyes,” asking if he and his family could come, too: “He took David’s kayak, and they started kayaking their things and his wife, daughter, and son, to our house,” Kindra said. They even kayaked their big dog in a crate. Another neighbor came for refuge with her dog, and then an elderly couple. “We were trying to get everyone evacuated,” said Kindra, “but it just didn’t look like it was going to happen.”

At this point, there were seventeen people, five dogs, and one bunny in the Blechers’ second story. The Blechers’ daughters gave up their rooms, played games with the teenagers, and watched the three little girls whose parents were making call after call to find someone, anyone, with a boat. Sunday evening, a large truck finally came and picked up the family with children. “They just barely made it out,” said Kindra.

Later, around 10 p.m., a boat chugged up to the front porch with bad news. The Blechers were told that a levy was going to be released, the water was going to rise fifteen feet or more, and their whole house would soon be underwater. When David asked if they could pack a suitcase, he was told there wasn’t room. “We felt that we had lost everything,” said David. “It was certainly one of the worst moments of my life.”

“It was an eerie feeling,” Kindra remembered. “The downstairs was flooded, it was dark, and we went upstairs to this roomful of people and animals.”

The Blechers told their neighbors that they were welcome to make whatever decision was best for them—but that they were Christians, and they were going to pray to ask the Lord whether to board the boat or not. After praying as a group, they decided to stay. The elderly couple, because of health concerns, were the only ones who got into the boat. The rest stayed overnight with the Blechers. Mercifully, the waters receded by the next afternoon.

## It Began with Prayer

Most OP members will not need to open their homes to neighbors during a record-breaking, city-wide flood. But perhaps we should be ready to show hospitality. “We as Christians have to be prepared and pray that God gives us an opportunity to be a safe place for non-Christians,” Kindra said. “It wasn’t like we were heroic, or did anything great. Any Chris-

tian would have done the same thing. But to have been able to get that opportunity!”

An important part of that preparation is prayer. Kindra reflected that they were able to serve during the flood because they already had a relationship with their neighbors, which began with prayer. “I just love them, and I’ve prayed desperately for them,” she said.

David particularly has a heart for their Chinese neighbors. Employed by a local university, David co-teaches a Bible study with Chinese researchers who work in the medical center. He recently had the opportunity to share the gospel with them and 150 attendees at a Christmas dinner.

Kindra has reached out to the community by inviting neighbors into her home for a little Southern hospitality. For the past three years, Kindra has hosted a ladies’ Christmas tea. She and her daughters put invitations in neighbors’ mailboxes, asked for an RSVP, and made a formal tea complete with Christmas songs. In this way, they built relationships that allowed them to open the door during the Harvey flood.

### Coffee with Neighbors in Minnesota

A little over a thousand miles to the north of Houston in Andover, Minnesota, Pastor Jim Hoekstra and his wife, Bonnie, are holding neighborhood Christmas celebrations, too—only, they serve coffee.

It is one of three events they host for their neighborhood. Hoekstra, who serves as church planter for Immanuel OPC, lives in a townhouse as part of a community of seventeen buildings and thirty-four twin homes. Like the Blechers, he and Bonnie go door to door to invite neighbors. If no one is home, they leave a little homemade flyer inside the front screen door. The first event, “Neighborhood Night Out,” is an ice cream social in their driveway: the Hoekstras provide the ice cream, and everyone else brings toppings.

In either June or September, they also have a neighborhood cookout, with the goal of fellowship. “We just converse and enjoy the time together,” Hoekstra said.

And then, of course, the Christmas coffee time. This year, they ramped up their celebration by including some Christmas caroling. Bonnie also asked everyone to write down what’s most important to them at Christmas. She read the answers out loud, and then shared her testimony. Their hope is to make points of contact and be a resource in times of difficulty. When new neighbors move in, they knock on the door with some freshly baked cookies or bread.

Immanuel has been taking similar steps as a church. “One of the highlights of the church is its fellowship, its warmth,

its love, and its friendliness,” Hoekstra said. You can walk into some churches without a single greeting, but not at Immanuel. “Our problem is people swarming!” Hoekstra laughed.

In order to reach out to the residents of Andover, Immanuel works to make entry points for nonbelievers or new people to experience the warmth and closeness of Christian love. During the warmer months, the entry points include monthly bonfires on Sunday evenings. Church members invite family and neighbors to attend. In the colder months, a few key church families regularly invite members and newcomers for dinner. These events ease people into Christian fellowship, which can then lead them to worship on Sunday morning.

### Award for “Most Quiet”

But hosting regular events doesn’t mean the church is full of talkative people. Quite the opposite, said Hoekstra. Yet the members take different roles based on their gifts. Some make a point of inviting friends and neighbors. Some host, some bring extra food, some coordinate a few low-key games.

Hoekstra himself doesn’t think he has the gift for gab. In fact, in eighth grade he was given the award of “Most Quiet.” Some people might be able to strike up conversations with just about anybody and effortlessly transition to the gospel. But for less gregarious Christians, there are other ways to share the good news, he said.

Hoekstra stresses the need to just show care toward neighbors—wave hello, ask them how they’re doing, look for struggles in their life, find points of contact, and follow up from time to time. And, like Kindra Blecher, Hoekstra prays. “It’s interesting how the Lord opens up an opportunity as you pray for it,” he explained. In time, the points of contact may open the door to speaking of Christ.

“I think the hard things in life have taught us that there are a lot of hurting people out there,” Hoekstra said. “Our job is to look for points of contact in the midst of their hurt and pain and to begin to speak the Word into their lives.”

### Nothing Radical

Hurricane Harvey was just such a point of contact for the Blechers and other believers in Houston. “The barriers came down suddenly during the flood, and people ... were very openly sharing the pains and the struggles, so that gave us a lot of opportunities to talk about the Lord,” David said.

In the aftermath, the OPC Disaster Response teams were able to build on David and Kindra’s relationships to provide aid in the neighborhood, including hosting two neighborhood luncheons at the Blechers’ home. “The OPC has been just fantastic,” David said. “Our neighbors have seen God at work through the church being the hands and feet of Christ.”

Looking back, Kindra insists that Luke 17:10 is the right lens for their hospitality. “We didn’t do anything radical really,” she said. “We were just there, and God in his grace used us. We just did what we were supposed to do.”

*The author is managing editor of New Horizons.*

### Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail [HomeMissionsToday@opc.org](mailto:HomeMissionsToday@opc.org).  
New editions: February 14, 28.

# NEW BIOGRAPHY OF E. J. YOUNG

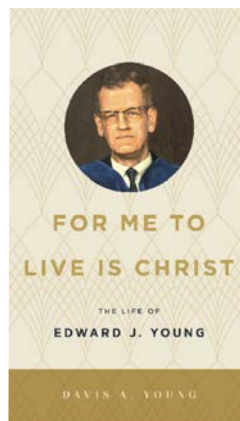
// JOHN R. MUETHER

When Edward J. Young (1906–1968) died of a heart attack a half-century ago, on February 14, it marked the shocking and seemingly premature end of a life of faithful service as Professor of Old Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary and minister in the OPC. It also served as the beginning of a nearly fifty-year dream of his son, Dr. Davis A. Young, to write a biography of his father. The Committee for the Historian is pleased to announce that dream has come to fruition with the publication of *For Me to Live Is Christ: A Biography of E. J. Young* (available for \$10.00 from [opc.org](http://opc.org)).

In this book, Dr. Young has composed a unique window on the remarkable life of his father. We read of E. J. Young's exacting scholarship and his remarkable grasp of over two dozen languages. Young stood firmly in the Old Princeton tradition in his defense of the inspiration of Scripture and the historicity of Old Testament.

We also learn from this narrative about his devotion to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He served long tenures on the Christian Education Committee and on the special committee that produced the original *Trinity Hymnal*. Faithful in his vocation as a minister of the gospel, he found time for writing devotional studies and working with young people. He even carpooled students to the Christian school.

Committee for the Historian of the OPC is delighted to bring the memory of Dr. Young back before the church. Edward J. Young was a gift to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and to Westminster Seminary, and so too is this loving tribute by his son.



## IN MEMORIAM: R. C. SPROUL, 1939–2017

*John R. Muether*

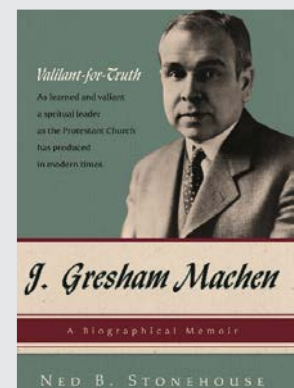
When R. C. Sproul passed away on December 14 at the age of 78, it was an occasion for many to reflect on the remarkable sixty-year ministry of the PCA minister and popular speaker. The Pittsburgh native, student of John Gerstner, and founder of Ligonier Ministries authored more than one hundred books and hosted national conferences that drew thousands.

Seeking to bridge the gap between Sunday school and seminary, Ligonier packaged Sproul's teaching in portable formats from audio cassettes to podcasts. Even more significant was the accessibility of his content: Sproul had an uncommon gift for communicating the riches of the Reformed faith to popular audiences, as early as his work with the Ligonier Valley Study Center in western Pennsylvania and his frequent speaking engagements at the Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology. His reach would be lengthened through *Tabletalk* magazine and "Renewing Your Mind" radio broadcast.

His influence extended to many in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, where there is likely no congregation without members who have benefited from his instruction.

### Now Available

Ned B. Stonehouse's popular tribute, *J. Gresham Machen: A Biographical Memoir*, has been reprinted and is available again from the Committee for the Historian (available for \$10.00 from [opc.org](http://opc.org)).





# FEBRUARY

1. **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for Ben as he responds to the needs of the congregation of St-Marc Church. / **Bob and Grace Holda**, Oshkosh, WI. Pray that God's Word would produce deepening faith in Christ, fresh repentance, and evangelistic zeal at Resurrection Presbyterian Church. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund document specialist.
2. **Jason and Amanda Kirklin**, Waco, TX. Pray that the gospel would continue to transform members of Trinity OPC in their worship, edification, and witness. / **Mark and Jeni Richline**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for wisdom in making decisions regarding their children's education. / Pray for *New Horizons* managing editor **Judith Dinsmore**.
3. **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray that God would build a growing sense of unity within the new group in Maldonado. / Pray for Home Missions general secretary **John Shaw**. / Pray for Christian Education general secretary **Danny Olinger** as he interviews prospective interns.
4. **Andrew and Billie Moody**, San Antonio, TX. Pray that San Antonio Reformed Church finds opportunities to shine the light of Jesus into its community. / Missionary associates **Markus and Sharon Jeromin**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for plans to begin new Bible studies in 2018. / **Mark Stumpff**, Loan Fund administrator.
5. Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson** as he visits with and encourages our missionaries in Uruguay this week. / **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Andover, MN. Give thanks for the generous provision of the Lord at Immanuel OPC. / Pray for the students and instructors as classes begin for the **Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC (MTIOPC)**.
6. Pray for **Miller (and Stephanie) Ansell**, church-planting intern, Houston, TX. / Missionary associates **Janine Eygenraam**, Quebec, Canada, and **Kathleen Winslow**, Prague, Czech Republic. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel. / **Stephen (and Felicia) Lauer**, yearlong intern at Redeemer OPC in Beavercreek, OH.
7. **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray that God would soften the hearts of the unsaved people of Haiti. / **Matthew and Lois Cotta**, Pasadena, CA. Pray for Pasadena



Kathleen Winslow

Presbyterian Church to find the most suitable place to meet and worship on Sunday mornings. / **Scott (and Elizabeth) Creel**, yearlong intern at Redemption OPC in Gainesville, FL.

8. **Jeremy and Gwen Baker**, Yuma, AZ. Pray for increasing outreach and evangelism opportunities for Yuma OPC. / Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray for wisdom in developing strategies for ministry. / **Daniel (and Victoria) Garcia**, yearlong intern at Escondido OPC in Escondido, CA.



Jeremy and Gwen Baker

9. Affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne**, Urayasu, Japan. Pray for the Lord's leading as the church explores options for a larger meeting space. / **Paul and Sarah Murreale**, St. Louis, MO. Praise God for eight years of ministry at Gateway OPC as of January 1, 2018. / **Adam (and Joy) Harris**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Komoka, Ontario, Canada.
10. Pray for Home Missions associate general secretary **Al Tricarico**. / Retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Cal and Edie Cummings, Greet Rietkerk**, and **Young and Mary Lou Son**. Remember especially those with chronic illnesses and those struggling with sickness during the cold winter months. / Pray for **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
11. **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. F. as he resumes his ministry on the field following a seven-month furlough. / **Chris and Megan Hartshorn**, Anaheim Hills, CA. Pray for more conversions and adult baptisms at Anaheim Hills Presbyterian Church. / **Andrew Farr**, yearlong intern at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, MI.
12. **Jim and Eve Cassidy**, Austin, TX. Pray that several new families worshiping at South Austin Presbyterian Church would commit to membership. / **Mr. and Mrs. M. M.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. M. M. as he works with future church leaders. / **Aijalon (and Jana) Church**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Sinking Spring, PA.
13. Pray for **Mr. and Mrs. J. M.**, Asia, as they relocate and settle into a new area of ministry. / **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, IL (downtown). Pray for the people of Gospel Life Presbyterian Church to catch the vision for discipling others. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Diane Olinger**.

14. Pray for **Mark (and Peggy) Sumpter**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southwest, as he encourages and assists church planters in the presbytery. / Pray for **Mr. and Mrs. K.** and their family, Asia, as they adjust to a new living and working situation on the field. / Pray for the final production details before printing the new *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.
15. Pray for tentmaker missionary **T. L. L.**, Asia, as she returns to the United States this month to begin her labors in the Foreign Missions office. / **Lowell and Mae Ivey**, Virginia Beach, VA. Pray that visitors to Reformation Presbyterian Church will join in the Lord's time. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.
16. **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, FL. Pray that the Lord would give Christ the King Presbyterian Church wisdom in reaching families in the community. / **Heero and Anya Hacquebord**, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray that many will visit the church in L'viv and hear the preaching of the Word. / *New Horizons* cover designer **Chris Tobias**.
17. **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the young people. / **Brett and Maryann Mahlen**, Orland Park, IL. Pray that the Lord would allow the officers of the church to enter the prison. / Pray for **Marvin Padgett**, executive director of Great Commission Publications.
18. **Larry and Kalynn Oldaker**, Huron, OH. Pray that Grace Fellowship OPC's discipleship of Oberlin College students would bear fruit. / **Charles and Connie Jackson**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Charles's preaching and teaching ministry, and particularly that more men will become interested in studying for the ministry in Uganda. / **Doug Watson**, part-time staff accountant.
19. Pray for **Mark and Carla Van Essendelft**, and their family, Nakaale, Uganda, traveling to Uganda tomorrow to begin their labors. / **Josh and Kristen McKamy**, Chambersburg, PA. Pray for Covenant OPC to have effective evangelism and teaching opportunities among new contacts. / **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
19. Pray for **Ryan (and Rachel) Heaton**, church-planting intern, Naples, FL. / Pray for missionary associates **Sarah Jantzen, Schylie La Belle, Paige Vanderwey**, and **Angela Voskuil**, laboring in Uganda. / Pray for stated clerk **Ross Graham** as he works with the Committee on Arrangements to plan the meetings and registration process for the 85<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, which convenes June 11, 2018, at Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL.
21. **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for the men who serve our Karamoja Station as translators. / **Tim and Deborah Herndon**, West Lebanon, NH. Pray for the men who are beginning officer training and for marriages growing in godliness at Providence OPC. / *New Horizons* proofreader **Jessica Johnson**.
22. Pray for Home Missions administrative assistant **Katie Stumpff**. / **David and Rashel Robbins**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for David's pastoral ministry as he serves the church in Nakaale. / Diaconal Response Coordinator **David Nakhla**. Pray for the families affected by the 2017 hurricanes and the many involved in the disaster response efforts. Pray that the Lord would raise a steady stream of volunteers. Give thanks for the abundant giving!
23. Pray for the labors of missionary associates **Leah Hopp** and **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. / Pray for **Steve (and Joanie) Doe**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic, as he follows up on contacts and visits Bible study groups. / **Andrew (and Cyndi) Myers**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, PA.
24. **Bradney and Eileen Lopez**, Arroyo, Puerto Rico. Pray for members of Iglesia Uno Reformada to proclaim God's Word in their communities, families, and workplaces. / Pray for medical doctor **Flip and Anneloes Beardman**, Nakaale, Uganda, as they adjust to their new living and working situation on the field. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Pat Clawson**.
25. Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube** as he reports to the Committee on Foreign Missions meeting this week. / **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, FL. Continue to pray for the Lord to add new families to the congregation of Keys Presbyterian Church. / Navy chaplains **Tim (and Janine) Power** and **John (and Linda) Carter**.
26. **Matt and Elin Prather**, Corona, CA. Pray for continued perseverance in love for God, neighbor, and one another at Corona Presbyterian Church. / Pray for Foreign Missions administrative assistant **Linda Posthuma** and secretary **Katrina Zartman** during this busy week of Committee meetings. / *Ordained Servant* editor **Greg Reynolds**.
27. Tentmaker missionary **T. D.**, Asia. Pray that she will be an encouragement to her students. / **David and Rebekah Graves**, Coeur d'Alene, ID. Pray that participants in the new members' class would become involved members of Coeur d'Alene Reformed Church. / **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the finance director.
28. **Daniel and Amber Doleys**, Springfield, OH. Pray for guidance as Living Water OPC inquires about a new building. / Missionary associates **E. K.** and **M. S.**, Asia. Pray for teachers at YUST as they prepare for a new semester of classes. / Pray for **Archie Allison**, chairman of the Subcommittee on Internet Ministry.



Linda Posthuma

# THE PROVISION FOUND IN CHRIST

// JOHN A. SHARPE

One of the wonderful realities of the Christian life is experiencing the provision of our heavenly Father. Not surprisingly, it's a crucial aspect of the life of faith as Jesus describes it in the Sermon on the Mount: as Christians, we must look to God always to provide our every need, even as we seek first his kingdom and his righteousness. What *is* surprising is how abundant that provision can sometimes be.

I once heard a charismatic preacher say, "God loves to spoil us." I didn't like the sentiment behind that statement, because it was an expression of the prosperity gospel. Jesus didn't die so that we could be rich with earthly wealth. He died so that we might be reconciled to God (Rom. 5:10) and live a life of obedience, which is pleasing to God (Rom. 8:1-13; Titus 2:11-14). But we should also realize that one of the fruits of his death, which is to say, part of what it is to be a Christian in this world, is to experience God's provision as his children. That is why Jesus stresses it in the Sermon on the Mount. He wants us to know that God cares for us. He even teaches us to pray for our daily bread, and, as Herman Ridderbos reminds us, this too is one of the blessings of the kingdom. And there are times when he does spoil us! There are times that his provision is so abundant, we marvel at his goodness and generosity. We learn in a new way the truth of what Paul said in Romans 8:32: "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

This is what the apostle Paul experienced and expressed to the Philippian church in the fourth chapter of his epistle to them. In verse 18, he says, "But I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received

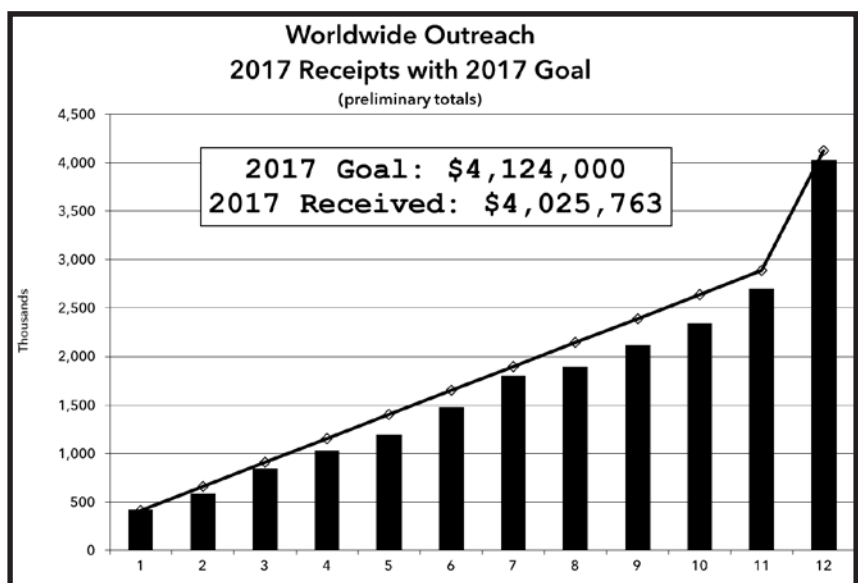
from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God." Clearly, Paul felt that God's material kindness was overflowing to him through the generosity of the Philippian church. But notice that he doesn't therefore couch the gospel in terms of this material provision. Rather, he couches material provision in terms of the gospel: "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (v. 19).

What a wonderful theology motivated Paul in all that he said and did! He couldn't thank these Philippians, nor God, without seeing the gift as a fruit of the gospel. All the riches of God are found in Christ, even material ones! There is no other explanation. And this led Paul to speak confidently of this same God causing his generosity to overflow to the Philippians themselves.

Then there is what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 8:9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich." Well, one might argue, Paul is just expressing the gospel in economic terms. And indeed he is! But he does so in a passage about Christian generosity and giving; he is encouraging the Corinthians to abound in the grace of giving, just as they abound in all other graces (v. 7). And the reason is because of what God did in the gospel. The gospel is an abundant provision; it can only be spoken of as "riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

And if that is what the gospel is, you can see why Paul felt it was necessary to urge believers to "see that you excel in this act of grace also," the gracious act of giving (2 Cor. 8:7).

*The author is the pastor of Calvary OPC in Tallahassee, Florida.*



# NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

## 25TH REFORMATION SERVICE AT TRINITY OPC, NOVATO, CA

*Reid Hankins*

On Sunday, October 22, 2017, Trinity OPC in Novato, California, together with Sovereign Grace Community Church (SBC) of Petaluma, held its twenty-fifth annual Reformation service. This year's event commemorated the five-hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of the Ninety-Five Theses. In addition to the formal Reformation service, the festivities also included a pre-service lecture. Dr. W. Robert Godfrey, President Emeritus and Professor Emeritus of Church History at Westminster Seminary California, and minister in the United Reformed Churches in North America, lectured on "Luther and Grace."

During the service, Godfrey preached from Galatians 1:1–10, drawing parallels between how Paul contended for the gospel with the Galatians, how Luther had to contend for the gospel during the Reformation, and how we must contend for the gospel in our day.

Rev. Kevin D. Kirby, SBC pastor of Sovereign Grace Community Church, declared the Five Solas with excerpts from the Cambridge Declaration, leading the assembly in a reaffirmation of these doctrines. Rev. Richard C. Miller, Pastor Emeritus of Trinity OPC, Novato, led the assembly in a hearty singing of "In Devil's Dungeon Chained I Lay," a poem of Luther's set to the tune "Luther's Hymn." Miller then led the congregation in a prayer for reformation. Rev. Carl Erickson, Pastor Emeritus of New Covenant OPC, South San Francisco, gave the benediction. Rev. W. Reid Hankins, Pastor of Trinity OPC, Novato, led the service.

Following the lecture and service, a time of fellowship and refreshments was enjoyed. Members from at least eight different churches from the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada were in attendance. A number of members from other local churches in the community



*At the Reformation service of Trinity OPC (left to right), Kevin Kirby, Richard Miller, W. Robert Godfrey, Carl Erickson, and W. Reid Hankins*

were also present, including several from congregations that were greatly affected by the recent Northern California fires in Sonoma and Napa counties.

The lecture and sermon are both available online at [www.trinityopcnovato.org](http://www.trinityopcnovato.org).

## IN MEMORIAM LAURENCE N. VAIL

*Donald Buchanan*

The Rev. Laurence N. Vail was born on October 6, 1924, and went to be with the Lord on November 27, 2017, at the age of 93. A diligent and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, he labored on behalf of the OPC for forty-three years.

Native to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he attended local schools until World War II, when he joined the Marine Corps and flew with bomber crews in the South Pacific.

He married Jane Fitch in August of 1946. They remained together for the next sixty years until her death, sharing the challenges of college and seminary, and the ministry and joy of raising two daughters, Susan and Diane.

Vail studied at Houghton College and Westminster Theological Seminary. He

was ordained by the OPC Presbytery of the Dakotas in 1956 and went on to serve OP churches in Thornton, Colorado; Vienna, Virginia; Vineland, New Jersey; and Lampeter, Pennsylvania. He also helped in the ministries of several other congregations.

He became well known in the OPC through his service with the Committee on Foreign Missions, laboring as general secretary from 1979 to 1983. Those of us who served under his leadership will always remember his gracious encouragement and wise counsel.



*Laurence N. Vail (1924–2017)*

# UPDATE

## MINISTERS

• **David A. Smiley**, formerly the pastor of Providence OPC in Bradenton, FL, was installed as pastor of Calvary OPC in Middletown, PA, on December 15, 2017.

## MILESTONES

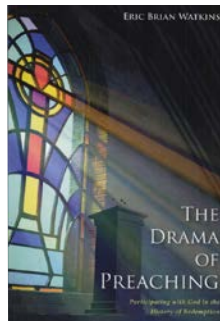
• Retired OP pastor and Foreign Missions general secretary **Laurence N. Vail**, 93, died on November 27, 2017.

• On December 27, 2017, retired OP pastor **Harold L. Dorman** died at the age of 100.

# REVIEWS

***The Drama of Preaching: Participating with God in the History of Redemption*, by Eric Brian Watkins. Wipf & Stock, 2017. Paperback, 274 pages, \$26.40. Reviewed by OP pastor Mark Winder.**

In seven brief but substantial chapters, Eric Watkins provides a historical and exegetical basis for application through redemptive-historical preaching. After opening with an excellent, even gripping, overview of the historical discussion, he advances the work of Kevin Vanhoozer and others by wedding the drama-of-redemption model with that of redemptive-historical preaching. The drama of redemption is a metaphorical idea in which the sermon's audience lives within the drama revealed in Scripture. The triune God is the author of the script as well as its primary actor, who calls people to be faithful participants "in the historically unfolding kingdom of God upon the world stage of God's glory" (25).



God performs his part in the drama of redemption by keeping his covenant promises and drawing his people "into a renewed story of life that repairs their sin-stained, misguided stories of death" (30). As the listener understands himself as part of the drama of redemption, he will not be a passive spectator, but learn to live out the text of Scripture. The sermon is then "much more than a creative display of God's redemption. . . . It is also a summons to active participation in the drama of redemption by the life-giving Spirit of God" (58).

The legitimacy of this paradigm is demonstrated in the book's compelling exegetical and practical centerpiece: a treatment of the "Hall of Faith" of Hebrews 11. Each character points to Christ and anticipates his coming. The curtain having closed on their symbolic "stage," they point toward the drama of redemption in which New Testament saints participate as they work out their salvation. Insofar as the Old Testament saints walked by faith in Christ, they provide a pattern for New Testament believers.

Chapter 5 discusses legitimate application, which must be "exegetically derived from the text for the purpose of instructing hearers in their proper response to the redemptive message indicated by the text" (115). Watkins provides a brief historical discussion of application, but focuses on an exegetical defense of his formulation, concluding that "union with Christ is the necessary, non-negotiable foundation of the New Testament idea of imitating Christ" (132).

The volume concludes on a practical note with a helpful discussion of postmodern culture's historical context, followed by a demonstration of how the "drama of preaching" paradigm provides a platform for interaction. With a redemptive-historical em-

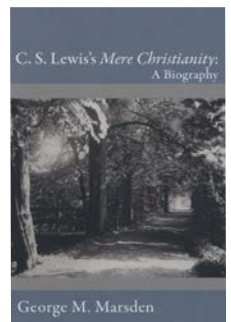
phasis, the drama-of-redemption paradigm draws the "postmodern hearer *into the drama* of Scripture, rather than letting her remain at a safe distance as a spectator of the text" (175). The Church's responsibility is to live out her missionary calling and faithfully "perform her script in the 'theater of God's glory'" (185).

This rich, historical, exegetical, and practical resource constitutes an essential advancement in the discussion of redemptive-historical preaching and application.

***C. S. Lewis's Mere Christianity: A Biography*, by George M. Marsden. Princeton University Press, 2016. Hardcover, 280 pages, \$17.59 (Amazon). Reviewed by OPC Historian John R. Muether.**

"Lives of Great Religious Books" is a series that treats religious classics to biographical analysis, from their conception to their assessment and appropriation by generations of readers. The series has treated Christian classics such as Augustine's *Confessions* and Calvin's *Institutes*, and it is fitting that Marsden, the great chronicler of twentieth-century church history, takes on the challenge of this title.

*Mere Christianity* did not start out as a book, and it became one rather improbably. Marsden devotes the first three chapters to the decade before the book, with Lewis's BBC radio addresses during World War II. The darkness of that war provided inspiration to Lewis for his talks, as he understood his calling as a "translator"—expressing Christianity in the vernacular. These talks were gathered into three short books, *The Case for Christianity*, *Christian Behaviour*, and *Beyond Personality*, which were published collectively as *Mere Christianity* in 1952.



Be sure to check out the new and improved Short-Term Missions and Disaster Response website at [OPCSTM.org](http://OPCSTM.org).



For many American readers, Lewis provided space between modernism and fundamentalism. In this way Lewis fit perfectly into the American “new evangelical” turn of the 1950s (even as he avoided platforms to expand his voice, when, for example, he declined the opportunity to serve as a contributing editor for the newly-launched *Christianity Today* in 1956).

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship prominently promoted him on many college campuses. Through the labors of Clyde Kilby, Wheaton College became the headquarters of growing evangelical interest in the smoking, drinking, protheistic-evolution non-inerrantist. Reformed readers were mixed. Westminster Seminary’s Paul Woolley described Lewis’s *Case for Christianity* as “a brilliant statement,” but two years later, his colleague Cornelius Van Til found flaws in the argument that rendered it “destructive of the evangelical faith” (77).

Lewis’s broad outline of “mere Christianity” proved elastic—even Roman Catholics and Orthodox readers could read him as their own (131), and eventually mainline Protestants embraced him. (If Lewis was a gateway to Roman Catholicism for some disenchanted American evangelicals, Marsden notes that Lewis’s upbringing in Northern Ireland was sufficient deterrence from journeying to Rome himself.) Yale’s Paul Holmer praised his writings that “have a way of fitting every reader” (111). Especially among women, Lewis had an eager audience, even if his writings were a tad misogynistic, even for his time.

For his part, Lewis never claimed to be a theologian. His real contribution lay in demonstrating that reason and imagination could both be put to use in defense of historic Christianity. Christianity proved to be both true science that was more reasonable than scientism and true myth that challenged the false myth of evolutionary progress (which gave rise to the modern conceit of “chronological snobbery,” in Lewis’s famous expression).

Interest in Lewis waned after his death in 1963, but the presidency of Jimmy Carter and the conversion of Chuck Colson prompted a second wave of interest in *Mere Christianity* and the intellectual

credibility it provided to the evangelical movement that was commanding unanticipated headlines in the American media. Today, movies of Narnia keep him popular, and C. S. Lewis institutes and societies abound.

*Mere Christianity* resembles other BBC productions in its way of generating imitators. Marsden traces the influence of Lewis on contemporary writers such as N. T. Wright and Tim Keller, and his “biography” provides readers with much incentive for returning to the original.

***Death in Adam, Life in Christ: The Doctrine of Imputation*, by J. V. Fesko. Mentor, 2017. Paperback, 320 pages, \$10.99. Reviewed by OP elder Joseph W. Smith III.**

Contemporary evangelicals sometimes complain that the modern church has abandoned older, purer doctrine—and there’s no doubt that this has happened. But in the broad sweep of church history, it’s also common for theology to move gradually toward orthodoxy—and nowhere is this more apparent than in the oft-neglected doctrine of imputation.

J. V. Fesko’s *Death in Adam, Life in Christ* recounts this struggle with meticulous care. It’s fascinating to watch church fathers work haltingly toward an accurate understanding of how Adam’s sin is imputed to humanity—and how our sin is imputed to Christ, while his righteousness is then ascribed to us.

This helpful historical survey is only one of many merits of Fesko’s excellent new volume.

Chief among its other virtues is extraordinary clarity on a topic that can be challengingly recondite—and which in any case has not been widely taught. When was the last time you heard a sermon on imputation? If your answer is something like “never,” this book will provide much-needed illumination.

Fesko calls attention to strong work by such lesser-known theologians as Francis Turretin, Martin Chemnitz, Robert Rollock, and Ambrogio Catharinus. And he

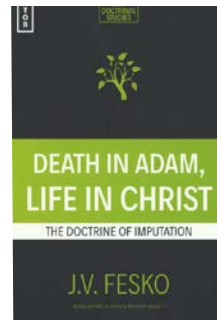
grapples with our culture’s rampant individualism, which makes the imputation of Adam’s sin so counterintuitive. Modern thinkers may feel it’s unfair for God to impute someone else’s crime to us, yet Fesko shows that such an action is quite common in Scripture. In Joshua 7, for example, Achan’s sin is ascribed to Israel; in 2 Samuel 24, punishment for David’s wicked census is poured out on the entire nation. Even more significant is Isaiah 53:4–6, where the Suffering Servant bears the sins of God’s people—an idea Fesko ties convincingly to the scapegoat in Leviticus 16. Furthermore, he repeatedly shows how the ascription of Adam’s sin to us has its corollary in the imputation of our sin to Christ. And, of course, that also applies to the placing of Christ’s righteousness upon us, a truth that has always been sadly underemphasized; yet, for Christians struggling to believe that God loves them, this key teaching is absolutely crucial.

Fesko treats these three imputations as a package deal, and in the process he underscores the necessity of a historical Adam as a parallel with a historical redeemer. As the author so pointedly asks, how can God impute to us the nonexistent sin of someone who never actually lived?

On the downside, the book is sometimes repetitive, occasionally bogging down in picayune detail and unwieldy vocabulary (e.g., *noetic*, *represtinate*, *traducianism*).

But these are quibbles. As Fesko himself concludes, “The doctrine of imputation is of vital importance for a right and robust understanding of the doctrine of justification and ultimately the gospel.” His book proves this clearly and firmly; and in doing so it points away from human effort and failure to mankind’s only true hope: the righteous death and life of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

***John Bunyan and the Grace of Fearing God*, by Joel R. Beeke and Paul M. Smalley. P&R, 2016. Paperback, 160 pages, \$11.50. Reviewed by OP minister Robert J. McKelvey.**



## Women's Spring Conference

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- Online registration at [www.nhopc.org](http://www.nhopc.org)
- Email questions to [library@nhopc.org](mailto:library@nhopc.org)

We hear little in the church today on the discomfiting doctrine of the fear of God. In a timely and relevant manner, this historical-devotional work by Joel Beeke and Paul Smalley highlights John Bunyan's focus on this "weighty and great grace" (131) in *A Treatise of the Fear of God* (1679).

The authors emphasize the sweetness of fearing God from Bunyan's "sound advice on how to grow in the fear of God." You can't be a Christian and not fear God, the authors warn, but we must "beware of slavish fear, the fear of rejection by God, for it is inappropriate and unhelpful for the justified child of God." In the end, his covenant promises in Christ will teach each believer "how to live as a reverent son or daughter of the living God" (137).

The book begins with a thirty-page biographical sketch of Bunyan's life in general, but it does not pertain directly to his treatise on fearing God. The authors should have concentrated more contextually on the fear of God in connection with Bunyan's life and times. Before this focused treatment, they could have directed readers to a standard and more general Bunyan biography or even Beeke's own sketch (along with Randall Pederson) in *Meet the Puritans* (Reformation Heritage, 2006).

The authors never mention the anti-Catholic paranoia arising out of the al-

leged Popish Plot in England, stirred up in 1678, which provided a context of fear behind Bunyan's *Treatise*. Richard Greaves, in his introduction to the Oxford edition of that work (*The Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, vol. 9, 1981), discusses that supposed plotting at length. He suggests that, at a time when people lived in fear, Bunyan directed them to live in the fear of God and to do so in a proper manner. Unfortunately, while the authors cite other volumes of the Oxford edition, they do not mention this crucial one.

The authors also favorably explain Bunyan's treatment of "the spirit of bondage" in Romans 8:15. While we should applaud his emphasis on the fear of hell driving us to Christ, we must question Bunyan's exegesis here.

He calls this spirit of bondage "godly" and part of a "first conversion" or "awakening." Paul actually treats this spirit as something slavish and experienced in the unregenerate state before one receives "the spirit of adoption."

Please don't let the issues I raise keep you from this otherwise excellent book. The

church needs to hear more, not less, on the fear of God. Furthermore, we need to view this fear as Bunyan, Beeke, and Smalley do: as a blessed grace intimately related to our faith in and love for Christ.

***Honoring the Elderly: A Christian's Duty to Aging Parents*, by Brian L. De Jong. CreateSpace, 2017. Paperback, 136 pages, \$9.99. Reviewed by Pastor Paul Mourreale.**

A few years ago, during a visit to my parents, I realized they were getting older. My father had just been diagnosed with cancer. I could see that my parents were beginning to look worn out. At that moment, I began to become more aware of the fact that my parents were going to need increasing amounts of help.

This is not, of course, a problem that is

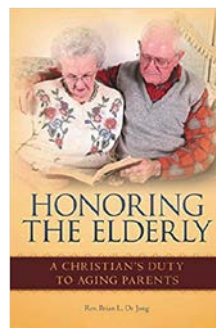
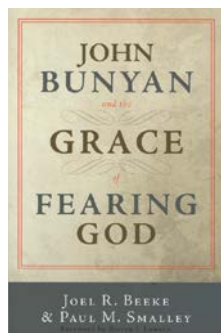
unique to my family. There have been, over the years, great advancements in modern medicine. Illnesses that used to be fatal are now often treatable, so as people live longer, children will need to find ways to care for their aging parents.

Families have a duty before God to care for their own (1 Tim. 5:8). We see this principle in the fifth commandment, Exodus 20:12: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you." As followers of Jesus, we have a duty and a privilege to honor and care for our parents as they age.

But how do we fulfill our duty to our parents in this day and age? Many of us, for instance, live quite a distance from our parents. How can we adequately care for them when we live so far away? What about those who need around-the-clock care that we are not equipped to handle? How can the Christian be faithful to God's commandment to honor our parents in a world where it is becoming seemingly more difficult to do so?

It is for us in this modern world, full of these kinds of challenges, that Brian L. De Jong has produced a helpful resource for the church, *Honoring the Elderly: A Christian's Duty to Aging Parents*. This wonderful little book, which began as a series of Sunday school lessons, presents a pastoral tone throughout. De Jong carefully lays out biblical principles and their application in real life. Each chapter contains pastoral advice and applied biblical teaching as De Jong deals with difficult situations that come up. At the end of each chapter, there are a series of questions to ponder, which would make this book ideal for a Sunday school text or a small-group study. Whether your parents are young or old, healthy or sick, you will glean great wisdom from this book.

At some point, all of us will find ourselves faced with caring for our elders—whether our own parents or a dear older saint in the church. How are we going to respond to these challenges and honor our elders as they age? This is a very important topic for us to consider.



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