

# Covenant Protestant Reformed Church Ballymena, NI

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16 July, 2009

Dear saints  
in the Protestant Reformed Churches,

Christian greetings!

Some have asked for the speaking itinerary etc. of our biennial trip to the US this summer (10 August – 7 September), so here goes:

**12 August**, Wednesday 7:30 PM—“Calvin vs. Darwin: Anniversaries, Origins and World-views” at Grandville High School Auditorium (sponsored by Grandville PRC)

**16 August**, Sunday 9:30 AM—Hudsonville PRC  
5:00 PM—Peace PRC  
(plus slides on N. Ireland, etc.)

**17-21 August**, Monday-Friday—PR Young People's Convention

**23 August**, Sunday 9:30 AM—Loveland PRC  
6:00 PM—Loveland PRC  
(plus slides on N. Ireland, etc.)

**30 August**, Sunday 9:30 AM—Doon PRC  
6:00 PM—Hull PRC  
(plus slides on N. Ireland, etc.)

**31 August**, Monday Evening—barbecue with Heritage PRF in Sioux Falls

**3-5 September**, Thursday-Saturday—Calvin Conference in Grand Rapids

**6 September**, Sunday 9:30 AM—Hope PRC  
6:00 PM—Southwest PRC  
(plus slides on N. Ireland, etc.)

We shall also camp in Rocky Mountain National Park (24-29 August), meet with the Contact Committee, and visit family and friends (D.V.).

While we are in America, Rev. Rodney Miersma (Loveland PRC) will stay in the manse

and preach for the CPRC on the first three Sundays. As is our custom, in seeking pulpit supply during our biennial US trip, we invite PR ministers who have not been in Northern Ireland before (this way the saints in the CPRC get to know more of the preachers of our sister church) and whose children are older (since the CPRC can only pay the flights of the minister and his wife). The CPRC elders will lead the services on the fourth Lord's Day.

Our seminarian, Martyn McGeown, brought a word of edification in the CPRC at both services on four Lord's Days this summer. He was keen to speak and did a very fine job. The ascended Christ is giving another pastor/teacher to His church (Eph. 4:11)! Martyn began his internship in Southwest PRC under Rev. den Hartog and the consistory there on 1 July.

Martyn's taking the four Sundays in Ballymena left Mary and me free to go to Limerick where I spoke for the Limerick Reformed Fellowship those four Sundays (31 May; 7, 14, & 21 June). The group there is small but they are doctrinally strong, united, and active in witnessing. In our time there, we saw attendance at the meetings increase and had some good meetings with various interested parties. Twice we stayed over in Limerick for a night or two so that we could include a special lecture in our visit: “Calvin on Justification” (30 May) and “Calvin vs. Darwin” (19 June). A Roman Catholic man who is a professor in the science faculty came to the “Calvin vs. Darwin” lecture. When Martyn graduates in June 2010 (D.V.), we hope to have two fields of labour (Ballymena and Limerick) for two (ministerial) labourers in the harvest. God willing, other fields will open up too. Thus we continue to give lectures in various parts of the British Isles and (very occasionally) further afield.

On a trip to Portugal for our 9<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, I gave two speeches in Lisbon on

“Calvin's Battle for the Reformation” for a Presbyterian denomination (3 & 4 June). We had a wonderful time staying with our friends Nuno and Alina Pinheiro and their three children, and at the two lectures. I spoke in English and Nuno translated into Portuguese. The saints in Portugal put a lot of effort into the meeting, producing fine programmes and a booklet containing excerpts from Calvin's *Institutes* in Portuguese. The people listened well and the question and answer periods after both speeches were especially good. Those whose English was up to it took a number of Calvin books and RFPA literature and pamphlets, plus some DVDs. TV cameras from the Evangelical Alliance of Portugal were present. Nuno, Nuno's pastor, and I were interviewed before the lecture in front of the cameras and they recorded the first few minutes of the speech. Some of this is to be shown on Portuguese national television on 31 July. (For more on this, see [www.cprf.co.uk/audio/bulletin/june0709](http://www.cprf.co.uk/audio/bulletin/june0709)).

The lecture in Portadown in Northern Ireland on “Calvin vs. Darwin” went very well (12 June). A good number of visitors were present, including some we had never seen before. We are planning to give a Reformation Day lecture in Portadown later in the year.

We are currently halfway through the two lectures on “Calvin's Battle for the Reformation” in Ballymena. Last Friday, we looked at Part I: “Calvin's Influence and Early Life” (10 July, Calvin's 500<sup>th</sup> birthday) and this Friday we turn to Part II: “The Geneva Years” (17 July). We have advertised these lectures widely, with ads in the two Ballymena newspapers, an article in the *Ballymena Guardian* (7 July), a trailer after our Reformed Witness Hour broadcast, etc. Several members of the church helped us by delivering some 2,500 flyers along with 2,500 copies of the *Covenant Reformed News* in Ballymena. The first lecture was well received, with a very good number of visitors and a lot of books and DVDs sold (£200 worth or about \$330, including donations). I am looking forward to Part II on Friday night.

The latest addition to the CPRC is little

Corey Jonathan Hall born to Philip and Susan Hall (8 July). He is to be baptized this Sunday morning (19 July). Susan's parents, Pete and Marilyn Adams from First PRC, are in Northern Ireland at present and will be able to witness Corey's baptism. Pete and Marilyn kindly brought us a couple of boxes of RFPA books to replenish our depleted stocks. A good number of copies of the new edition of *Calvin's Calvinism* have been sold already.

Marco Barone from Italy returned home yesterday after spending 10 days with us (6-15 July). In early June, Anne and Audra Miedema visited, and three young men from the Limerick Reformed Fellowship were with us for a weekend (22-25 May). We greatly enjoy the visits of other saints, and you are very welcome to join us!

Our YouTube site ([www.youtube.com/cprfni](http://www.youtube.com/cprfni)) now has 95 videos, each up to 10 minutes long, covering 3 debates and 10 sermons. A couple of men who have attended our services of late have helped us with this audio-visual witness and we have had good feedback from viewers. For example, some have signed up for the *Covenant Reformed News*, and a Czech truck driver is seeing through common grace.

Family visitation once again proved to be of great service in the CPRC—an important form of oversight. Two nights ago we had the congregation and friends over at the manse for a barbecue. We had a lovely evening.

The foundations for our church building have been laid (for photos, see [www.cprf.co.uk/articles/building.htm](http://www.cprf.co.uk/articles/building.htm)). By the time most of you read this, the steel work should be well under way. Then the bricklaying starts. The *Ballymena Guardian* (21 May) carried a photo of our sod-cutting ceremony, along with an article on the planned building.

Please continue in prayer for us because the devil is busy attacking true churches, and God answers our prayers according to His gracious and sovereign will.

In Christ,  
**Rev. & Mary Stewart**