

# Covenant Protestant Reformed Church Ballymena, NI

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12 May, 2010

Dear saints in the  
Protestant Reformed Churches,

## Church Building

We have been very encouraged with the interest and support for our new church building that we have received from you, our sister churches in North America. The concrete floors have dried out well. The flue is up and the heat will very soon be on in the building, floor tiles have been laid in the kitchen and bathrooms, and the wooden ceiling in the main auditorium has



been fitted. Painting is on-going. Some of the next jobs include hanging the inside doors, fitting the kitchen and the “porcelain” in the bathrooms, installing the lift, and varnishing the ceiling in the main auditorium.

Outside the building, two sections of perimeter wall have been built and “rough-



dashed.” These are joined to two sections of wooden fencing erected on the boundary of our property. Work has started on the road leading up to our property; storm drains are being laid today.



In just a few months, we shall begin worshipping in our own church building for the first time—after twenty-two years in rented accommodation! Profs. Hanko and Engelsma are to officiate at the dedication service on Thursday, 5 August. A number of friends of the congregation from Northern Ireland, Limerick, Wales, England, Germany, and Italy plan to join us on this happy occasion, as well as a good contingent from the PRC. You are all very welcome! There is still time to book a place at the British Reformed Fellowship (BRF) Family Conference in South Wales (7-14 August) on “The Word of God for Our Generation” ([www.cprf.co.uk/articles/brfconference.htm](http://www.cprf.co.uk/articles/brfconference.htm)).

Why not cross the Atlantic to take in both events?

## Church Activities

The church “season” is coming to a close. The Ladies’ Bible Study on the BRF book *Keeping God’s Covenant* (using helpful study questions by Rev. R. Kleyn) has already concluded, and catechism is practically finished. Tonight is our last Midweek Bible Study. This will conclude two years on the great epistle of I Peter. This year has seen the largest number of visitors yet to our Wednesday night study, and we hope that this will continue in September,

especially because we will have our own building in Ballymena.

We are about to start family visitation, as per Church Order 23. Although this can be a difficult work, it has proven an invaluable blessing in the life of the CPRC.

With the completion of the four-sermon series on “Joash, King of Judah,” we are now considering “The [Seven] Parables of Christ’s Last Week” (which are mostly contained in Matthew). In *Heidelberg Catechism* preaching, we are in the middle of the ten commandments. The biblical and Reformed faith is so deep, and there is always so much more to learn and practise, that it never grows stale.

“Preaching: The Voice of Christ” was the title of a special lecture in Ballymena (9 April). We had a good number of visitors and there were others who had hoped to come but were unable to make it. The question-and-answer time afterwards was very profitable, and several RFPA books were purchased. This may well be our last lecture in the Protestant Hall, where we currently meet.

At the request of John McAuley, one of our members, we put two on-line articles, Rev. Hanko’s “Reformed Evangelism” and my “The Sunday Evening ‘Gospel Service,’” into a pamphlet. We printed 120 copies on the duplicator at the manse, using card stock for the cover. Julie Rainey is doing the collating and stapling.

We had Nelson (Uganda) and Daniel (Hungary) stay with us at the manse for a week (26 May-1 April). The two brethren are foreign students at the University of Limerick who worship with the saints in the Limerick Reformed Fellowship (LRF), our mission work. This was Daniel’s second and Nelson’s first time in Northern Ireland and it was great to have them with us at our Sunday services, Bible studies, and family devotions (on Leviticus). Sam, Manuel, and Emily-Kate from the LRF were also with us for a couple of days (26-27 May).

Currently, Jennifer Hanko (Lynden PRC) and Mr. and Mrs. Hank De Vries (Randolph PRC) are in Northern Ireland. It is always good

to have visitors from the US. Last Sunday we had tea and sandwiches after the evening services for them and the saints here.

### Internet

April 2010 has been the best month yet for hits on the CPRC website ([www.cprc.co.uk](http://www.cprc.co.uk)), both in terms of written material and audios. Thirty translations have been added in the last two months: 15 Italian, 8 German, 5 Portuguese, 1 Russian, and 1 Romanian (the first ever on-line version of the *Canons of Dordt* in that language). Recently, a former Roman Catholic priest from Sicily wrote to me wanting to know if Herman Hoeksema’s *Reformed Dogmatics* or Rev. Ron Hanko’s *Doctrine According to Godliness* had been translated into Italian or French. Francesco De Lucia is now corresponding with him, and the ex-priest is re-examining common grace.

We have created eight new on-line resource pages ([www.cprc.co.uk/resources.htm](http://www.cprc.co.uk/resources.htm)): Christian Education and Child-Rearing, Civil Government, Irresistible Grace, Israel, God’s Effectual Saving Desire, Uncommon Grace, the Trinity, and “The Passion of The Christ” Film (including the video of a short TV debate on this Mel Gibson movie in which I took part some six years ago). These pages contain links to audios, videos, and articles on specific subjects. Typically, these resource pages arise like this: someone asks a question about a Reformed doctrine and, rather than write a lengthy e-mail for the benefit of one person, we create a webpage for the benefit of others. These resources have helped many, including the saints in the CPRC. More and more we are hearing from people in and around Ballymena and Limerick who appreciate our on-line materials.

The CPRC Facebook is going well. It can be accessed through a link near the top left corner of our main website ([www.cprc.co.uk](http://www.cprc.co.uk)). We use Facebook to post the latest photos of our church building, Bible questions, upcoming events, sermon audios and videos, good theological quotes, etc. Please feel free to subscribe! Through it, in the last week, I had contact for the first time with a brother in Chile who has almost finished his Spanish translation of Prof. Gritters’ pamphlet “The Antichrist.” Through our YouTube site ([www.youtube.com/cprcni](http://www.youtube.com/cprcni)) a believer in Madrid phoned me. Now he and his

wife and two children are to fly from Spain to South Wales to attend the BRF Conference in August.

### **Limerick**

We held two Bible studies on Ephesians 1 and II Thessalonians 2 in the home of the Cesars in Shannon, 15 minutes drive north of Limerick (Thursdays, 1 and 29 April). This lovely Filipino family is learning the biblical and Reformed faith, attending services at the LRF, and inviting others to these Bible studies in their home. For this, they are being ill-treated by local Pentecostals.

The last two speeches in Limerick on “Charismaticism” and “What About Israel?” (Fridays, 2 and 30 April) were well attended and well received. A student from China, who has been coming to the lectures for some months, was asking if we know of a good Reformed church in Beijing she could attend when she returns after her course at the University of Limerick ends in September.

We are very pleased with the progress in Limerick, especially because Seminarian Martyn McGeown is soon to finish his four-year course at the PR Seminary and return to the British

Isles. The CPRC is sending Elder Brian Crossett as our representative for Seminarian McGeown’s synodical examination and graduation in June (DV).

On 31 May, Mary, Francesco and I will travel to Italy to visit with some saints there, give some speeches (with Francesco translating), and meet Francesco’s parents. Three Italian saints (Marco, Gaetano, and Maria Antonietta) meet in Avellino each Lord’s Day to read a PR *Heidelberg Catechism* sermon translated into Italian by Francesco. We want to encourage our brethren and reach out to others in Francesco’s homeland. Our planned trip in April was cancelled due to volcanic ash, not from Mt. Vesuvius (near Naples), which buried ancient Pompeii, but from Iceland. I imagine the Icelandic volcano also made US and Canadian news. One sign in creation of Christ’s return stopped another sign in the realm of the church (cf. Matt. 24:7, 14)!

Please continue to pray for the work of our Lord in and through His church here.

Every blessing,  
***Rev. & Mary Stewart***