

missions

OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCHES

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16 YEARS OF FOREIGN MISSION WORK IN THE PHILIPPINES

By Rev. Kleyn and Rev. Smit

INVESTIGATION AND DEVELOPMENT

From 1995 until 2001, our mission work was developed from a few contacts to a field on which it was necessary to have a missionary. Our involvement in the Philippines began in 1995 with the work of Peace PRC's evangelism committee. Peace had correspondence for some time with several people throughout the islands. When Peace realized that this work might be better served by a possible missionary, they gave the work over to the Foreign Mission Committee (FMC) to continue and develop. With our Synod's approval, the FMC oversaw the sending of delegations in order to assess whether the Lord was giving to us a place of labor in the Philippines. The delegations visited, preached, lectured, and conducted Bible study meetings in such places as Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Capalonga, Daet, Davao, Jose Panganiban, Labo,

and Manila. Our first delegation of Rev. Arie den Hartog and Rev. Allen Brummel labored for several weeks here in the Fall of 1997. Since that visit, 6 more delegations were sent for the investigation and development of this foreign field. Having done what was possible by periodic delegations, the FMC proposed to Synod 2001 that a missionary be sent by the churches to labor in the Philippines and stationed in Manila. Synod 2001 approved the calling of a missionary to labor in metro Manila as well as with the other substantial contacts in a few other places in the Philippines.

ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH

In the Fall of 2001, Rev. A. Spriensma considered the call extended to him, and, having accepted the call, moved with his family to Manila in July 2002. His labors focused on a group of saints whom we know today as the Berean Protestant Reformed Church (pictured above). Through the Lord's blessing on Rev. Spriensma's

labors, the church was instituted as a Reformed congregation on November 20, 2006. In addition to the Berean PRC, Rev. Spriensma conducted weekly Reformed doctrine lectures with area pastors, lectured, and preached with pastors, churches, and contacts in Bacolod City and Inayauan, on the island of Negros. Having been instrumental in the growth and establishment of the field, Rev. Spriensma laid down his labors in the Philippines in March 2007.

TRIAL AND INTERIM

From March 2007 to July 2009, the Lord led the mission churches and groups through a trial of the absence of a missionary. Though a difficult trial of patience and faith for the saints of our churches and groups in the Philippines, the Doon PRC persevered to extend calls for missionaries to continue with the work. After extending fourteen calls from October 2006 to January 2009, the Lord provided another missionary



A Combined Youth Gathering

to continue our labors. Then with the fifteenth call in April 2009, the Lord actually provided two missionaries to carry on the mission work.

During the two year interim between missionaries on the field, several PRCA congregations had the opportunity to offer some of their pastors for several weeks at a time to provide some limited pulpit supply to the Berean PRC in Quezon City and the All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship in Gabaldon. Besides preaching and leading Bible studies, some pastors and professors gave speeches at conferences and made important visits to other Reformed pastors and contacts in Manila and in the Reformed Free Churches, located on the island of Negros.

STRENGTHENING AND GOALS

With the presence of Rev. Daniel Kleyn and Rev. Richard Smit on the field since 2009, the churches and mission groups here have been guided and strengthened in the knowledge and distinctives of the Reformed Faith as that applies to doctrine, daily life, church government, church worship, and the preaching of the Gospel. The missionaries provide instruction and guidance to the churches here toward the goal of a Protestant Reformed federation, formed by churches and future churches in the metro Manila area and in surrounding areas. If this federation becomes a reality, the Lord willing, then the missionaries will assist in the establishment of a sister church relationship of the Philippine denomination with the PRCA. The

missionaries assist in the ministerial training of existing pastors and future pastors of our mission groups and churches in metro Manila with the goal that these churches and future churches may be supplied with faithful, Reformed, Filipino preachers. Ultimately, the goal to which we as missionaries labor is the day when our intensive guidance and instruction is no longer needed and the churches here may continue forward on their own as mature Reformed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ.

OVERVIEW OF OUR PRESENT MISSION WORK

What follows is an overview of the work the Lord has given us the opportunity and privilege to do among His people here in the Philippines.

Berean Protestant Reformed Church

This congregation, which was organized in 2006 while Rev. Spriensma was missionary here, is located in Metro Manila. The background for many in the Berean PRC was membership in the World Wide Church of God. They have been part of the PRCA's mission work since the late 1990's.

Our regular work here involves the following: Preaching every Sunday; Catechism instruction for the young people and children; Leading the weekly Bible study; Pastoral work; Consistory meetings; Assisting the BPRC in the establishment of a federation with the First Reformed Church of Bulacan; and Providing

guidance toward the goal of a sister relationship with the PRCA.

Also, this congregation has a student for the ministry with whom many of you are no doubt acquainted, Mr. Vernon Ibe. Vernon is in his final year of seminary, and has been licensed to speak a word of edification in our Protestant Reformed churches. We eagerly await his return, Lord willing, in 2012.

All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship In Gabaldon

This small fellowship of Reformed believers is a church extension work of the Berean PRC. They were originally part of an Arminian group of churches. The town of Gabaldon is in the province of Nueva Ecija, and is located about 5 hours from where we live in Antipolo.

We visit here twice each month (Rev. Kleyn on the 2nd and Rev. Smit on the 4th Sundays of each month). We provide catechism instruction for the children and young people, preaching, and pastoral care.

First Reformed Church of Bulacan

This congregation, pastored by Pastor John Flores, is located approximately 2 hours north from Antipolo. Originally the congregation was Pentecostal and Arminian. They became aware of the Reformed faith, and also of the PRCA through Pastor Flores' study as well as his research on the internet. We visit here two Sundays a month for preaching (two services), leading the young people's society, providing



The First Reformed Church in Balachan



The Reformed Free Church in Inayauan

instruction on the Church Order of Dordt, and monthly Consistory meetings. We also assist the Consistory in its desire and goal of establishing a federation with the Berean PRC.

One more aspect of our work is our involvement in the FRCB's church extension work on the island of Leyte (east-central Philippines). Recently Rev. Kleyn accompanied Pastor Flores on a weekend visit to this group.

Christian Faith Ministry In Batasan Hills

The CFM is located about 1 hour from Antipolo, and is led by Pastor Oseas Andres. Their background is Baptist. They have been in touch with the Berean PRC and the PRCA's mission work since about 2007.

In the past two years, the CFM has experienced a significant loss of members due to the stand they have taken for the Reformed faith – specifically over against arminianism and dispensationalism.

We visit here one Sunday each month for preaching and for instruction on the Church Order. As they are able, the members of CFM also attend the Berean PRC's worship services and Bible study. And if possible, their children attend the catechism classes taught in the Berean PRC.

Maranatha Foursquare Gospel Church

This congregation is located in Valenzuela in Metro Manila and is

pastored by Pastor Leovy Trinidad. Many years ago, they were part of an Arminian group of churches.

The congregation recently requested that we make regular Sunday visits to preach, and also to provide instruction for their office-bearers. We began doing so in October, and are grateful for their desire to be a part of our work here.

Reformed Free Churches In Negros Occidental

These churches are located in the central Philippines, on Negros Island. They were originally formed as Reformed churches through the work of the "Liberated" churches from the Netherlands.

We have had contact especially with Pastor Ezequias Rosal, of the congregation in Inayauan, as well as Pastor Donasco, a Reformed Free missionary in Sialay. We have also met another pastor in the area who is very interested in the Reformed faith.

From time to time we have visited to preach and teach. However, for the most part we maintain contact through correspondence. We also provide the pastors material to study at their regular ministers' meetings – for example, DVD's of lectures we have given at the annual Berean PRC conferences.

Other Contacts

We correspond regularly with a number of people throughout the Philippines. Usually this contact begins through emails or through cell

phone text messages expressing the desire on their part to learn more of the Reformed faith.

Due to our existing work, we are not always able to make regular visits to all of these contacts. But we stay in touch, and seek to guide them as best we can in their understanding of the truth. We answer their questions, provide them with literature (pamphlets, *The Standard Bearer*, etc.), inform them of various websites (the PRCA, the Berean PRC, and our own – prcphilippinesaudio.wordpress.com), and give them the opportunity to purchase RFPA books at significantly reduced prices (something that many of them have done).

The increasing number of contacts makes us realize how plenteous the harvest of the Lord is here in the Philippines.

"7M"

This acronym refers to our "Metro Manila Monthly Monday Morning Ministers' Meeting," which meets at least twice a month (every other Monday).

In these meetings, we teach Reformed doctrine to the pastors of the churches and groups mentioned above. The two of us alternate between the different loci of Reformed doctrine. To date, Rev. Smit has covered Introduction to Dogmatics and Anthropology, and Rev. Kleyn has covered Theology and Christology. Rev. Smit is now leading us in a study of the truths in Soteriology.



The Berean Consistory



The 7M Group

The goal we have in mind is to equip these men, through our doctrinal studies, to be well grounded in the Reformed faith, so that they can better serve as faithful ministers of the gospel. We hope that they might be examined one day by a future classis here, and thus declared ministers of the Word within a denomination of Reformed churches that would be established, the Lord willing.

“Bookstore”

Due to generous giving within our Protestant Reformed churches for the Philippine Book Fund, we are able to make RFPA literature available to Filipinos at a significantly reduced price. Many here have an eager interest in owning and reading good Reformed books, but most cannot afford to pay the full price. The collections subsidize the cost of the books, and/or cover any shipping.

At this point, our “bookstore” is set up in the Kleyn’s home. To date we have sold close to 250 books, and distributed over 200 pamphlets. The

saints here are overjoyed to be able to purchase this Reformed literature at such affordable prices. We express our sincere appreciation for the gifts given for this good cause.

Annual Conferences

Each year the Berean PRC sponsors a conference. The last two years, Rev. Smit and Rev. Kleyn have been the speakers for these conferences. For the April 2010 conference we spoke on two subjects: Particular Grace, and Reformed Church Government. Our subject for the May 2011 conference was Church Membership.

These conferences draw quite a number of visitors, with attendance usually ranging between 75 to 100. We have also given these same speeches among our contacts in Negros Occidental.

Congregation And Youth Activities

A few times a year we have organized (or helped organize) either a combined church activity, or a combined youth

activity. This past year a combined church outing was held in April. Combined youth outings were held in December 2010 and August 2011.

These have served well to bring together the members of the various churches and groups in which we work. We pray they will also serve well the goal of establishing a denomination of churches here.

Language Studies – Tagalog

We continue to make progress in learning Tagalog. As much as possible, we meet each week with a tutor, Mrs. Nona Caballero. She teaches us the grammar, gives us written assignments, and assists us also in our actual use of the language.

It seems that progress is slow, due to the demands of our other work (but also partly, it seems, because of our age). However, we are constantly reminded of the need as well as the benefit of learning the language, especially in our labors outside Metro Manila.

Our missionaries and their families are greatly encouraged by correspondence from home.

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