

Newsletter

Heritage Protestant Reformed Fellowship

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A Request for Organization

Greetings from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. We are excited again to report on our labors this fall on behalf of the mission work that we are doing here in Sioux Falls.

The most exciting news to report is that the Fellowship has decided to work toward organization in the Spring of 2010, Lord willing, according to Article 38 of the Church Order. The men of the Fellowship met for a meeting on November 15 to discuss a recommendation from the Steering Committee that we request the right to organize at the next meeting of Classis West. All fifteen of the men were present to discuss the request. The motion passed, and a letter was adopted which was signed by the heads of households. The letter will go to Edgerton's consistory and to the DMC for approval to be forwarded to the clerk of Classis West for their March 3, 2010 agenda. The request represents 14 families and 2 individuals, as our synod would count them, with 30 confessing individuals and 10 baptized children, for 40 total souls. This does not include the missionary family.

Internal Growth

Once again we were privileged to administer the sacrament of baptism. Andrew Cole, infant son of Eric and LeAnne Westra, was baptized on November 29, along with our daughter, Carly Shae. We are thankful for God's continued covenant faithfulness. We rejoice also with Kyle and Kate Bleyenburg, who are expecting their second child this coming Spring.

Mission Labors

The main work on the mission field involves preaching. I preached a series through the life of Joseph earlier this fall. I enjoyed preaching a few sermons on Nehemiah and the calling to build the walls of Zion. These sermons had direct application to the work that we are involved in here in Sioux Falls in working toward organization. I enjoyed my work on those sermons, and they were well received. Our Heidelberg Catechism sermons started over again with Lord's Day one. This time as we go through the catechism I'm preparing and distributing a handout that includes quotes from the Reformed confessions that parallel the individual Lord's Days. My goal is to increase knowledge of the confessions and demonstrate our connection to the church of the past. It is important, especially for a young congregation, that her members be very familiar with the confessional standards that they embrace. This does produce quite a bit of reading material for the Fellowship each week. In addition to the bulletin, I already distribute outlines of each of the sermons as well. Hopefully all of this will help build up the saints in the knowledge and love of the truth.

I am thankful for the continued opportunity to preach to a wide variety of individuals. We have enjoyed many visitors again over the past months. Most of them come once and we don't see them again. Usually we do get a chance to talk with them and get some feedback from them. The members of the fellowship again are to be commended for the excellent job they do of welcoming visitors. The visitors come for all sorts of reasons—not necessarily looking for a church home. But we trust God is working His perfect work in and through this. As an example—last Sunday a family attended because it was a college requirement for their daughter to attend a Reformed church. I need to make contact with that professor and encourage him to keep up that good requirement. A young family from Sioux Falls has been attending regularly and has expressed an interest in joining the Fellowship, which is exciting for us. In addition, I maintain contact with a growing number of individuals and families who are interested in moving to Sioux Falls for work and to join our mission. We continue to pray that God will open doors and provide employment.

Thanks to the generous assistance of Active in Missions (AIM), we are now producing DVD's

of all our worship services. Each service is being duplicated for distribution to saints in the Tucson, AZ Fellowship as well as to individual contacts in South Dakota, Minnesota, and California. We are thankful for this opportunity to spread the word.

We are also working on enhancing our witness with a YouTube channel. Hopefully the channel will be in operation by our next newsletter. Our desire is to put some of our lectures and sermons on the channel, as well as some specially-produced, 10-minute spots pertaining to specific doctrines or practices of our churches.

Minister Meetings

The area Protestant Reformed pastors have made an effort to keep in touch by periodic meetings. We now have five pastors/missionaries living within an hour of each other. So, we picked a central location—Luverne, MN—and each drive 30 minutes or so in order to get together for breakfast. We enjoyed a meeting a few weeks ago and look forward to maintaining our fellowship through continued meetings.

Here in Sioux Falls a group of Reformed pastors is trying to get a ministers' gathering going as well. While there is a broad ministers' group that includes most of the pastors in town, the desire was for a group of confessionally Reformed pastors. A few weeks ago I was able to meet with the local Reformed Church of the US (RCUS) pastor as well as the United Reformed Fellowship pastor and a Sovereign Grace Baptist missionary. We discussed the possibility of getting together as a book club. We plan to meet in a couple of months to start discussing a book by David Wells entitled *The Courage to be Protestant*. I look forward to getting to know these men better and in that way being able better to understand the religious landscape of Sioux Falls.

Future Building needs

The Steering Committee has been keeping an eye open in Sioux Falls for a more permanent place of worship. While the Holiday Inn has been very accommodating and the rental price is very reasonable, we desire a more permanent worship location as soon as is feasible. A number of church buildings are currently for sale in Sioux Falls. We have looked at some of them in order to get some idea as to what is available and at what price. A committee was appointed to look into the possibility of financing, mainly to get an idea of what kind of

options we would have going forward. Our findings were a bit discouraging, even with the connections that some of our men have to the banking industry. The majority of the banks that we contacted refused to consider loaning us any money. They were not willing to work with such a small church group. Those who were willing to consider working with us expressed that they would require at least a 35%-50% down payment and a loan term not to exceed 15 years.

In response to this finding, giving to our Building Fund has been strongly encouraged and the saints are responding very generously. Our fund balance is currently around \$75,000. As we face the need for a parsonage and a church building, the needs will be great. After organization we anticipate making a request to the churches to assist us by taking collections for our building needs if they are willing and able.

We thank you for your continued interest in and prayers for the mission work here in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. As always, if you plan to be in our area, give us a call and come and witness with us how God is building His church here in Sioux Falls. The Holiday Inn City Centre (605-339-2000), where we meet for worship services is offering a special rate of \$59.99 per room per night for friends and family of the Fellowship. Just mention that you are with the Protestant Reformed Churches and ask for the friends-and-family rate.

From the Brummels: Have a blessed Holiday Season!



In Christ's Service,

Rev. Al Brummel