



PROTESTANT REFORMED FOREIGN MISSIONS - THE PHILIPPINES -

- JUNE 2012 NEWSLETTER -

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Kleyns' Furlough

The Kleyns departed from Manila, The Philippines, on Monday, May 28, and arrived the same day in Redlands, California, where they were hosted graciously by Rev. and Mrs. Huizinga. Rev. Kleyn gave a presentation to our Redlands congregation on Tuesday night. After a short visit with our fellow saints in Redlands, the Kleyns travelled onward to Spokane, Washington, where they were scheduled to stay for several days over the Lord's Day of June 3.

After this, the Kleyns plan to travel onward to the Grand Rapids area via Loveland, Colorado. After a presentation in Loveland on June 5, they plan to attend some of the sessions of the PRCA Synod 2012, especially the examination of Bro. Vernon Ibe, the seminary student of the Berean PRCP, as well as attend his graduation which is planned for Tuesday evening, June 19, at the First Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids.

Rev. Kleyn has more presentations scheduled:

- Sunday, June 10, Grand Rapids area churches
- Sunday, June 17, Crete, Illinois
- Sunday, June 24, Wingham, Ontario
- Friday, July 6, Edgerton, Minnesota
- Saturday, July 7, Doon, Iowa
- Sunday, July 8, Hull, Iowa

Somewhere in that ambitious schedule of presentations, preaching, and some regular furlough errands and business, the Kleyns have some vacation planned with family. We hope that they have time to relax and unwind.

May the Lord bless this work of making our supporting congregations more aware of the work and fruits of the mission labours of our churches in the Philippines.

Some Recent Developments

Maybe most of what I write here will be mentioned by Rev. Kleyn in his presentations this month and in July, but for those who are not able to attend the presentations, here is an update on some noteworthy developments.

First, there was a significant announcement made in the Berean PRC on May 27. This announcement was about the Christian Faith Ministry in Batasan Hills, Quezon City. We have reported about Pastor and Mrs. Andres, and the other members of the CFM in the past. The CFM made an important but also very difficult decision on May 20, 2012, to disband officially and to seek membership in the Berean PRC. The CFM came to this decision because in recent years, at the cost of their embrace of the Reformed

Faith, their numbers dwindled. Their desire of becoming an instituted church appears in the Lord's providence not to be possible at this time. As a result, they believed that it was necessary at this time for them to join the church and receive regular weekly care under the means of grace. The members will receive regular membership classes in the coming months in order for the households and individuals to make confession of the Reformed faith and be received into the fellowship of the church in full communion. May our heavenly Father assure our brothers and sisters of His goodness towards them in this important step in their church life.

Second, the following was announced in the Berean Protestant Reformed Church and the First Reformed Church (Muzon, Bulacan) on Sunday, May 27 in regards to the future goal of their federation. Here is the complete announcement:

On December 26, 2010, the Consistory of the First Reformed Church and the Consistory of the Berean Protestant Reformed Church jointly announced to our respective congregations our mutual desire to work together towards the establishment of a federation of Protestant Reformed Churches. This was the important starting point of a future federation.

In that same announcement on December 26, 2010, we mentioned that there was much work to be done to reach that future goal of federation.

Today, we are very thankful to our heavenly Father that He has made it possible for us to announce a very significant step forward to our future goal.

We have completed the important and necessary second step of a mutual recognition of each other as faithful Reformed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, faithfully manifesting the marks of the true church, and who must now seek the unity of the church of Christ in a federation. This significant decision of both consistories is the basis for the third stage of closer and respectful cooperation towards federation. In this third stage we may expect several meetings and discussions in a spirit of brotherly love about our non-essential differences and other matters. These things will need to be resolved and approved in preparation for a fully unified federation in both doctrine and

practice. While the third stage continues, we will try to keep the congregations well informed of our progress.

At a future time when the consistories believe that we are ready to join together as a denomination or federation, the consistories will ask for the approval of our congregations to establish a denomination of churches. At this time, we cannot predict when those very significant congregational meetings will take place, but we trust that the Lord will make it possible soon by His grace and the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

Please continue to pray for our consistories that the Lord will give them much wisdom and grace as they fulfill the difficult and demanding work of preparation toward our goal of a federation of Protestant Reformed Churches in the Philippines, the Lord willing.

In all of this work, let us continue to commit our way unto Jehovah. (Psalm 37:5)

As you can tell, the work towards federation has actually started back in 2010, and it will take many more months of work into the future. That is good. Since this is a learning process for all involved, including us, we need the time to make sure we understand and are applying correctly the principles of good church order that guide us in our work towards federation. Through all of this, we continue to trust in the Lord for His strength and wisdom to guide us and the churches whom we serve in this good path towards federation.

Finally, the All of Grace Protestant Reformed fellowship in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija, has recently decided to move ahead with some repair and upgrade work on their building so that during the current rainy season the building floor does not get flooded, nor the missionaries get soaked on their backsides while preaching. You see, the upper section of the wall above and behind the pulpit is open. While this opening provides fresh breezes and bright light during the services on sunny days, it also provides an easy way for downpours on a slant to reach the pulpit and the missionary. The fellowship plans to cover this opening with appropriate, local building material, and, if necessary, a light will be installed above the pulpit. While all of this information may not seem so important, yet it is significant to us that the fellowship is taking the initiative to take care of its building. Even though the members are new in many ways in the Reformed faith, yet there is this sign of some growth in the fellowship in the direction of the long-term goal of becoming self-governing, the Lord willing. And, for a missionary, that little sprout of growth is exciting to see.

The Return of the Ibe Family

The Berean PR congregation looks forward to the return of the Ibe family from the USA to our weekly fellowship. Of course, between now and their return stands the examination by the Synod of Bro. Vernon for his readiness to be a candidate for the ministry of the Word,

then his graduation from the Protestant Reformed Seminary, and then lots of packing and preparations for the trip home again.

The congregation is mindful of the difficulty of the oral examination but also aware of the importance of this process. In fact, we are thankful for the carefulness that our Church Order, on the basis of Scripture, requires when training and ordaining a minister of the Word because it is common to hear about many pastors in the Philippines who in reality are not qualified to be pastors or in reality have been self-appointed and not sent by the church. We trust that in faithfulness to the Lord in this way, He will provide the churches here trained, qualified, and faithful preachers of His sure Word that build up His church.

The family plans to return to the Philippines at some time in July. We look forward to their return, especially the newest covenant son in the family, baby LJ (Louvin Jedidiah).

The June Church Camp of the CERCS

I was asked to participate in the annual Bible camp (ABC) of the CERC in Singapore from June 18-21. With permission from my consistories and the FMC, I look forward to giving 4 lectures on the 2012 ABC theme: "Established in the Faith." (Colossians 2:7) I plan to provide pulpit supply in the CERCS on June 17 and 24.

This will be a good opportunity to visit with our neighbouring islanders and companions in the Faith in Southeast Asia. It is good for us to get to know each other since we live relatively close by.

At the same time, this will be another new experience for me, and my oldest two children, John and Rebekah, who will accompany me on this trip. My wife, Tricia, with the rest of the children and our new puppies, will "hold the fort" at home.

Other Matters

Today is the last day of school for the children for the 2012-2013 school year. Of course, they are glad to be finished another school year, and they look forward to a few months of "summer" vacation and a change in the daily routine.

Besides the pulpit supply for the CERCS in June, the preaching schedule for June and July has me being sent to Gabaldon June 10; July 1, 8, 15, and 22; and August 5. During this stretch of Sundays in the AGPRF, I plan to preach, in addition to the Heidelberg Catechism in our 10:45 a.m. worship services, a series on the TULIP in the 9:00 a.m. worship services. We trust that this will be profitable for them, but also give a clear testimony in the surrounding neighbourhood and town concerning the Faith.

We are very thankful for your continued support. We appreciate very much all of the many e-mails and letters sent over the last months. May the Lord bless and keep you.

In His service,

Rev. Richard J Smit 1 June 2012