

Limerick Reformed Fellowship
Rev. Martyn McGeown, missionary
11 The Laurels, Briarfield, Castletroy, Limerick, Republic of Ireland
<http://www.limerickreformed.com/>
pastor@limerickreformed.com

Dear saints in the
Protestant Reformed Churches,

One interesting fact I omitted to mention in my last newsletter: Limerick is twinned with Spokane, WA. Greetings to Rev. Rodney Kleyn and the saints there!

You have probably seen the economic and meteorological crises affecting Ireland. The Irish banks have had to be bailed out by the European Union, and yesterday the Irish government announced spending cuts of €6 billion. It is all very complicated but just another example of the riding of the black horse of Revelation 6:5-6 as our ascended Lord opens the third seal.

Very cold, icy, and snowy weather has caused traffic chaos throughout Ireland, especially in Dublin. Limerick missed most of the snow, but the winter is only beginning. This morning it was -8 degrees C (17.6 degrees F)! Of course, most Americans are used to such weather, but the Irish are not.

The saints in the LRF are flourishing by the grace of God. Together, we are growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Heidelberg Catechism preaching (up to LD 16 this coming Lord's Day), the series on Hebrews 11, "A Great Cloud of Faithful Witnesses" (up to the faith of Joseph; sermon 13), the Catechism classes on *Old Testament Bible History for Juniors* (up to Lesson 10), *Essentials of Reformed Doctrine* (Lesson 7; almost finished the section on "Theology"), and the weekly Bible study on John (almost finished chapter 4) continue. Attendance has been reasonably constant, with some weather-related problems (Bill Davies, especially, is reluctant to risk walking on the treacherous pavements [sidewalks]. Perfectly understandable, given the fact that he had a hip replacement last year). Apart from these regular meetings we enjoy fellowship throughout the week. The group

is close-knit, and the communion of the saints is evident.

The LRF has recently given two public lectures. The first was "God Is Love" (November 11) and the second was "What Happened at the Cross?" (December 7). In these lectures I chose a subject that would give me an opportunity to set forth the glories of the Reformed faith without being too abstract for the non-churched or for the poorly educated church member. In the first lecture, we explored what it means that God *is* love within Himself, what the characteristics of His love are, and how God loves sinners in Jesus Christ. I emphasised the particularity and efficacy of God's love. *God's love saves*. This is necessary in a climate of wishy-washy sentimentalism about the love of God.

In the second speech, my goal was to explain why the cross was necessary and what the sufferings and death of Christ accomplished, that is, real, effectual redemption from sin, hell, and the devil for all those for whom He died, not simply the possibility of salvation for all.

At the first lecture, we had four visitors, three of whom are Chinese friends of Jessie-Li; and yesterday we had three visitors, all three of whom had been at LRF speeches (or at least speeches by Rev. Stewart of the CPRC) before. Others had expressed an interest in coming to the lecture but the combination of weather and examinations at the University of Limerick were factors that prevented them doing so. Perhaps we need to consider these factors when planning speeches in future.

Our plan to give the lecture ("God Is Love") in Porthcawl, South Wales was sovereignly overruled by our heavenly Father who blanketed Dublin in snow. The flight that I would have taken was scheduled to leave Dublin at 15.00 but it took off at 22.40 hrs, almost 4 hours after the speech

was supposed to begin! I am thankful that I did not even attempt to drive to the airport.

Our next speech will be on January 17, 2011, just after the congregational dinner of the CPRC, when Rev. Doug Kuiper of Randolph, PRC will be our special speaker (“What It Means To Be A Christian”). Rev. Kuiper will be accompanied by James Holstege on behalf of the Contact Committee. We look forward to their visit, and hope that the weather will have improved by then, but we leave all things in our Father’s sovereign will.

In the providence of God, the Chinese are showing more interest in spiritual matters than the native Irish. In October, I received an e-mail from Holly Xiao Li, a Chinese student living in Athlone, Co. West Meath. She informed me that she was



Jessie Li, Holly Xiao Li

a Christian and that after searching in the Google Internet search engine for “Bible Study Athlone,” she had come across the website of the LRF! Who says “Google Ads” do not work?

She visited us 23-25 October, and left with a lot of pamphlets and a lot more knowledge of the Reformed faith. We also brought her for a walk in the picturesque Clare Glens near Limerick. Recently, she contacted me again. This time, she and her friend, a German girl named Melanie Born, visited us 26-28 November. Melanie is studying at the University of Heidelberg, but she had never read the Heidelberg Catechism. Now she has read some of it and heard it preached! These visits are of great encouragement to us, even if the ladies in

question must return to their homelands soon. In fact, Holly leaves on December 18.

One of Jessie-Li’s Chinese friends, a young man named Jiang, another student, who attended the “God Is Love” lecture, recently contacted her to tell her that he has become a Christian. Life was empty for him, he said. Freud, Darwin, and other unbelieving philosophers could not give him deliverance from sin. Now he has found deliverance from sin in Jesus Christ! He has been reading his Bible ever since, and he came to both our worship services last week. He has a lot of questions and we hope to see more of him, DV. We praise God for His work in Jiang.

It seems, too, that the LRF parsonage is becoming a honey-pot for so-called Jehovah’s Witnesses. I have had two different pairs of them on the doorstep in the space of a few weeks. To both I gave the same handout, now included on the LRF website.

Have a blessed Christmas and New Year. Remember us in your prayers that we would be faithful until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Christian love,
Rev. Martyn McGeown