

COVENANT OF GRACE
 PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH

9:30AM & 5:00PM

VISITORS WELCOME

reformedspokane.org

August 21, 2015

To our sister congregations in the PRC,

A recent visitor to Spokane from one of our mid-West congregations suggested that I write a letter to the churches because, as he put it, "You have so much going on here and no one knows about it." I think he's right.

The picture I've used as a letter head is our new church sign, which is in front of our new church building. Quite a few things have changed in our congregation here in Spokane over the last couple of years, the biggest change being the purchase of a church building and the subsequent parsonage renovations.

Toward the end of 2013 it became clear that we needed to find a new place to worship as the rent on our building was going to increase significantly. We began looking quite earnestly for a new place to rent, which included calling churches to see whether their building might be available after their services. Minnehaha Covenant Church called back about two months after we had left them a message and asked whether we might be interested in purchasing their building as they were disbanding the next week. In the



beginning of 2014 we went through the building, and in April, after securing some private loans, we purchased and moved into our "own" church building.

The church is located on about an acre of land, in a residential

neighborhood on the East side of Spokane which is a central location for our members. It also came with a parsonage. We paid \$390,000.00 for the property, knowing that we would have to spend some money on repairs and updating.



Built in 1957 the church was slightly neglected, though certainly not run down, and the house, having been used as office space and a rental, also needed updating. In the church we have updated the heating and air conditioning, replaced some windows on the sanctuary, installed new bathrooms on the main floor, repaired some electrical and lighting and repainted the exterior.

The parsonage repairs have been a bit more extensive. Our old parsonage (located about half hour from the new church building) was sold in the Summer of 2014 and we then began an extensive remodel and addition on the new parsonage. This included a complete remodel of the basement (with the addition of bathrooms and egress windows for bedrooms), a new kitchen and bathrooms upstairs, and the addition of a dining room and mud room under the former carport area. The remodel work was completed in February and we were able to move into the house. The house will also need a new roof and some new windows in the future. Presently we are building a garage with pastor's study right next to the house.

As you can imagine, all of this costs money, so we are grateful to the churches for the continued collections for our building fund, and we have requested of your consistories extra assistance if your congregation should have extra resources. We would like to pay off our mortgage as quickly as possible so that we can become more financially independent as a

church and less dependent, then, on synodical subsidy. This is not something we can budget to do, but is dependent on what we receive through giving.



We count it a great privilege to have a building of our own. The building suits our size, it's not too big and not too small. It is also a wonderful place to worship after being in a store front for so many years. Also, having the church property has brought our congregation together in new ways. The building, having a full basement, is much more suitable for fellowship meals. The outdoor property encourages longer visiting after church. Also, the work that we have been doing on the property has brought us together a number of times on Saturdays for work-bees and gives us a purpose together. All of these things, added to our regular Bible studies, catechism classes and Sunday worship, are teaching us what is involved in church life.

Our congregation is prospering spiritually, numerically and generationally. There have been some changes in membership and leadership over the last few years. In a small church every family and every member is essential, something that we've experienced in different ways (e.g. a man in his 80s serving as deacon, a family moving here from another of our PR congregations). Of our 47 total membership, 26 are children from the families. This means we have a vibrant congregational life, good size catechism classes in all ages, and, with God's blessing, a bright future as a church. This past year the two oldest of the children, Sarah Kleyn and Jonathan Tash, made confession of faith. These are the first additions to the full membership of our congregation from the second generation. We continue to do evangelism which includes radio and special lectures, and continue also to have new and regular visitors to our services. Through this work, God has added some individuals to our membership, most recently a man in his sixties who became aware of us through advertising

and has attended for about a year and a half. Recently we also had a man and his son, who have known about the PRC for a long time, move to our area from Reno, NV. We also have other outlying contacts in the Western USA (Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Montana, Hawaii, as well as Washington).

God is building and gathering his church here.

Another very important and beneficial activity that we've been a part of this past Summer is the hosting of two seminary students for a "mission internship." First we had Dave Noorman visit and work in our congregation for 6 weeks in June and July, and now we presently have Justin Smidstra here for just over two weeks. Even though we are an established congregation, we still, in many ways, resemble a domestic mission field. These visits from the seminary students have not only benefitted them in their development and exposure, but have also been a great blessing to our congregation, and have impressed upon our people and visitors the good work that our seminary does in preparing men for the gospel ministry.

I cannot close this letter without recommending for your consideration a move to Spokane. We have educational and medical institutions here and it is a beautiful part of the country in which to live, with a low cost of living and plenty of job opportunities. Most of all, by doing this, you can be of great help in the building of the church here and the spread of the gospel and establishment of our Reformed witness in this city. Yes, God gathers his church here in Spokane from the local population, but having solid Protestant Reformed families and individuals here to lead the way is invaluable. Getting a Christian School of our own started here in the future is also something that we discuss and work towards as a congregation.

We covet your prayers for our work as a church, and thank you again for your generosity in the support of our building fund.

In Christ,

Rev. Rodney Kleyn

4005 E Marietta, Spokane WA 99217
(509) 926-0372; r.kleyn@prca.org
www.reformedspokane.org