



Eastern Home Missions

Newsletter

Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma
216 Thornberry Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
phone: (412) 371-2277
willb52@comcast.net

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Lydia's High School Graduation

Mary and I have entered a new phase of our lives: our youngest has graduated from high school. Lydia, with 28 classmates, graduated from Trinity Christian School on the evening of May 28. All of her siblings and nieces and nephews were able to attend the graduation ceremonies. We were happy to be surrounded by our family on this special occasion.

Lydia has been offered a job through Keith Bauman as a pastry chef for Sydexo, the food company that services the campus of the University of Pittsburgh. Since Lydia is "into" baking and preparing food dishes she is happy for the chance to pursue what she enjoys. It goes to show, "It is not what you know as much as who you know!" We are thankful that Keith was able to provide her with this opportunity. Now all of you know why I look the way I do. How does a person lose weight when baked goods are constantly sitting out on the kitchen counter?

Visitors

We continue to have visitors to our worship services. Our witness on WORD FM remains the major instrument in drawing people to the services. Most of these visitors come for a service and do not return. Some return a few times and then we do not see them again. The Word goes forth and does not return empty. Neither is it always the case that no one returns.

Some have visited and remained. I am not sure that we even consider those who have remained visi-

tors anymore. They have been attending church and our Reformed Doctrines class for about eight months now. They have involved themselves in the organic life of our Fellowship. We have all become friends as well as fellow saints. They are to us much more than mere visitors.



Memorial Day Picnic

We all enjoyed the annual Memorial Day church picnic again this year. We had lots of visitors. Not only were my children and grandchildren there, but a young couple who has been attending for some months now invited their family to the picnic. We played lob ball and basket ball, enjoyed our hamburgers and hotdogs, and also gathered round for a short time of reading God's Word, listening to a devotional, and prayer. The church picnic is always well-attended and all seem to enjoy themselves.



The Christ-Centered Conference

On May 21 and 22 Mary and I attended the Christ-Centered Conference in Cincinnati, OH. It was sponsored by the Gospel of Grace Church in Ross, OH. The theme of the conference was *The Christ of Sovereign Grace*. I was assigned two lectures out of four, the first given on Friday night and the second on Saturday morning. The other speaker at this conference was Rev. Jim Byrd, of the First Baptist Church in Almont, MI. The topics assigned me were, *The Christ of Unconditional Election* and *The Christ of Preservation and Perseverance*.

There were approximately 50 people in attendance from Ohio, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and West

Virginia. One family flew in from Idaho. Most of those who attended, though not exclusively, were of Baptist background. In my first lecture or “sermon” (as they called them) I spoke of Christ as first in the counsel of God and the elect as chosen in Him—definitely a supralapsarian point of view of God’s counsel. My second “sermon” addressed preservation from the point of view of God’s covenant. God’s people are predestinated unto the adoption of children. We are predestinated in Christ to enter into the relationship of love and fellowship with God. We are become His children. Since we are God’s very own children, He will never forsake us, but will preserve us in our salvation for Christ’s sake.



The response was overwhelmingly favorable. I realize that to convince those of Baptist background of the necessity of infant baptism as opposed to believer’s baptism is difficult, to say the least! But it surely seems that when the covenant is taught as God’s relationship of friendship and fellowship with His elect in Christ, it is far more convincing to a Calvinistic Baptist than the idea of a conditional contract that God makes with every child born into the church.

There were those at the conference that afterwards expressed thanks and agreement with the Word of God spoken. I have since been invited to another conference, though not as a speaker.

The Word of God is living and powerful! By it God works in the hearts of His people. It brings to faith and repentance. But it also instructs and changes the hearts of men, convicting them of the truth. We are thankful when given the opportunity by God to preach the Word. We scatter that Word as seed and pray that God will indeed cause it to sprout in the hearts of His people wherever it is scattered.

Trips

Mary and I have also had opportunity in April, May, and June to travel to Southwest Michigan a few times. The first time, in April, I was asked to participate in the missions conference hosted by the Domestic Mission Committee of our churches. The speeches delivered by Rev. Van Overloop and Rev. denHartog

were instructive and beneficial for missions in our churches. Conferences of this sort are definitely worthwhile for our members.

The second trip was to Grandville in order that I could give a presentation of the work in Pittsburgh at a potluck dinner in Southwest church. On that trip I also met for a couple of hours with the council of my calling church to discuss important matters that pertain to the inner workings of the mission field. These periodic meetings are much appreciated because they promote unity of thought and labor on the part of the calling church and the missionary. This is so necessary for a positive and fruitful labor in missions. The same is true of my relationship to the Domestic Mission Committee. We are thankful for the men from this committee that visited our work here in Pittsburgh the first week in May. That visit, likewise, was encouraging and beneficial.

On both trips to Michigan, I was given the privilege by Prof. Gritters to address the seminary students on the subject of missions. I was able to teach on the subjects of: “Discovering a Mission Field,” “Preparing a Mission Field,” and “Committing to a Mission Work.” I’d like to thank the seminary and Prof. Gritters for this opportunity. It has helped me develop a little more in my own limited knowledge of mission work.

One last visit to Michigan was to attend Mission Awareness Day on June 12. Mary and I spent a pleasurable day with the saints who attended. It was good to hear of the different work that is done in various places of the world. I was impressed with the labors of the Contact Committee and Rev. Andy Lanning’s presentation of those labors. Truly, God is giving us great opportunities to proclaim His Word in various places of this world. We are thankful for His blessings on the newly formed churches in Spokane and Sioux Falls. We hear wonderful things from Revs. Smit and Daniel Kleyn and their labors in the Philippines. May God bless our witness in Singapore, Myanmar, and India.

May the cause of missions continue to prosper in our churches. May we grow in our awareness that missions belongs to the chief calling of the church to preach the gospel to all creatures.