



## *Eastern Home Missions*

# *Newsletter*

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### **August 2011**

We have had a busy and fruitful summer here in the Fellowship in Pittsburgh. There have been a number of activities of importance that took place. Plus, of course, there has been the usual summer busyness that replaces for a short period of time the routine of the autumn and winter months.

### **A Wedding**

On July 22, 2011 John and Julie Fennell were united in marriage in our church. The church was filled from front to back! About 120 people attended. Although many of the attendees were members of our Fellowship, well over half were family and friends of John and Julie.



If you recall, this young couple became a part of our Fellowship almost two years ago, while they were

dating. During this time they grew together in their love for one another and for the truth of God's Word. This is the first time this has happened here. I realize that weddings are commonplace in our churches. We might read something of this sort and say, what is the big deal? Indeed, where God has established his covenant in the line of generations, weddings are commonplace. But have we ever considered what a blessing that truly is? It is an evident token that God is blessing the church in her generations!

That is what we wish to witness here too! We have witnessed the spiritual growth of a young couple that came to our churches so very new to the faith. We have witnessed them grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. And now we have witnessed their vows of marriage. One wedding! The first of its kind here. We do not take that for granted. What a reason to rejoice, because it is evidence to us of God's blessing on the work of the church in our Fellowship.

Our hearty congratulations to this young couple! John announced last night at our fellowship dinner that he and Julie were celebrating their one month anniversary.

### **Eric Guichelaar**

This past summer also saw the presence here of Seminarian Eric Guichelaar. Southwest and the DMC granted permission for him to serve our mission for the weeks of July 8-31. He spoke a word of edification for us both services on July 17 and one service on July 31.

While here he visited with many of the members of the mission. He also attended our Saturday morning Reformed Doctrines class, becoming involved in the discussions. An invitation was also extended to him to rejoice with us in the wedding of John and Julie.

It is always a good thing when someone can become a part of the life and fellowship of God's saints here. It is an encouragement to us, first of all. It reveals a genuine interest in our work here on the part of the churches and our seminary. Besides, it is always good to enjoy the fellowship of saints of like faith. His involvement in the labors here were much appreciated not only by the saints but by me. I always love talking missions with someone who might give a listening ear! But Eric's help also freed up a little of my time in order that I could do some make up work on my writing.

It is also good, I believe, for a young man who aspires to the ministry to have firsthand experience on a mission field. It always produces the positive fruit of a new perspective on mission work itself. Even if Eric

does not himself become personally involved in the work of missions, he will carry a love for it in his heart. Then as a minister in an established church, the Lord willing, he can encourage the members of the church to understand the necessity of missions in the life of the church. We pray that this may also have been the fruit of the month Eric spent among us.

## **An Engagement**

I was given a vacation day on Sunday, July 3. The week before my wife and I spent time on a campground just outside of St. Louis, Missouri. I have one married daughter who, with her family, lives near Loveland, CO. I have a married son and daughter who, with their families, live in the SW Michigan area. Our youngest daughters live here in Pittsburgh. One of these is married and the other is still at home.

We met in St. Louis because it was the half-way point between Pittsburgh and Loveland. All of the family spent a wonderful week in the miserably hot weather of Missouri!! I sure am glad my camper had air-conditioning! At least I could sleep at night. We fished, swam, and visited the arch in St. Louis. We even watched the Cardinals play. Sad to say, it was not a game against the Cubs, which would have been far more exciting. But it was fun anyway. Lots of family memories were created.

We decided to invite with us a young man who was at that time dating our youngest daughter, Lydia. Now, prior to meeting with this young man, Lydia was suffering from the “left behind” syndrome. So she was really, really anxious to have him come with us on vacation. We did not want to disappoint our daughter so we let him come with us. Toward the end of our stay there, I was in my camper (it was air-conditioned, remember) reading a book when this young man suddenly appeared and asked for the hand of my daughter in marriage. Oh, I forgot to mention, his name was Derek Kuiper from our Grandville church. Can you imagine that?! But, hey, being the understanding man that I am, I consented. Just before Derek left to return home he asked Lydia to marry him. Lots of tears of joy—and a few tears of sadness, since she is our last one—were shed by the family.



Congratulations to Lydia and Derek in their engagement!

## **WORD Radio**

We continue to air the broadcast of the Reformed Witness Hour on WORD radio. This continues to be an important means of gaining contacts. When someone orders a copy of the sermon on the RWH, then Pam Van Putten, secretary for this committee, sends us their address and we place it on our mailing list. We then, in turn, send out quarterly letters, flyers, and pamphlets to these people. This list also helps us determine if there is an area of interest in our churches near Pittsburgh.

In addition to the Reformed Witness Hour, I am interviewed by Mike Howard on Bibleburgh, a talk show that airs for two hours every Sunday night. We also continue to air, twice a day, one-minute ads that pinpoint a particular truth and invite people to visit us or look us up on our website.

WORD radio is helpful to us in developing our mailing list and bringing visitors to our church services. We hope to see a few more visitors in the next couple of months. We have found that, with school starting, people are busy church shopping too. I know, it may sound strange to us who are well satisfied with our churches and places of worship. But in this world, where there is a famine of the hearing of God’s Word, there are many who are searching. We pray that the Lord may lead to us those whom He has chosen to receive the Word.

We continue to covet the prayers and support of the saints. Our prayers are also raised on behalf of our denomination of churches. We pray that our denomination might be a faithful witness to the truth both in its preaching and the lives of its members.

Rev. Bruinsma