



## *Eastern Home Missions*

# *Newsletter*

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### **Work in the Fellowship**

The call of the gospel continues to go out twice every Sunday. I am up to Lord's Day 14 on Sunday mornings. This is my third time through the Heidelberg Catechism since coming to work in the Fellowship. I have started a series on Ephesians during the evening service. I will be preaching my third sermon in the series this coming Sunday.



It is a blessing for the Fellowship to receive live preaching every week. Since I quit going to Franklin I have been able to preach every service here in Pittsburgh. Well, almost every service. On Sunday, October 2, Mary and I were in Michigan. I attended a number of meetings the week before. But the pulpit in Pittsburgh was not empty that Sunday. We are grateful that the then pastor-elect Jon Mahtani consented to fill our pulpit both services. The saints of the Fellowship enjoyed hearing the Word from one they consider a "son" of the

mission here. The next Sunday, October 9, Rev. Kenneth Koole preached for me during the evening service. He and his wife came out the week before to visit us and a number of historic battle sites in the east. We had a refreshing and uplifting time with them. It reminded me of how much I miss the camaraderie and fellowship of my fellow ministers.

The Reformed Doctrines class is now finished with our study of Reformed doctrine. It took us about two years to complete our study. This does not mean, however, that the class is finished. Those who attend will not let me bring our Saturday morning classes to an end! It was decided that we will take up a study of the Belgic Confession next. I will be using the articles of Prof. Decker in volumes 51-53 of the *Standard Bearer* as our resource. We now have nine people in attendance. This class continues to be a source of joy and encouragement to all, including me.

I have now completed the initial work of the study syllabi developed for this course on Reformed doctrine. Each lesson includes a short written explanation of a particular doctrine, a work-sheet that requires the student to look up the Bible passages that prove the doctrine, and a page of memory work. These lessons have served us well in our study of Reformed doctrine. Now that the initial work is accomplished on these study guides, the meticulous labor of reworking them and editing them for use in the future begins. It is the intention of the Fellowship to use this material for future classes in the group and whenever it is decided to start a work elsewhere. Also, our Fellowship wishes to advertise these study guides as a means for home study of Reformed doctrine. But, again, this awaits the finishing touches. It will be some time yet before this material is ready for use elsewhere.

Catechism classes and Bible studies started again in September. Our adult Bible class meets every other Wednesday. We are finishing our study of the letter of James. Next week, the Lord willing, we are going to begin another class on alternating Wednesdays. It is a class on the Church Order, to which everyone in the Fellowship is invited. We will be using Prof. Hanko's syllabus on the Church Order as a resource for this class. I hope to show the biblical basis for the various articles of the Church Order in order to foster a deeper appreciation for the way our churches handle ecclesiastical matters.

I have emphasized this before, but so often we take for granted what God has given us in our generations. We not only have our distinct set of doctrines and practices. We also have deep historical roots. We have a certain way of doing things as churches. Because of

Heidelberg Catechism teaching we have a solid knowledge of the commandments and the Scripture's teaching on proper observance of those commandments. A knowledge of all these things is necessary for life as a congregation in our denomination. The purpose for a class on the Church Order is not so much to make the members proficient in church polity as it is to instill in them an understanding that affairs in the church must always be carried on in a church-orderly way.

### Other Activities

I continue to make one-minute ads for WORD radio. Each time I go to the studio to record these ads, Mike Howard, the talk-show host of Bibleburgh interviews me. I am heard rather consistently on his program. It airs from 9 to 11 on Sunday nights. The ads continue to bring in visitors to the Fellowship. People often comment on a particular ad they heard or on an interview on Bibleburgh. Others comment on how much they enjoy the Reformed Witness Hour. The work on radio, therefore, continues to be an active part of our labors.

Pamphlet work continues too. The Neighborhood Outreach Committee (NOC) has restocked our supply of pamphlets. We are in the process of purchasing shelves to put in one of the small rooms off the side of the pulpit in order to organize and store all the pamphlets for easy access. Rev. Stewart has a broad range of contacts who write the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Northern Ireland for pamphlets. When the request comes from a person in the eastern United States, Mary Stewart forwards the request to us and we attempt to fill the order. This requires quite an inventory! Just a note to our Evangelism Committees: if you publish a new pamphlet, please send us a copy so we are aware of it.

We are looking to publish a few pamphlets of our own as well. I preached a sermon some months ago that the committee wants to publish as a pamphlet. Since then I have adapted it into pamphlet form. The pamphlet committee is presently formatting it and designing a cover. The NOC wants to make pamphlet writing and distribution more of its focus.

On October 28 we sponsored our 14<sup>th</sup> annual Reformation Day lecture. For the past several years I have been speaking on men of the Reformation, picking out a certain point of truth that I can weave into the lecture. Two years ago I spoke on *John Calvin and God's Sovereignty*. Last year the subject of the lecture was *Martin Luther: Captive to the Word*. This year our lecture was on *John Knox and the Reformation of Worship*. The work put into it was well worth the effort. We had 16 visitors present. Over half of these visitors are repeat visitors from the last two years. I do not believe that at

present these people are interested in coming to our worship services. But that they are making it a point to come to our lectures every year. That is a good thing! We do not know how God by His Spirit will lead them in the future. We rejoice that our witness by means of these lectures is broader than just our own Fellowship. Visitors travel from as far as an hour's drive away. One lady was so enthusiastic that she suggested the Reformer she would like me to speak on next year. We enjoy hosting this lecture and are happy to be establishing a certain listening audience. This assures us of a crowd for that evening. We hope they bring friends to next year's lecture!



This first weekend in November I attended a conference sponsored by the Pittsburgh Reformation Society. The conference was held in the Reformed Presbyterian Theological School (RPTS) and the speaker was Dr. Jack Kinneer, a professor at RPTS. On Friday night, from 6 to 9, and Saturday morning, from 9 to 12, he presented a series of six lectures on Christ's use, in His ministry, of the prophecy of Daniel. He did an excellent job tying what Christ said to the language of Daniel. Several contacts were also made while I was there.

As you can ascertain, there are many labors going on in the Fellowship itself. Add to this the pastoral work that needs to take place and it is clear that we keep ourselves busy. As always, the work has times of rejoicing and other times of sadness. But the Lord builds up His Zion. He seeks her wandering sons. We ask for your continued prayers and support.

Rev. Bruinsma