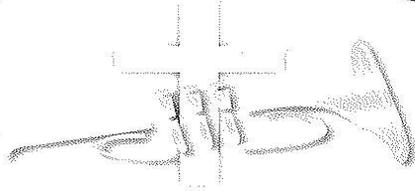


# THE TRUMPET



*"The great trumpet will be blown, they will come, who are about to perish" Isaiah 27:13 (NKJ)*

## COVENANT URC FRESNO, CA

Excerpts from the January 2009 Newsletter.

### THANK YOU

We did not think that our church would be sending out another newsletter in 2009, but I am very happy to be sending this newsletter out because it attests to the generosity of the URC. Our council and congregation are overwhelmed by the flood of support that has come to our congregation. Words cannot express how grateful and thankful we are for your contributions. All I can say is **thank you very much.**

### PASSING OUT DOOR HANGERS

In the past, individuals in our church have handed out packets to many neighborhoods around Fresno to alert people to our presence in the community. It has been some time since we have done this and, thanks to the Chino URC, we have the opportunity to do this again this year. Our consistory has decided that we are going to pass out door hangers and then have a potluck.

This way we alert our community to our presence, and promote fellowship within our church. We have scheduled Saturday, February 7, as the designated day to do this.

Please pray that the Lord would bless this endeavor. Who knows, we might even have a community member *crash* our potluck. It would be great if that would happen.

### CHURCH LIBRARY

We had a wonderful surprise one Sunday last month. The husband of one of our steady visiting families pulled the pastor and an elder aside to share his desire to donate towards a church library. He had done some extra consulting work and wanted to get a church library going. He committed to giving the church money so that we could facilitate this desire.

God's providence is a remarkable thing because just prior to this my neighbor had moved to a different office space. He needed to get rid of three bookshelves. He knew that we recently moved to our office space and thought that we might need some shelves. I took the shelves, but did not fully know how we would use them.

## PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR US:

We, once again, want to thank the churches for their generosity. I cannot tell you how much the congregation appreciates what the URC has done for us. We do pray that if you are able, to continue to remember us in your giving.

However, we want to also impress our need for prayer. A few things are listed below:

- That the Lord would bring us families who seek to actively support the work.
- That the Lord would continue to provide for us financially.
- That the Lord would bless our efforts as we move forward with this community based conference.
- That the Lord would bless our inviting people to church as we pass out these door hangers.
- That the Lord would continue to allow us to make community contacts.
- That we would be able to compete with the mega churches that surround us.
- That the Lord would grant us patience as we wait on Him.

Pastor Paul Lindemulder  
[phlinde@gmail.com](mailto:phlinde@gmail.com)

## **NOTICE: CHURCH PLANTERS, MISSION COMMITTEES / CHURCH COUNCILS**

If you are involved in a Church plant, please send "The Trumpet" an update on your activities for the Spring issue.

Thank you, The Trumpet staff.

## **HISPANIC CHRISTIAN MINISTRY A Ministry of Covenant Reformed Church of Toronto in Partnership with Faith United Reformed Church of West Olive, Michigan**

### **HCM Trip Report - Guatemala / El Salvador / Miami - January 7-22, 2009**

This was a 3-point trip for teaching in Guatemala and El Salvador, concluded with meetings in Miami with the Joint Venture committee of Revs. Neal Hegeman, Allen Vander Pol and myself.

The existing MINTS Centres are experiencing growth, and in some cases multiplying into new areas. Soli Deo Gloria!!!

### **Guatemala Visit**

John Calvin Seminary in Quetzaltenango is celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of John Calvin. Last year I participated in their year-long celebrations with a course on the Doctrines of Grace. On this visit I taught my recently completed course on the book of Philippians in two centres. While there they informed me about the expansion of their seminary into two new communities. In addition to students studying at a diploma level, they currently have 40 students studying in the Bachelors program offered by MINTS. What a joy to see their enthusiasm to train leaders! I had the privilege of reviewing and grading 56 term papers during my visit with them. It is encouraging to see the improving quality of the work being done in academics and in practical ministry. Plans are for me to teach "World View" in July as part of their Calvin Anniversary Year.

## **El Salvador Visit**

I continue to groom José Jesús Ramirez, a Masters graduate student from Toronto, who is raising funds to be able to return to his home country in El Salvador to serve as the MINTS Country Coordinator. We stayed at the humble home of his in-laws in a village near the northern Guatemalan border during the 10 days of my trip. He preceded me by a few days to set things up and stayed on a few days longer to wrap things up there. We currently have fifty El Salvador students studying with MINTS. Highlights are as follows:

**Graduation in Calchuapa** - Graduations are always the most exciting part of MINTS. Two students who had been studying on our online program of study graduated with their Bachelor of Theology degree. What a joy to see the participation of community dignitaries and other church leaders in this momentous occasion.

**Follow up on Established Centres** - We had an opportunity to follow up on four Centres who were struggling to stay focused on their plans. Our visit served as an opportunity for these Centres to get back on track and re-focus their efforts.

**Two New Centres** - We had the privilege of introducing MINTS to two new groups of students, one of which will have 20 students studying, and another which plans to have 8 students studying. José Jesús and I co-taught the introductory Hermeneutics course in these Centres which were enthusiastic about the plans.

## **Financial Update**

Last year was a challenging year with several very lean months. My committee sent out some promotional materials regarding our situation, and the Lord has responded through you with a year-end surplus and several months of funds in our account to start out the New Year.

I am thankful to the Lord and to each of you as churches and individuals who continue to make this ministry possible from year to year.

Rev. Eric Pennings,  
Missionary, Covenant Reformed Church  
of Toronto  
Miami International Seminary (MINTS) Central  
America Regional Coordinator

**Canadian Donations:** Hispanic Christian  
Ministry, c/o Covenant Reformed Church, 265  
Albion Road, Toronto, Ontario, M9W 3P1

**US Donations:** Hispanic Christian Ministry, c/o  
Faith United Reformed Church, 8270 120<sup>th</sup>  
Ave., West Olive, Michigan, 49460

## **A visit to Messiah's Reformed Fellowship**

One of the many blessings that you receive when you go to serve on a work project is the opportunity to worship with other saints. We read and hear about the saints in New York City at our local church, but until this past summer I couldn't picture it in my mind. Our church sent 5 young people and me to Teens All Serving Christ, which took place at Pompton Plains Reformed Bible Church (URC). The first Lord's Day we crossed the river, made our way around the island of Manhattan until we came to the building where Messiah's Reformed Fellowship worships. Parking was interesting; first, because where do you park 2 -15 passenger vans and a car? Two, it's expensive to park anywhere down there.

We were directed to some free parking areas and then went into the Seaman's Building. We went upstairs first for about an hour of Bible study and fellowship. The saints were studying about the Holy Land using Ray Vander Laan's video series. After we had finished the Bible study and discussion, we went downstairs into the chapel for worship.

Rev. Murphy and his family were on a well-deserved vacation, so we were led in worship by Brother Tuininga. He had been serving there with Rev. Murphy this past summer. We talked briefly after the service, but due to time restraints we had to depart early without getting to know the saints more.

If your travels bring you in or near New York, as I hope to again, I would encourage you to spend time seeing what God is doing there, and worship with that growing congregation. Please also consider a financial gift; it is difficult to offer the services they do, as the costs are very high in the city. Please continue to pray for them and the ministry that God is working through them in Manhattan.

May God bless the work there.

Rob Brinks

Cornerstone URC, Hudsonville, MI

## REV. BILL GREEN COSTA RICA UPDATE

CLIR "Confraternidad Latinoamericana de Iglesias Reformadas"

Many of you may already know quite a bit about CLIR and the important role that it has played in the spreading of the Reformed faith in Latin America. But whether or not you are familiar with this ministry, let me give you three reasons: Why CLIR?

**1. The real Need:** Latin America has always been a stronghold of Roman Catholic doctrine. In fact, the Roman church is the official state church of Costa Rica. But in the last 20 years a ravenous, greedy, superstitious and often outright pagan pentecostalism has taken strong root in the culture.

While the Roman Catholic Church has caused people to turn away from empty and hollow religiosity, the radical pentecostal/charismatic movement here has caused the gospel to be mocked and derided. We believe that the antidote to this destructive trend is a robust preaching of the gospel, and solid training in the historic, orthodox Christian faith. The crying need of the hour is the gospel of justification by grace alone through faith alone.

That is why CLIR.

**2. The perfect opportunity:** Another reason is that it has provided a forum for confessionally Reformed churches and denominations all over Latin America to cooperate together in the Great Commission that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to his church. CLIR has been a unifying force in this very divided part of the world. CLIR's membership includes very small churches to very large denominations. What is remarkable is that these churches have come together to collaborate on a single, all-embracing, and glorious goal of spreading the gospel and raising up solidly reformed churches, in spite of their great diversity.

Their unity lies in their commitment to the gospel of justification by faith and their common allegiance to the historic Christian faith, as summarized in the Westminster Standards and the Three Forms of Unity. This is also an opportunity for the Lord's people in the United States to collaborate with the Latin church in a truly ecumenical way. Space simply will not allow for the many ways in which the Lord has used CLIR, but right now, we are seeing an impact, both here in Costa Rica, and in many other countries. We hope to share these stories with you in the future, but this leads me to my next very important reason to support the work of CLIR.

## PRINSBURG MINNESOTA CHURCH PLANT

**3. The right time:** Anyone who is familiar with Latin America will know that the doors for an evangelical witness have not always been as they are today. Today, the Lord has granted a remarkable, historic opportunity for the faith to be proclaimed widely and freely. We will rue the day that we squandered the precious time the Lord gave us for this work if we neglect to take advantage of it now, because history tells that the doors of the gospel open and close. Today they are open. Today is the time to take advantage of what the Lord, in his mercy has given. A good friend of mine who ministers out east asked his son what time was. And like a wise old man, he answered, "Time is something that is very precious to us, and something we have very little of" (he was only six when he said this). The doors are open today, but we know that a night will come when no one can work (John 9:4

And that is why CLIR.

Rev. Green lives in Costa Rica, where he is the executive secretary of CLIR. He has a team of 5, including Nicolas Lamme\*, assisting him in writing, translation, publishing and leading conferences throughout Latin America.

He labors under the oversight of the Bethany URC and the Green JVC. For more information contact the Bethany church.

(\*Last July, Nicolas Lamme and his family moved to Costa Rica to assist Rev. Green. He has been sent by the Trinity URC of Caledonia, MI. There will be more information about the Lammes in a future Trumpet.)

On January 18, 2009, the Covenant United Reformed Church plant located in Prinsburg, Minnesota, held its first worship service. This service marked the end of a year-long period of meeting and planning for a group from the Prinsburg area among themselves and with the Cornerstone United Reformed Church in Sanborn, Iowa.

Prinsburg is one of several small farming communities located approximately 100 miles west of Minneapolis/St. Paul. The people of the area are largely of Dutch, German and Scandinavian descent. Willmar, the largest town nearby, is experiencing the immigration of people from several different nationalities.

The congregation in Prinsburg is small; consisting of 8 households with 23 persons. It was decided early because of the size of the group, the traveling distance for any pulpit supply, and the difficulties of ministering to interested parties and the congregation during the week that worship services should not begin until we had a minister.

After working together with the Cornerstone (Sanborn, Iowa) consistory, it was proposed that the Cornerstone Consistory call Rev. Larry Johnson to be their minister.

The call was issued on November 12<sup>th</sup> and Rev. Johnson accepted on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Johnson is 55 years old and has been in the ministry for eight years. He comes to the Prinsburg Church plant from the Doon United Reformed Church in Doon, Iowa.

On Friday January 16, 2009, Rev. Johnson was installed as an Associate Pastor of the Cornerstone United Reformed Church to be the pastor of the Prinsburg Church plant.

There were approximately 60 people attending the service as members and consistory members from the UR Churches in northwest Iowa, southwest Minnesota, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, came to offer their support for the church plant. Rev. Todd De Rooy's sermon, preached from Acts 20:32, was entitled, "Commended to God and the Word." Rev. Doug Barnes from Hills URC conducted the service and exhorted the minister. Rev. Sinke from the Rock Valley URC exhorted the congregations in their calling and duties.

On January 18, approximately 50 persons attended the first worship service, as elders and members from Cornerstone URC made the 150 mile trip to Prinsburg to show their support and offer encouragement to the congregation. Rev. Larry Johnson preached from Romans 1:16. His sermon was entitled, "Not Ashamed of the Gospel."

The church has been warmly received by the other churches in the area and we have been blessed by the regular attendance of several persons and the visitors that stop by occasionally to worship with us. Please pray for us as we minister to the people of this town and this area that Jesus Christ will build His Church in this area through us and our witness here.

Rev. Larry Johnson

### **A request for help**

Following is an excerpt from an e-mail letter received recently;

Most of our time is spent in the interior, in quiet places, as there the people are anxious to receive God's word gladly. Many of our areas are not desirable for others. Another blessing is the costs to hold such events in these places are much less than in the big mega cities, where there is also a concern for safety.

We recently finished two sets of seminars during the day, and also a phonics class in the **Winter, 2009**

evening for the schoolteachers, from January 28 to February 6, 2009, in Andhra State. It all went very well. God has certainly blessed His servants, one from Australia, who stayed in RCPUR for all these events.

During this time also the CRA elders brought up their desire for a Godly young team with a strong Reformed background to come and help in the Lord's work, and keep strengthening the Reformed fellowships here in India. (Teams have been sent successfully twice in the past.)

We do hope and pray for God's will and His providence for the team and their needs, and for us (CRA) also, to meet all the expenses. Each year our Lord has been graciously providing for the needs of this children's ministry, and the Covenant Family conferences, seminars, and Christmas celebrations by our supporting United Reformed Congregations and other special friends.

N.P.

### **A plea from the Hudsonville MI Cornerstone Joint Venture Committee**

We are looking for a number of committed young adults to assist in VBS and other mission related events overseas May 23-mid June 2009, as requested in the above letter. If God has given you a desire for short-term missions, please contact Bruce Sterk at [bksterk@hotmail.com](mailto:bksterk@hotmail.com) or [office@cornerstoneurc.com](mailto:office@cornerstoneurc.com).

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