



## Eastern Home Missions

# Newsletter

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A new year of labor has begun in eastern home missions. We are grateful for the faithfulness of God in the labors of the past year, and look forward in hope to the work of this new year.

#### Reformation Day Lecture

In our last newsletter we informed you that we were hosting our 13<sup>th</sup> annual Reformation Day lecture on October 29, 2010. This took place according to schedule. The subject was *Martin Luther: Captive to the Word*. We had a total of 20 visitors - almost the same amount as last year! About half of these visitors returned after hearing last year's lecture. I had an interesting discussion with the minister of the local Lutheran church via email. He wondered why a minister of Reformed persuasion would be speaking on the man who established the Lutheran church. We corresponded on the subject more, but the point is that our witness in the community of Forest Hills (the borough where the church is located) is being noticed. Most of the visitors came as a result of our advertising on WORD radio.

#### Northeastern Ohio Family Conference

The highlight of all the events we scheduled in 2010 was our family conference held in the Carlisle Inn in Sugarcreek, Ohio on November 19-20. The theme of our conference was *Guided By God's Counsel*. Most of the families of our Fellowship were able to attend. Representatives from the Domestic Mission Committee and Southwest PR Council were also present. We were hoping to draw more visitors from Ohio itself, but there were only a few. We were glad to see Lee and Jennifer Finley with their three children and Eric Skolny. Friday

evening Rev. Bruinsma spoke on the subject: *God Guides Believers*. Rev. denHartog spoke Saturday morning on: *God Guides His Church*. That same morn-



ing, while Rev. denHartog spoke, Rev. Bruinsma met with the young adults to discuss the subject of *Determining God's Will*. After each speech time was left for discussion. The discussions were excellent! Friday



night after the evening speech everyone sprawled out in the eating and lounge area. Adjacent to this room was the pool, and a few of the younger couples and singles enjoyed some swimming and games. It was a good time for everyone to mingle and enjoy each other's fellowship. What added to the allure of the conference is that it was simply a time away from the hustle and bustle of our everyday routine to enjoy the company of fellow believers.

I am also including a picture or two of our annual Christmas program held after the morning worship service on December 19.





## News from the Fellowship

To mold a group of saints into an established church takes arduous labor. We must grow in our knowledge of the truth of God's Word. We must learn of our historical roots and take on a denominational identity as well as a congregational one. We must learn the church political way of dealing with matters in the church. And we must learn to live and function together as fellow saints in the body of Christ. These simply take time and labor. There are occurrences, however, in the life of our Fellowship that always give us great reason to be encouraged in our development. Here are two of them.

John Fennell and Julie Hernley, a young dating couple, have been attending our Fellowship for well over a year now. The first day of the family conference in Ohio the two of them announced their engagement. They are planning a July wedding—perhaps in our own church building! I will be officiating at the wedding. Pete and Megan Clossen and Chad and Kim Skolny will be among those standing up for them. It will be a wonderful church affair. We rejoice with this young couple and ask God's blessing on their engagement.

The other encouraging event is another family has been visiting us for the past few months: the Maalouf family. They are from Butler, a little over an hour drive north of here. Tony Maalouf is a general surgeon in the Butler Hospital. He and his wife, Tracy, have three teenage children. The family has been regularly attending our morning worship services and have expressed an interest in becoming a part of the Fellowship. Tony grew up in Lebanon as a Roman Catholic. Tracy grew up in the United States in the Greek Orthodox Church. For the first few years of their marriage they attended the Roman Catholic Church. Tony was then asked by a friend to join a Bible Study of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). During this time he came to the blessed knowledge of justification by faith alone. The family left the Roman Catholic Church and became members of the PCA. There they received training in the Reformed faith. But over the years Federal Vision

crept into the church there. Besides, Tony and Tracy became convicted of the Bible's position on the permanency of the marriage bond. This position led them to us. They are a welcome addition to our fellowship!

## WORD Radio

We continue to air the Reformed Witness Hour on WORD radio at 10 A.M. on Sunday. This radio program brings response from the Pittsburgh area. So also do the one-minute ads we air twice a day on WORD and once a day on WPIT, the AM affiliate of WORD. These ads consist of a concise statement of truth and an invitation to visit our website for information leading to our church and her worship services. More than any other means, these ads have served as a powerful witness to bring people to our worship services and lectures. I now am able to record these ads on my computer and send them as an mp3 to the station. This saves me travel time, since the station is on the other side of Pittsburgh. But then, it is necessary that I still make it to the station every so often. I am asked to go there for live interviews to be aired on Bibleburgh, the Sunday night talk show.

## Reformed Doctrines Class

Much time and labor is spent working within the Fellowship itself. Many of the pastoral labors common to an established church are performed here too. There are the regular catechism classes and Bible studies: Adult Bible Study and Young Adults Society. Life in the Fellowship is typical of life in the church. We continue to conduct our Saturday morning Reformed Doctrines class. In the past year we have made our way through over half of the material we are studying. Right now we are finishing up on the study of the Spirit and salvation. Several members of the class talk already of making confession of faith in the Fellowship. We look forward, the Lord willing, to this blessed fruit upon our labors.

## Visits of the DMC and SW delegates

We are thankful for the faithful labors of the DMC and Southwest Church. These past several months we hosted delegations from both. Our Fellowship finds these visits enriching and profitable for our continued work in the gospel. We are also thankful for the prayers and support of you, our fellow saints, in the work we are called to perform in Pittsburgh.