



PROTESTANT REFORMED FOREIGN MISSIONS

- THE PHILIPPINES -

Rev. Daniel Kleyn

FALL 2009 NEWSLETTER

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A Delegation Visitation

As I begin writing this newsletter, the recent delegation of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Boon, from our Doon PRC congregation, and Rev. and Mrs. Daniel Kleyn, co-missionary in the Philippines, has returned to Iowa and Michigan respectively only several hours ago. The visit, which began when they touched down on Philippine soil in the late evening of October 15, has now quickly become another chapter of the history of our Philippine denominational labors with their departure early Monday morning, November 2.

Rev. Kleyn and Elder Boon visited here as part of the work of the FMC and Doon Council's annual oversight visit, and the Kleyns were part of the delegation in order to make preparations for their move to Metro Manila on December 16.

During their visit, the officebearers with their wives had the opportunity to become acquainted, or reacquainted, with the members of the Berean PRC, of the All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship from Gabaldon, of the First Reformed Church of Bulacan, and of the Christian Faith Ministry Fellowship group of Batasan Hills (in the Quezon City area). They visited with the Berean PRC members and with the missionary Smit family in Antipolo to the delight of the children, especially the littler ones, and for much encouragement to my wife and me.

Rev. Kleyn received a good taste of the work that awaits faithful attention and service in the name of the Lord of the harvest. In addition to the search for a rental house, various immigration application exams and meetings, and miscellaneous other errands related to their December move, Rev. Kleyn gave a lecture at the Christian Faith Ministry fellowship in Batasan Hills on Thursday, October 22, preached in the First Reformed Church in Bulacan on October 25, and preached four times over the 3 Sundays during the delegation's visit. We are quite sure that after receiving a good taste of the work and our growing number of contacts, the Kleyns are eager to resume their labor and service in the Lord's harvest here next month.

Another Memorable Visitation

The Lord visited Metro Manila on September 25 and September 26 through the mighty Typhoon Ondoy, whose power was not so much in its wind, but in the colossal and catastrophic amount of water that poured out of the sky in a very short period of time.

During our discussion on Psalm 46 in Bible Study on Wednesday following the storm and its aftermath, one of our members mentioned a sermon preached after another day (Tuesday, April 3, 1956) in which God visited the earth in a mighty tornado in the Holland, Hudsonville, and Walker, Michigan areas. That memorable sermon about a memorable tornado was preached by Rev. Gerrit Vos in the Hudsonville PRC on April 8, 1956, and was entitled, "Visited by the Majesty on High."

Indeed, we were visited by the Most High God, not only in the recent stormy blast, but also in the comfort of His Word. On our first Lord's Day together as a church family after the disruption of the typhoon and its floods, I preached on Psalm 62:5-8 under the theme, "God: My Only Refuge."

Five of our families were affected by the flooding caused by Typhoon Ondoy, some suffering the loss of earthly possessions and enduring hardship. Nevertheless, the Lord has provided for those who needed the benevolence assistance of our merciful High Priest, Jesus Christ, through the willing hands, eyes, and hearts of our Berean diaconate. The Berean church also had the opportunity to extend benevolence to affected members of the First Reformed Church in Bulacan, which is served by Pastor John Flores, and to the brethren of our mission outreach in Gabaldon.

How can we adequately thank the PRCA, the PRCNI, and the Covenant ERCS for their ready willingness to help us? Hebrews 13:3 says, "Remember... them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." We are very thankful for your remembrance of us in our recent adversity.

We are thankful for the work of our Berean diaconate here in cooperation with the diaconates of our Protestant Reformed Churches through the Doon PRC diaconate by which the needs of our affected brethren were quickly and sufficiently met. May Christ continue to prosper the work of His faithful deacons here and abroad while they seek to work in His Name with wisdom, discretion, heavenly compassion, and faithfulness to Christ, our merciful High Priest, Who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." (Matt 25:40)

Future Plans

In addition to the regular congregational work of preaching on the Lord's Day twice, catechism instruction,

Bible Study work, pastoral visiting, and writing articles, there is other work planned for the coming months.

In November, we expect to provide for the CFM fellowship of Batasan Hills the 3rd lecture in a introductory series of 5 on the theme, "What it means to be Protestant Reformed." The 1st lecture in September gave the historical perspective. The 2nd by Rev. Kleyn in October gave the doctrinal perspective. The 3rd will present the Protestant Reformed perspective of worship and the regulative principle. The 4th and 5th lectures will present the Protestant Reformed convictions regarding church government and the Christian's antithetical, daily life.

For later in November, the Berean consistory is planning for a combined meeting between the Berean consistory and the consistory of the First Reformed Church of Bulacan with interested male confessing members from both congregations. This meeting is being held at the request of the FRC of Bulacan. The purpose of the meeting is a discussion about principles of Reformed church government and their application to our relationship as Reformed congregations who appear to be embracing the like precious, historic Reformed faith. While it is impossible to predict what the fruit of this meeting may be, yet we seek the Lord's indispensable blessing and the guidance of His Spirit for a profitable discussion between both congregations for the growth of closer ties.

There are plans being made to have a Young Adult Fellowship activity in the last week of December for the young adults of our congregation and to which will be invited the young adults of the First Reformed Church of Bulacan and of the CFM from Batasan Hills. These kinds of activities are important because they provide our young adults the opportunity to develop friendships with others of like precious faith in a huge city where such godliness is scarce and where the temptations of the world and Satan are seemingly countless. The theme of our December activity is, "Walking as the Children of Light." (I Thess 5:5-8). Rev. Kleyn and myself are planning to give the inspirational speeches for the young adults and to participate, of course, with the young adults in the games and meals also planned.

In the distant future, there is an April 29 and 30 conference planned. The topics which the Berean consistory chose for this conference were common grace and church government. Eight speeches over two days, given by Rev. Kleyn and Rev. Smit are planned for this conference. Since it is scheduled during the summer break for the Philippine schools, we expect an increase in attendance in comparison to our conferences in recent years held in the months of July through September.

Besides all of these plans, there are other plans in the preliminary stages for the development of our relationship with contacts in other places near Manila, elsewhere on the island of Luzon, and on the island of Negros in Bacolod City and Inayauan, the Lord willing.

With all of our preparations and plans, we commit our way unto Jehovah and trust that He will bless our efforts for the cause of His truth and eternally chosen church, also gathered by His Word and Spirit from among the 7,107

islands of the Philippines.

Other News

Our immigration work is completed so that all of us are permanent residents of the Philippines. Unlike the missionary 9(g) visas which expire after 5 years, the permanent visas do not expire as long as we maintain our residency. As a result, these visas give significant relief from the burden of immigration work. They are cheaper than the missionary 9(g) visas after 4 years (or earlier since fees are expected to increase significantly with the election of a new president in 2010). They give our children the opportunity for employment and for post-secondary education in the Philippines. Furthermore, our children have the freedom to continue to live with us and our church family here beyond their high school years, if they are so led by the Lord. Finally, rather than expecting that we will be in the Philippines for a maximum of 5 years under the limitations of a missionary 9(g) visa, the Berean brethren and our other contacts are happy to know that our permanent visas allow us to stay as long as the Lord wills and gives us work here.

To our surprise and delight, we have a new couple attending. Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Baatenburg worshiped with us for the first time on October 11, having moved to Manila so that Jeff's wife, Katie (nee Haak), could teach at Faith Academy. She is teaching in Faith's Middle School in which John (7th grade) and Rebekah (6th grade) currently are students. The Baatenburgs are members of the First PRC of Holland, MI, where Rev. Kleyn was previously pastor. We and our children have enjoyed getting to know them, and they seem to fit in well with the congregation. At present, the Baatenburgs are living in an apartment building within the Valley Golf subdivision, near the school. We pray that the Lord will supply all their needs in their adjustments to life and work in this area.

Conclusion

Soon, we come to the end of another year of our Lord. We pray that you may end this year in the thanksgiving and the hearty assurance that the Lord through another year has guided you by His counsel, that His grace has been sufficient through each step of His way for you, and that, in spite of all our sins, His mercy endures forever.

May our heavenly Father for Christ's sake fill your hearts and homes with the true wealth of our only comfort in life and also in the valley of the shadow of death.

We conclude with stanza #1 of the oft and heartily sung, especially at year's end, Psalter #247, based on Psalm 90 and similar to the truth upon which Rev. Vos preached that memorable sermon from Psalm 46. It is certainly appropriate for the end of our 2009 and our first few months in the Philippines.

*O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And, our eternal Home.*

In His service,

Rev. Richard J. Smit

4 November 2009