

# PROTESTANT REFORMED FOREIGN MISSIONS

## THE PHILIPPINES



### SEPTEMBER, 2011 NEWSLETTER

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#### Smit's Furlough

The Smit family has now returned from their first furlough. After two years on the mission field here, they were able to visit again their families and many of our churches in Canada and the USA.

Rev. Smit and Tricia and their 8 children enjoyed their six weeks in North America. Though travel for a large family can be demanding (as some of you no doubt know), they were glad for this opportunity to be among you all again. They returned home refreshed as well as greatly encouraged by the verbal and visible support you gave for the work here.

Their furlough gave Rev. Smit opportunity to preach in seven of our congregations. He was also able to attend and speak at synod, meet in person with our calling church (Doon PRC) and the Foreign Mission Committee, and visit with many colleagues in the ministry.

However, the highlight of his furlough work was the opportunity to give numerous presentations of our mission work – in Edmonton (AB), Lacombe (AB), Grandville (MI), Kalamazoo (MI), Chicago (IL), Randolph (WI), Doon (IA), Hull (IA), and Lynden (WA).

Rev. Smit and Tricia have commented more than once to us regarding the presentations, mentioning the large numbers who attended, the many questions asked, the encouraging remarks given, the greetings sent, etc. This evidence of your interest in our mission work is something we appreciate more than we can express in words. It is indeed a great blessing to be able to do this work with the support of the denomination.

The Smit's return makes us (the Kleyns) begin to think ahead a little to our furlough in 2012, the Lord willing. It struck us just this week that this is now only about 9 months away. We look forward to our time among you, and plan to try to visit many of the churches the Smits weren't able to get to.

#### Two Missionaries

One thing that became concretely evident during the Smit's furlough is the blessing of having two missionaries on the field here.

An obvious and significant benefit of this is the ability to provide continuity in the work.

During Rev. Smit's absence, I was able to do some preaching also in the Berean PRC (where Rev. Smit regularly labors) – thus no need for reading sermons for six weeks. I was also able to lead their weekly Bible study (which is regularly attended also by members of the Christian Faith Ministry in Batasan Hills, as well as a few visitors). At the same time, my own labors in the First Reformed Church in Bulacan, the Christian Faith Ministry in Batasan Hills, and the All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship in Gabaldon could, for the most part, continue as normal.

Pastoral care within the Berean PRC could also continue. This became especially necessary because of a death in the congregation. Sadly, the Lord took home the eldest member in the church, Bro. Max Lising. This was the first death within the church in the history of the Berean PRC. Thereby the Lord gave me opportunity to bring words of comfort to the family and congregation. The Lord's abundant grace was evident, for in spite of their sadness they expressed their hope and trust in their heavenly Father and His sovereign, good will.

While Rev. Smit was gone, I was also conscious of the benefit of two missionaries from the viewpoint of being able to consult with each other concerning our work. A number of times, there were matters I needed to discuss with Rev. Smit. We were able to do this in a limited way through email and Skype. But to be able to do this face to face is certainly preferable. In fact, hardly a day or two goes by without our doing so. Since both of us are on the field, and each of us is personally aware of the challenges faced, this mutual consultation is invaluable.

Sharon and I could not help but think as well, during the time the Smits were gone, of the blessing of two missionary families from the viewpoint of the friendship we have with each other and the companionship we enjoy. It is indeed good to have the Smits home again.

We take the opportunity, therefore, to thank the churches again for your willingness (in spite of a number of vacancies) to call two men to labor together in the foreign mission field here in the Philippines.

### **Our Mission Labors**

The Lord has given and continues to give us many doors of opportunity to preach and teach the precious gospel truths of the Reformed faith.

Rev. Smit keeps busy in the Berean PRC. In addition to the regular labors there of a pastor within a congregation (preaching, catechism teaching, leading Bible study, pastoral work, consistory meetings, etc.), Rev. Smit also makes periodic visits to the All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship in Gabaldon.

Both Rev. Smit and I communicate regularly with various contacts throughout the Philippines. This includes the Reformed Free Churches in Negros Occidental (central Philippines), whom Rev. Smit visited this past May. The three pastors in these churches meet regularly to listen to and discuss various DVD lectures we provide them – of the PRCA conferences sponsored by our seminary, and of the speeches given at the Berean PRC's annual conferences.

I preach and teach in the First Reformed Church of Bulacan (about 2 hours from where we live) twice a month. This is always a full day – we leave home at 6:30 am, and return home about 12 hours later. I preach for their two worship services (8:00 am and 10:00 am), provide instruction on the Church Order of Dordt, and lead the Young People's Society in a study of the Belgic Confession of Faith. Once a month I also attend their monthly consistory meeting. This congregation and the Berean PRC are working together toward establishing a denomination, the Lord willing.

On the other two Sundays of the month, Sharon and I go to the All of Grace Protestant Reformed Fellowship in Gabaldon (about 5 hours from home), and to the Christian Faith Ministry in Batasan Hills (about 1 hour from home). In both places I am able to teach the Reformed truth especially through means of preaching on The Heidelberg Catechism. It is a joy to observe the interest in the truth, and also the evident desire of God's saints to conform their lives to His Word. We count it a privilege to be used of the Lord in this work.

We still hold our "7M" meetings every second Monday. Through these classes we provide dogmatics instruction for existing and future pastors. Soon I will finish leading the men through a study of Christology, after which Rev. Smit will teach Soteriology.

Up until now we have had three men at these meetings, but just this past week a fourth man began attending. This is an exciting and encouraging development – especially because he and his congregation are also asking that we include them in our mission work and make regular visits there to preach and teach. We need to work out the details yet, but are grateful for this extra door that our sovereign Lord Jesus has opened for us. This congregation is within the greater metro Manila area and approximately 1 ½ hours from where we live.

The harvest is plenteous, and this again demonstrates the need and blessing of having two missionaries here.

### **Spreading The Truth**

Besides preaching and teaching, one way in which the truth is disseminated is through the internet. We have our own audio and literature website, which now also includes (in addition to our weekly sermons) about 100 Tagalog translations of Reformed Witness Hour messages. See: [prcphilippinesaudio.wordpress.com](http://prcphilippinesaudio.wordpress.com)

Another significant means of spreading God's Word is through The Standard Bearer. There are many throughout the Philippines who have subscriptions to this magazine. In addition to this, we receive 10 copies of each issue and distribute these among the many contacts we have.



No doubt you also know that we make RFPA books and PRCA pamphlets available to Filipinos at significantly reduced prices. We are able to do this through the generous collections taken in the PRCA for the "Philippine Book Fund," as well as through donations of pamphlets by some of our evangelism committees. Recently our supplies were replenished, and already in the past few weeks we have sold over 75 books. Thanks to all who have helped and who continue to help in this worthy endeavor to advance the cause of God's kingdom here in the Philippines through good, Reformed literature.

Until next time, with Christian love and greetings, on behalf of Rev. Smit, myself, and our families:

*Rev. Daniel Kleyn*