

PRCA FOREIGN MISSIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

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Dear Members of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

First of all, the timing of this newsletter allows me to extend to you all our end-of-year and new-year greetings, include a recent picture of the two of us, and express to all our prayer that the Lord will be your Rock and sure Guide throughout the new year. None of us knows what the new year holds. There is a lot of change and uncertainty in the world, and a good share of it comes because of whom God has recently appointed as our world rulers. But in the midst of all this uncertainty, we have the sure comfort that Jesus Christ, Who is Lord over all, is the same yesterday, today, and forever. As we stand on the threshold of a new year, we can be confident that He Who is with us, and on our side, is unchanging in the midst of change (Hebrews 13:8).



FURLOUGH

Our furlough took place during June and July. Initially we visited the Midwest where we were able to spend time with the members of our calling church and to attend the annual Synod. We then spent the rest of our time in Michigan and Illinois. While we were in the USA, Rev. Smit was able to take over my work here for four of the six weeks that we were absent. We appreciate very much his willingness to do so, and the willingness of his consistory to release him for this work.

During the furlough, I had opportunity to preach every Sunday, except one. This was a good way to

get to see and renew contact with many of you. Both Sharon and I were encouraged by the many questions asked and comments made concerning the mission work. We also enjoyed the furlough from the viewpoint of having a significant amount of time to spend with our families, especially our parents. And we were also able to spend some quality time with Rev. & Leah Holstege and their family – a good opportunity to get to know each other, as well as to discuss their upcoming move to and work in the Philippines.

Throughout our furlough, we noticed and heard repeatedly of excitement in our churches regarding the Holstege family joining us soon in the Philippines, and also regarding the decision of Synod to approve calling yet another missionary for the work here (especially with a view to establishing a seminary, the Lord willing). These are significant times in our denomination's mission work, and we are grateful for your continued and growing interest and support.

PRC IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Protestant Reformed Churches in the Philippines consist of three congregations: The Berean PRC, The PRC in Bulacan, and the Maranatha PRC. My work in these churches consists of the following: (1) One Sunday each month in MPRC for preaching and to teach a Church Order class, (2) serving as an advisor at monthly Consistory meetings in the MPRC, and in the PRCB, (3) serving as an advisor on the two Standing Committees of the Classis, and at the Classis meetings, and (4) assisting in the work of Church Visitation.

The Classis of the PRCP met on Monday, October 31, with Rev. Ibe (by rotation) chairing the meeting. The Classis approved and adopted two important items: a Constitution for the denomination's Mission Work, and a Pre-Seminary Program for students of the PRCP. The Classis also made preparations for the upcoming delegation visit of Prof. Dykstra and Rev. Eriks as representatives of the Contact Committee of the PRCA. The PRCP is looking forward to this visit and to the progress that can be made, the Lord willing, toward a sister church relationship between the PRCA and PRCP.

PROVIDENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH

My schedule in PCC in Marikina is to lead the worship services on three Sundays of each month. In one service each week a sermon is preached on the Heidelberg Catechism. I also teach catechism to the children each Saturday morning, and I lead a weekly Bible Study/Doctrine Class each Thursday evening. In the Thursday class, we have covered, in detail, the Essentials of Reformed Doctrine and the Belgic Confession of Faith. We have now begun a study of the Canons of Dordt.

A recent development in PCC is the appointment of a Steering Committee. I plan to hold regular meetings with the four men on this committee in order to discuss and/or make decisions regarding such matters as the preaching, Bible studies, church membership, benevolence work, church property, church finances, etc. I believe this to be a significant step forward in the process of PCC becoming a properly instituted Reformed church in the future, the Lord willing.

PASTORS' TRAINING

The 7M (Metro Manila Monthly Martes Morning Ministers Meetings) classes are held twice a month. The main purpose of these classes is to provide instruction to existing pastors. By means of these classes we have been able to fill gaps that some of the PRCP pastors have had in their seminary training as well as to help prepare some of them for their Classis examinations. In the past we have covered Reformed Dogmatics (Introduction, plus all six Loci), Homiletics, Hermeneutics, Reformed Symbols, Catechetics, Heidelberg Catechism preaching, and Church History. We are currently studying Poimenics (pastoral care) and the Church Order. Usually between five to eight men attend these classes.

In addition to 7M, we hold a monthly pastors' class in Southern Negros Occidental. Some of these pastors have been longtime contacts of the PRCA, all the way back to the 1990's. Currently we have about 12 to 15 who attend. In these classes, we have focused on especially two areas: Reformed Theology, and Reformed Church Government. With a view to advancing this work, we hope in 2017 to make more regular visits to these pastors and their churches. This will be possible, the Lord willing, once Rev. Holstege has moved and settled into his life and work here. At least four of the pastors have expressed, many times, the desire that we increase our work among them. We hope and pray we can do so.

OTHER CONTACTS AND WORK

We continue to make monthly visits to a group in

Bacolod City. These visits involve a Monday evening Bible study in which we are studying the Essentials of Reformed Doctrine. Since Bacolod is part of Negros Occidental, this fits in with our monthly pastors' training classes in SNO.

We also have a number of contacts throughout the Philippines with whom we stay in touch. The communication is mostly on account of their interest in purchasing Reformed literature. But from time to time, some have requested that we speak or preach in their churches or groups. We hope to give more consideration to these requests once Rev. Holstege is here, and with the approval of Doon and the FMC.

As just indicated, a significant part of the work here is our sale of Protestant Reformed literature. Book sales have been gradually increasing over the course of the past year, but have significantly peaked in the past month. Sharon takes care of the book sales and is now receiving at least one or two orders each day. The main reason is because of the new titles the RFPA has recently published, but also because of new contacts and visitors in some of the PRCP congregations. We once again express our thanks to our churches for the generous giving toward the Philippine Book Fund. These collections enable us to sell the RFPA books to our Filipino churches and contacts at very reasonable prices. We are also able to provide free shipping, as well as to give away magazines (*Standard Bearer*, *Beacon Lights*, *Saltshakers*, etc.) and pamphlets.

CERC IN SINGAPORE

During the last week of October, we had the opportunity to visit the Covenant Evangelical Church in Singapore. This visit came about as a result of CERC's request that Rev. Bruinsma and I assist them in the oral examination of Bro. Emmanuel Singh from Kolkata, India. The visit also included conducting church visitation and preaching once on Sunday.

We thoroughly enjoyed the time among the saints in the CERC, and especially the time we could spend with the Lannings and Bruinsmas. The examination was the highlight. It was wonderful to hear of Bro. Emmanuel's knowledge of and love for the Reformed faith, and to see that God has provided a committed and well-qualified man to serve as an ambassador of the Reformed faith in India. May God bless his ministry, and CERC's work with him.

Until next time, in Christian love,

Rev. Daniel Kleyn