

Covenant Protestant Reformed Church Ballymena, NI

15 November, 2012

Dear saints in the
Protestant Reformed Churches,

CPRC

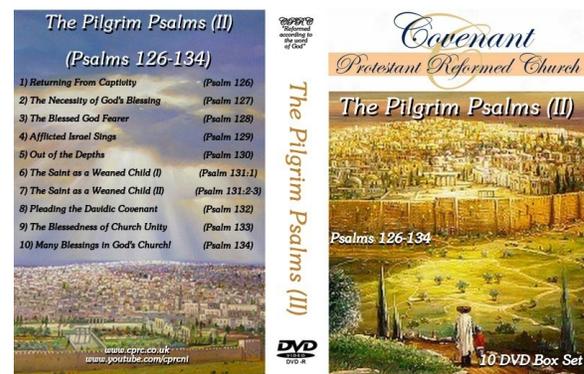
By God's grace, the CPRC continues to grow spiritually and numerically. Tommy Duncan received adult baptism and became a church member on 7 October. Tommy is a retired, single man who started attending our services in mid-July, 2011. Later, he and I met regularly for membership classes at the manse. It is great to have Tommy with us!

A few days after Tommy's baptism, Jackie Lou and her two children, Kirstin (7 years) and Kyan (1½ years), arrived in Northern Ireland from Trinidad and Tobago (12 October). Jackie is Marie Kennedy's niece, and Jackie's father is British, so she and her children are applying for UK visas. Kristin joined the Old Testament History for Beginners catechism class and Jackie is in the *Heidelberg Catechism* class.

Our other main weekly classes are going very well, with both better attended than at any time since my call to be a pastor. There are, on average, a dozen of us at the Tuesday morning class on "The Millennium" (Rev. 20) and about fifteen at our Wednesday evening class on the *Belgic Confession*. By the standards of many Protestant Reformed Churches, this is small, but it was only two years ago that we were able to start two weekly classes (before that we only had one), and ten years ago we had some Sunday services with only fifteen or so present!

The *Belgic Confession* audios are also posted on-line (www.cprf.co.uk/audio/belgicconfessionclass.htm) where many more listen to them than attend the class itself. Recently, we produced our

seventh box set of CDs from the *Belgic Confession* class, entitled "Original Sin and Double Predestination" on articles 15-16 (including Adam's covenant headship and the imputation of his guilt to us; defining and proving unconditional election and reprobation; the connection between God's hatred, hardening, and reprobation; the righteousness and purposes of election and reprobation, etc.). A box set on "The Pilgrim Psalms (II)" (Ps. 126-134) was also produced and advertised through the *Covenant Reformed News*, Facebook, our website, etc. We now have 31 box sets of CDs/DVDs for sale (www.cprf.co.uk/audio/boxsets.htm)



We are almost finished with the snagging list for our church building. Our contractor has replaced the few damaged skirting boards, filled in cracks, etc. We also added a new pulpit Bible.

Luther Lecture

After the British Reformed Fellowship (BRF) conference, Mary and I spent about twelve days in eastern Germany with her parents, Prof. and Mrs. Hanko, and Elaine Bos seeing especially sites connected with Martin Luther, the great Reformer. I did a fair bit of reading on Luther before and during the trip, so it seemed good to deal

with some aspect of his life and work in this year's lecture for Reformation day. We settled upon "Martin and Katie Luther: The Reformation of Marriage" and were able to use the photos we took in Germany (plus some pictures and a map from the internet) in a PowerPoint presentation accompanying the speech itself.



The lecture was given in three places: first, Ballymena, Northern Ireland (the first slide presentation in our new building; 19 October); second, Porthcawl, South Wales (25 October); third, Limerick, Republic of Ireland (9 November). There is a possibility that I may give this lecture with the PowerPoint presentation when we are in the US next summer, DV.

When in Limerick, I also preached for the Limerick Reformed Fellowship (LRF) while Rev. McGeown took the CPRC services (11 November). Debbie Murray came with us and she, several saints from the LRF, Mary, and I popped through the mail slots on doors in Limerick about 2,900 flyers, setting forth the gospel of Jesus Christ and inviting people to the LRF services. This manner of disseminating leaflets is perfectly legal and accepted in the British Isles, where we do not have mail boxes at the end of our drives. This was my first Friday lecture in Limerick since Rev. McGeown was ordained and it was good to get to spend some time with the believers there.

Translations

On our way to Limerick for the Luther lecture, we called in with Thiago McHertt and four other Brazilians in Dublin.

We had a lovely time of fellowship and dropped off with them a number of books and a lot of pamphlets. Yesterday, Thiago e-mailed me 2 Portuguese translations: the chapter on Saint Patrick from Prof. Hanko's *Portraits of Faithful Saints* and Rev. Van Baren's leaflet "Total Depravity."

We also posted 5 kilograms of books and pamphlets to Norma Gomez de Tochijara, a lady in Montreal, Canada, who teaches Spanish. She sent us 7 Spanish translations in the last two months, especially dealing with Psalm-singing and infant baptism.

Other additions to our translations page (www.cprf.co.uk/languages.htm) are 1 Tagalog (Rev. John Flores in the Philippines), 1 German (Carsten Linke in Switzerland), 2 Danish (Silas Riisager Dahl), 3 Afrikaans (Nic Grobler), 8 Hungarian (Bálint Vásárhelyi), and 15 Italian (Marco Barone in the LRF). This morning, a Chinese-speaking theological student e-mailed me to ask permission to translate Prof. Engelsma's pamphlet "The Kingdom of God."

There are now probably more written materials on our website in languages other than English than in English itself! For example, one can read 127 PRC pamphlets on-line in English whereas there are a total of 175 translations of them in some 17 languages (www.cprf.co.uk/pamphlets.htm).

There is much benefit in these translations. The translators testify of being edified while doing this work and we get positive feedback from those who read their translations. The translations have played a significant part in some people coming to BRF conferences, visiting the CPRC, and joining the LRF. Through the translations, we have given speeches in Portugal and Italy, made friends in various parts of the world, and distributed RFPA books and PR pamphlets far and wide. This work has also helped the PR mission work in the Philippines and the publication of books in other languages (e.g., the ongoing work of

translating Rev. Hanko's *Doctrine According to Godliness* into Afrikaans). In these ways and others, these translations are used to spread the biblical and Reformed gospel, and make the PRC and its ministers and message better known in God's catholic or universal church.

Now the free monthly *Covenant Reformed News* is going out not only in English but also in Italian and Hungarian. Marco Barone sends it out by e-mail to over eighty Italians, including a Waldensian member of the Italian senate. Bálint distributes the Hungarian version of the *News* to a similar number and copies of it are handed out at a Bible study in a church in his homeland.

The making and uploading of the translations is a cumulative work. The vast majority of the labour involved at our end is performed by Mary (not me), for she puts the translations and the links to them on-line, and there are now over 1,500 of them! Mary has also removed typos and cleaned the code in all our on-line English pamphlets; if you see any remaining typos, please let us know.

Visitors

Brian Harris from South Wales, a former chairman of the BRF who comes to the lectures in Porthcawl, stayed with us for

a weekend (28 September-1 October). It was good to have him with us and be able to join us at the Lord's Supper (30 September), along with Philip and Julie Rainey from First PRC, Grand Rapids.

Bálint, our Hungarian translator, came over to Northern Ireland (18-23 October) from the Netherlands where he is currently studying. This was his second visit (for he stayed in our house for a few days after the BRF Conference in August) and it included the Ballymena Luther lecture, Sunday services, and going to some of the parts of the country he did not see the first time he was here.

Megan Lubbers from Byron Center PRC, presently studying in Spain, also stayed with us (30 October-3 November). The saints in the CPRC and Mary and I took her to various sights and she was even present at the class on infralapsarianism and supralapsarianism!

We appreciate the interest, support, prayers, and visits from the saints in our sister churches in North America. May the Lord continue to build up and bless you all and keep us from the clutches of the devil, who goes about as a roaring lion.

In Christ,
Rev. & Mary Stewart