

# Presbytery of the United States

## Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

2009 Summer Quarter Edition

### **From the Editor:**

The ongoing purpose of our **Presbytery Email Newsletter** is “to promote and encourage love between the brethren and to stimulate unity among the various Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregations that the Lord is raising up within our Presbytery”. Communication among the brethren enhances our fellowship with one another in the Biblical sense of having things in common, in this case, having common knowledge with one another that we may rejoice or weep together and support one another in prayer.

For effective circulation, it is suggested that each church organize a means by which members without email service might receive the information provided in the Presbytery Email Newsletter. If you have received an email newsletter by error or wish to be removed from our circulation list, please contact the editor, Warren Gardner, at [warrengardner@windstream.net](mailto:warrengardner@windstream.net) and I will promptly remove you from our recipients' list. Those wishing to be added to our list should request a new subscription by writing to the same address. Note that it is important that you keep me updated of any email address changes.

**Reporting guideline:** For the sake of accuracy and the appropriate release of information, all reporting will be through the ministers and elders of the congregations.

**Reminder:** The fifth issue of The Master's Trumpet, published in March 2009, is available online at [www.masterstrumpet.org](http://www.masterstrumpet.org).

### **PRESBYTERY WEBSITE**

Another extremely important communication arm of our Presbytery is the Presbytery website. We encourage our readers to avail themselves of this valuable resource. The Presbytery's professionally-designed website, at [www.westminsterconfession.org](http://www.westminsterconfession.org), was launched on May 5, 2009. Between June 24 and July 24 there were 1800 visits, from 70 countries. We are grateful to all who contributed help and finances to bring about the launch of the website.

If anyone is skilled at proof reading, and would like to help with that task in the preparation of additional articles for use on the web site, please write to Rev. Isbell at [rsisbell@masterstrumpet.org](mailto:rsisbell@masterstrumpet.org).

### **In this issue, you will find:**

- 1) Schedule of communion seasons within our Presbytery, (page 2)
- 2) News from each of our congregations, (pages 2-4)
- 3) News from each of our preaching stations, (pages 4-6)

- 4) Brief Update on our 2009 Family Conference, (page 6)
- 5) Report on Presbytery Funds (pages 6-7)

**The following communion seasons are scheduled within our Presbytery:**

Atlanta: the fourth Sabbath of January, April, July and October

Detroit: the second Sabbath of March, June, September and December

Greenville: the third Sabbath of January, April, July and October

Washington, D.C.: the second Sabbath of January, April, July and October.

**FREE CHURCH ATLANTA**

The Atlanta congregation has services on the Lord's Day at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.. with a meal between services, and desserts served following the afternoon service, to encourage fellowship. A prayer meeting is held each Sabbath following the afternoon service. Services are held in our leased location at 2256 Northlake Parkway, Suites 301-302, Tucker, Georgia 30084-4034. (For directions consult MapQuest.com or contact Rev Warren Gardner at 770-867-5765.) A class on the Shorter Catechism for all ages is held on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Ron and Michele Haag. The class has reached Question # 100 and will be working through the final section on prayer.

Pastor Gardner is presently preaching through the Book of James during the morning services and the Book of Malachi in the afternoon. Our congregation has been blessed with a number of visitors over the last several months. We are hopeful the Lord will add to our numbers and expand our witness.

As you pray for us in Atlanta, join us in thanksgiving for the recent reduction in our rent. Our landlord has renegotiated our rent to \$750 per month allowing us to extend our lease for another six months (a savings of \$430.00 per month). Also we hope to begin a door to door outreach to our surrounding community in September with the assistance of ATL Direct Marketing, the new business endeavor of Elder Charles Greenewald and his wife, Elizabeth.

For more information, check out our website ([www.freechurchatlanta.org](http://www.freechurchatlanta.org) ) or contact Rev. Warren Gardner at 770-867-5765 or [warrengardner@windstream.net](mailto:warrengardner@windstream.net) .

**GREENVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

The Greenville congregation has two services on the Lord's Day at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., with a fellowship meal in between. Our mid-week prayer meeting is held each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. Over the course of the last couple of years we have engaged in open-air, evangelistic preaching and tract distribution on Main Street in downtown Greenville every Friday during the lunch hour and occasionally at special events in the city. On the Lord's Day, we have been engaged in a series of sermons on Luke in the morning, and Habakkuk in the afternoon. At our prayer meeting we have recently preached a series on the offices of Christ, followed by a series on the doctrine of sin. We continue to post our sermons and bulletins at SermonAudio.com every week.

It has been a significant encouragement to both pastor and people to see our new elder, Dr. Phil Larson, and new deacon, Mr. Steven Ervin, assume their roles and responsibilities within the congregation. Both have been actively involved in serving and caring for needs within our church. Elder Larson is now clerk of both the Session and Deacons' Court. Please continue to pray for the Lord's blessing on their labors among our people in the days ahead.

We are thankful to the Lord for new members who have been received into the congregation since the last newsletter: Kevin and Rebecca Hussey, Sam and Sarah Gerdt, Stefanie and Joshua Di Lella, and Hubert Maloy. We have also been grateful for two more baptisms: Hannahgrace Kim Hussey and Ian Michael Menendez. The Lord blessed us with a total of five infant baptisms and one adult baptism in 2008 and three baptisms thus far in 2009. Our congregation had a going-away party for the Xu family in June, which brought a measure of both happiness and sadness. We are thankful for the answer to prayer in the Lord's provision of employment for Mr. Xu and for the help that the Xu family will be to the FCC congregation in Washington, D.C. In July, the congregation enjoyed yet another opportunity for fellowship in remembering together the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of John Calvin.

The Lord has also added to our joy with a couple of weddings in recent months. It is a blessing to see godly young people being united in Christian marriage. On June 6, Mr. Sam Gerdt and Miss Sarah Cochran were joined in the covenant of marriage. The Lord blessed the ceremony and events of that day. It was a happy time for our people. Pastor McCurley also officiated at the wedding of Mr. David Lachman and Miss Katie Tillett on July 11, which many from our congregation and Presbytery attended. The Lachmans will be living in Scotland, where David is pursuing the ministry within our denomination. Please pray for the Lord's blessing on both of these new families.

In May, Sam Gerdt and Sarah Cochran (now Sarah Gerdt) graduated from undergraduate programs at B.J.U., and Travis Fentiman and Tyler Greene each graduated with an M.Div. degree from Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Mr. Fentiman has begun the application process which will ultimately culminate in being ordained as a gospel minister within our denomination. Another member of our congregation, Antonio Menendez, is applying to begin studies at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary this fall with a desire to pursue the gospel ministry.

We are grateful to Dr. David Murray, a minister in our denomination and a professor at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for coming to preach in our congregation on May 24. We give thanks for the Lord's rich blessing upon his ministry among us.

While much prayer is always needed, we would solicit your prayers for two specific matters: 1) Please continue to pray that the Lord will provide our congregation with a new meeting facility that will be suitable in size, cost, and location. 2) We are thankful for the Lord's merciful dealings with our congregation. Please continue to join us in

praying that Christ would have the preeminence among us and that his glory would be magnified in our city.

### **WASHINGTON CONGREGATION**

The Washington Session is delighted to report the addition of the Edgar and Juana Ibarra family to the congregation, with their six children. In addition, the Mark and Yele Xu family have come to us after Mark completed a graduate degree in accounting in Greenville, South Carolina, and obtained employment in Maryland. The men of the church have begun door-to-door visitation in a neighborhood near the church in Bethesda, Maryland, and also among the Hispanic population at Falls Church, Virginia. The congregation's lending library is being reactivated, and a full catalog placed online. We are deeply grateful for the Lord's answer to many prayers about employment needs, and problems of transition.

The Session regrets the loss of David Biser as an elder on the Session. David has resigned from serving on the Session, because of family responsibilities. His wise and mature counsel over the last number of years has been invaluable to the work of the Session, and he has the hearty thanks of Session and Congregation for his devoted and truly sacrificial labors in the service of Christ and the church. During his tenure on the Washington Session, he also served as representative elder on the Presbytery and at various times as an assessor on the Sessions in Atlanta and Greenville. One memorable moment was the counsel which he, having experience as a police detective, was able to give to a police officer in the Atlanta Congregation who was involved in a shooting while in the line of duty. David also has served as treasurer for the Washington Congregation.

The Congregation looks forward to the commemoration later this year of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Congregation, which took place in December 1979.

### **DETROIT PREACHING STATION**

The Detroit Preaching Station meets for public worship each Lord's Day at 3:30 p.m. in a room at Trinity Presbyterian Church, which is located at 10101 W. Ann Arbor, Plymouth, MI 48170. (For directions consult [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com) or contact Rev. Sean Humby at 734-855-6221.) We also hold a mid-week fellowship meeting on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Humby's residence.

Although our numbers continue to be small, with the normal attendance at our Lord's Day service being 8-10 people, the field of our ministry has grown in a couple of ways since the issue of the April Presbytery Newsletter:

- First, we now have membership at [SermonAudio.com](http://SermonAudio.com), so that our weekly sermon addresses are made available to a much wider audience. This internet ministry also includes a local church finder. The week after we joined [SermonAudio.com](http://SermonAudio.com), we were encouraged by the visit of two sisters who found us in this way. The link to our [SermonAudio](http://SermonAudio.com) homepage is [www.sermonaudio.com/seanhumbly](http://www.sermonaudio.com/seanhumbly).

- Second, we have commenced door to door evangelism in the area surrounding our meeting place.

Please pray that the Lord would use our witness and the gospel literature we distribute for the conversion of needy souls. 2 Thessalonians 3:1: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you."

### **ST. LOUIS PREACHING STATION**

July 2009 marked the completion of the first year of worship services in St. Louis, and the beginning of a new year of the Preaching Station's existence for the glory of God. We give thanks to the Lord for his many mercies throughout the year, and also extend our gratitude to all who have remembered us before the throne of grace. The Lord has sustained a stable and a maturing work, and we continue to look to him for continued blessing and further growth in grace and truth. Please continue to remember our fellowship in prayer.

Individuals involved with the Preaching Station have recently had contacts with unbelievers from various backgrounds. Several of these contacts come from nominal Roman Catholic families. One contact is a Mormon and one is entertaining thoughts of New-Age spiritualism. Please pray for our families and individuals as they seek to spread the light of Christ to those living in darkness. All of this serves as a reminder of how great a need St. Louis has for the grace of God.

Saturday, August 1, is to be another day of outreach in the area immediately surrounding our meeting place. In the late morning, we will be going door to door to hand out literature relating to the gospel and the work of the Free Church, as well as to witness to people about God, sin and the gospel. These times of outreach have encouraged us, as we enjoy fellowship with believers while sharing the gospel with others. We have also had substantial discussions with several individuals about the reality of sin and the need for the gospel of Christ.

The Mattulls would like to thank all who prayed for their encouraging and edifying trip to Scotland in June. They considered it a great privilege to be among the brethren in Scotland, many of whom expressed their encouragement due to the work going on in the Presbytery of the United States.

We are deeply indebted to Dr. Noah Manring for supplying the St. Louis pulpit for a month during Jonathan Mattull's preaching tour in Scotland. Dr. Manring's labors and his willingness to travel a long distance to minister the Word were very much appreciated.

### **2009 FAMILY CONFERENCE**

The Presbytery's fifth annual family conference begins Monday, August 10, 2009. The location is Rockingham County, Virginia, near the Shenandoah Valley. Anyone who is

interested in attending and has not yet registered should contact right away the conference secretary, Rev. Isbell, at [rsisbell@masterstrumpet.org](mailto:rsisbell@masterstrumpet.org), or 703-359-0192. We would be grateful for the assistance of anyone who is able to arrive early and help unload groceries and set up the meeting and dining rooms at Red Oak Lodge, between 3 and 4 p.m. If you are able to help in this way, seek out Edgar Ibarra, the coordinator of the Logistics Team, when you arrive.

### **PRESBYTERY FUNDS**

The Presbytery is deeply grateful for new interest in various Presbytery funds, such as The Master's Trumpet Fund, the Spanish-language Missions Fund, the Home Missions Fund, and the Ministerial Hardship Fund. At the same time, the primary need for funding is at the congregational level. In particular, the Atlanta Congregation needs additional funding if it is to maintain the lease of its public meeting place near the perimeter road around Atlanta, and the Washington congregation requires increased funding in order to meet its basic monthly expenses.

### **MINISTERIAL HARDSHIP FUND**

The Presbytery has established several funds to meet present and future needs. One is the Ministerial Hardship Fund. This fund was created to address emergency circumstances such as a minister or someone in his family having need of medical care at a cost beyond the minister's ability to cover. At present levels of income, our ministers are often unable to afford health insurance, or are unable to obtain it because of existing health problems. The fund is administered by a committee of eight, who review any request for help. This fund, which was established in 2006, has received \$400.00 to date. Donations should be payable to the Presbytery of the U.S., with a cover letter stating that the donation is for the Ministerial Hardship Fund, and the donation sent to the Presbytery treasurer, Rev. Warren E. Gardner, 1115 Jefferson Highway, Winder, GA 30680.

### **HOME MISSIONS FUND**

This second Presbytery fund is for the support of missions work to develop Congregations and Preaching Stations in this country. Because the local giving at those worship services has not been able to provide a full wage to the minister (or student for the ministry) supplying the pulpit, the Home Missions Fund would make available money for his support from outside those local situations. The Presbytery would normally use this money for augmenting the stipend of a minister or student giving regular pulpit and pastoral care for a Congregation or Preaching Station.

Individuals or Congregations may donate to this fund. Though in the past some valuable help has been given by some Congregations to ministers laboring elsewhere in the Presbytery, the creation of this fund will allow such disbursements to be administered by the Presbytery. No money has yet been donated to this fund, which was established in 2007. Donations should be payable to the Presbytery of the U.S., with a cover letter stating that the donation is for the Home Missions Fund, and the donation sent to the

Presbytery treasurer, Rev. Warren E. Gardner, 1115 Jefferson Highway, Winder, GA 30680.

### **SPANISH OUTREACH MINISTRY**

Our Spanish Outreach Ministry continues to give encouragement and to supply books to ministers in Central and South America. Translation work on important Reformed literature into Spanish is ongoing. Mr. Edgar Ibarra and Mr. Joel Chairez maintain a helpful internet site for outreach to Spanish-speaking people. Their site may be found at: [www.presbyterianoreformado.org](http://www.presbyterianoreformado.org). For those who cannot read Spanish, there is a Google translation tool that will enable you to read the entire site in English. The link is: [http://www.google.com/language\\_tools?hl=en](http://www.google.com/language_tools?hl=en). (To use this tool, follow the Google link. In the “search for” box, type in: [www.presbyterianoreformado.org](http://www.presbyterianoreformado.org). Then click on the “translate and search” box and the site will open translated into English.)

For those who can contribute to the Presbytery’s Spanish-language Missions Fund, checks should be made payable to the Presbytery of the U.S., with a cover letter stating that the donation is for the Spanish-language Missions Fund, and the donation sent to the Presbytery treasurer, Rev. Warren E. Gardner, 1115 Jefferson Highway, Winder, GA 30680. This fund has a present balance available of \$1225.98 after recent approval of the pre-publication purchase of 80 copies of a new Spanish-language Genevan Psalter from Faro de Gracia, to be released in 2010.