

Presbytery of the United States

Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

2010 First 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 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.

PRESBYTERY WEBSITE

Another extremely important communication arm for the Presbytery of the United States is our presbytery website: www.westminsterconfession.org. We encourage our readers to explore its many menus where very valuable resources for spiritual growth and encouragement can be found.

In this issue, you will find:

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The following communion seasons are scheduled within our Presbytery:

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

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

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

THE MASTER'S TRUMPET

The Presbytery would be grateful for donations at this time to *The Master's Trumpet* fund. We are in need of \$900 to help with the publication of the next issue, which will include the commencement of a series based on the sermons of Rev. Gavin Beers on "Christ at the Cross," preached at the 2009 family conference. We are dependent on generous donations because we do not charge households within the Presbytery when they receive a copy of each issue, and we also send complimentary copies to forty libraries at seminaries and colleges around the world, in the hope of exercising an influence on the next generation. *The Master's Trumpet* is a primary means for the Presbytery to engage the contemporary church scene with an argument for the church's principles. Perhaps individuals, and the Deacons' Court of each congregation, would consider gifts for the publication of the Presbytery magazine. Donations may be made by a check payable to "The Master's Trumpet", and sent to *The Master's Trumpet*, P.O. Box 2331, Fairfax, Virginia 22031-2331. Or you may donate online by credit card at www.westminsterconfession.org/correspondence/donations/donations-to-the-masters-trumpet-fund.php. The fifth issue of *The Master's Trumpet*, published in March 2009, is available online at www.masterstrumpet.org.

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 www.mapquest.com or contact Rev Warren Gardner at 770-867-5765.)

A fellowship dinner is being held the first Friday of every month at the Greenewald home. It is a time to deepen relationships within the church family and to converse about aspects of our lives that are not appropriate topics for the Lord's Day.

Pastor Gardner is presently preaching a series of messages on the Self-Portrait of Christ during the morning services, and one on the Parables of the Kingdom in the afternoon. A class on the Shorter Catechism for all ages was concluded in December. An Evangelistic Bible Study has begun on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Ron and Michele Haag. Door to door outreach to our surrounding community was begun at the end of 2009.

Please join us in prayer for the Lord's blessing on our witness, for the many in our congregation who struggle to find work, and for financial provision that would enable us to retain our present meeting location.

For more information, check out our website www.freechurchatlanta.org or contact Rev. Warren Gardner at 770-867-5765 or warrengardner@windstream.net.

GREENVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Greenville congregation has two services on the Lord's Day at 10:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., with a catechism class and 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 during the morning service, and a series on the Sabbath in the afternoon. At our prayer meeting, a series of messages have been presented on the doctrine of adoption. Our sermons and bulletins are posted every week at our website www.sermonaudio.com/source_detail.asp?sourceid=greenvillefcc. Pastor McCurley also recently had the opportunity to preach to the faculty and students at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

One significant development at GPC is that Elder Larson is now teaching a class on the Shorter Catechism to the whole congregation following the morning service, which has been warmly received as a blessing and help to both young and old alike. He covers one question per week for a period of 20–25 minutes. One primary goal of the class is systematically to inculcate biblical doctrine in the hearts and minds of our people, and thereby equip them to convey to the generations that follow us the truths we love. This programmatic study will enable us to cover the whole Catechism in a little over two years. Our second service has been changed to 1:30 p.m. in order to accommodate this class. We continue to derive much encouragement from the labors of our elder, Dr. Phil Larson, and our deacon, Mr. Steven Ervin, who have both been actively involved in serving and caring for needs within our church. 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 four new members who have been received into the congregation since the last newsletter: David and Anne Broyles, and their teenage children, Gilbert and Caroline Broyles. Our Presbytery's 2009 annual family conference was a source of rich blessing to our people, with nearly sixty of our own able to attend. We are grateful to Pastor Gavin Beers, minister of the Free Church (Continuing) in Ayr, Scotland, for coming to preach in our congregation on August 16. We give thanks for the Lord's rich blessing upon his ministry among us. We also had the privilege of having Mr. Edgar Ibarra share with our congregation the growing opportunities for the Presbytery's Spanish-language Outreach. It was refreshing to hear of the Lord's blessing on the spread of the gospel and the Reformed faith among the Spanish-speaking people of the world.

Another recent highlight in the life of our congregational was our annual church picnic and Psalm Sing, held on Saturday, November 7, at the Cochran's home. The Lord blessed us with ideal weather and a rich time of edifying fellowship. It was encouraging to see most people stay the whole day in order to savor time together. In addition to the Psalm Sing, Pastor McCurley presented a biographical sketch of John Calvin, which

can be found at <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=1227091757495>. The afternoon was filled with various opportunities for recreation and conversation.

"Fall for Greenville" is the largest annual festival held in downtown Greenville each year. Pastor McCurley and Mr. Travis Fentiman had the opportunity again this year to preach to thousands of people on Main Street on a few different occasions that weekend. For more information and pictures, please visit Mr. Fentiman's blog, Greenville Street Preaching: <http://greenvillestreetpreaching.blogspot.com/2009/10/fall-for-greenville-saturday-night.html>. Please continue to pray for Mr. Fentiman, a seminary graduate in our congregation, who is working toward being ordained as a minister in our denomination and who has had many opportunities to preach in various places in recent months.

Our most acute need at present is a new facility. Please pray that the Lord will provide our congregation with a meeting facility that will be suitable in size, cost, and location.

We are thankful for the Lord's merciful dealings with our congregation. Please continue to join us in prayer that Christ would have the preeminence among us, and that his glory would be magnified in our city.

WASHINGTON CONGREGATION

Immigration from abroad is more and more visible in the nation's capital city, and this is being increasingly reflected in the makeup of the membership and regular visitors at the Washington congregation. Besides members born in China and Mexico, others at the services are from China and South Africa. The life of the congregation centers on our gathering together to hear the Word of God. The pulpit ministry is progressing through expositions of 1 Peter and 1 Timothy. Household visitation is going on throughout the congregation.

We would ask for the prayers of the Lord's people concerning our many health concerns. David Simpson is to have surgery for prostate cancer on February 4, followed by an extended recovery, and has a good prognosis. Betty Heitzman, an elderly pastor's widow, has lost sight in one eye, and corrective surgery is too risky. There are issues to resolve before young Guillermo Ibarra can have surgery to remove the tonsils in order to enable easier breathing. Yele Xu is having a dangerous time early in her second pregnancy. Sue Mortensen, age 86, has had a stroke and lost her ability to speak and the use of her right side, while her son Walter, who cares for her, has developed disabling pain from back problems. We are thankful to report that Lisa Isbell has made a strong recovery after surgery in September. The people in the congregation are also thankful for job security, though the tight financial situation across the country is affecting households and congregations throughout the Presbytery.

ST. LOUIS PREACHING STATION

There was significant encouragement last month in St. Louis, with the first administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper at the preaching station, and the

reception of two new families into the church. It is a matter of much excitement to see aspirations for personal spiritual growth and consecration coming to fruition, and the joy of finding a church home. Jeff and Cindy Jo Fryer, and Eric and Alison Lauderdale were added to the communicant membership, and Brandon Fryer was baptized. Also, the Mattulls are expecting a second child, due in April, the Lord willing.

NOVEMBER 2009 COLLOQUIUM

A most enjoyable Colloquium was held on Thursday and Friday, November 12-13, 2009, at Detroit, Michigan, for office bearers in the Presbytery, and for students for the ministry. The event was graciously hosted by the Detroit Preaching Station. Rev. Robert McCurley spoke on "The Elder's School of Affliction," and "Redeeming the Time," Rev. Sean Humby preached on "Ministerial Piety," Rev. Sherman Isbell gave addresses on "Luther and the Sabbath," and Dr. David Murray delivered a presentation on "Calvin on Preaching Christ from the Old Testament." There was also a memorable outing to scour the bookshops at Ann Arbor, and a late afternoon discussion with the students about their personal preparation for the work of the gospel ministry.

NOVEMBER 2009 PRESBYTERY MEETING

The Presbytery met on the first afternoon of the Colloquium. In the business taken up for consideration, further preparations were made for Presbytery visitation of the Atlanta Congregation in December 2009, according to the rotation schedule mandating that each congregation in a Presbytery be visited once every five years, in order to provide support and assistance to the local effort. Presbytery also discussed further the options for securing a path to licensure for our students at the end of their theological education. The Presbytery's Ministerial Stipend Committee, which is responsible for meeting annually with each minister to discuss any problems arising from the level of stipend, reported that they had conducted their annual interviews. The Presbytery's Missions Committee reported on inquiries from Missouri, and also on opportunities to assist the Reformed cause in the nation of Chile. Presbytery went on record to "express its enthusiastic support for and cordial interest in the advance of the Reformed faith in Chile, as well as our desire to be of assistance as we are able within our providential limitations, beginning with book distribution, and considering the eventual possibility of Presbytery sending some of our ministers to speak in Chile. Further, that Presbytery commend Mr. Juan Lobos, Mr. Edgar Ibarra and Mr. Joel Chairez for their significant contributions to disseminating in Latin America the knowledge of biblical truth set forth in the Reformed faith." The Presbytery also arranged to have reports from Rev. Sherman Isbell on arrangements for the annual family conference, for which he was appointed conference secretary.

2010 FAMILY CONFERENCE

It is about five months until the opening of the Presbytery's sixth annual family conference, August 9-13, 2010, the Lord willing. The guest speaker will be Rev. Maurice Roberts, minister of Westhill Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), Inverness, Scotland,

editor of The Banner of Truth magazine from 1988 to 2003, and the author of a number of books.

There are several who regularly attend, or last year expressed interest in returning in 2010, but who have not yet registered for the conference. We hope that as many as possible from throughout the Presbytery will take advantage of this optimum opportunity for getting to know people from the other congregations, and for five days of rich blessing in the worship of God and in social fellowship. About half of those who attend the conference are from outside the Presbytery, and have become an indispensable part of the fellowship each year. There were 196 at the conference last year.

The location is again Rockingham County, Virginia, near the Shenandoah Valley. Accommodation is available in the form of camping at the conference facility (\$23 or \$28 each night, depending on whether one has utility hookup), rooms at Lost River Motel thirteen miles away (\$59 each night), or family cabins of various sizes at Lost River State Park twelve miles away (from \$81 each night). This year we would particularly urge that friends consider taking accommodation in the cabins at the Lost River State Park. We believe that once the conference families discover this fine resource, it will become a very popular choice for years to come. At the conference accommodations page <http://www.westminsterconfession.org/regions/family-conference/costs.php>, you will find the link to a virtual tour of the Lost River State Park cabins.

Please complete and send in the registration form, which is also found at the conference website, www.freechurchconference.org.