



Spring 2014



Attendees at this year's General Assembly numbered more than 200, most of them in this photo from Grace Covenant Church.

Fellowship in the 'Sufferings of Christ'

By Scott Swanson

A near-record crowd, gathered in sunny Arizona, received large dosages of encouragement to persevere April 1-3 at the 2014 Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America General Assembly.

Dr. Joel Beeke of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Mich., presented three powerful keynote sermons on "The Sufferings of Christ" in

Gethsemene, Gabbatha and Golgotha each evening to a full house at Grace Covenant Church of Gilbert, Ariz.

The G.A. drew well over 200 registered attendees, including people from five foreign countries.

Each day began with a devotional message. Tuesday's was delivered by Arden Hodgins of Trinity Reformed Baptist Church of La Mirada, Calif., on

the work of the gospel from Col. 1:24-29 – with emphasis on the fact that the "work" of the ministry is labor for which a pastor, in himself, is not sufficient.

Wednesday's message, delivered by Michael Kelly of Port Cities Reformed Baptist Church of Lewiston, Idaho, on Matt. 16:18, emphasized that Christ has promised

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ARBCA Update

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ASSOCIATION OF REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA

The Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America is a nonprofit organization registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The purpose of this association is to advance Christ's kingdom by providing a fellowship in which churches of common confession may find mutual encouragement, assistance, edification, and counsel, and may participate in cooperative efforts such as home missions, foreign missions, ministerial training and publications — all of which are often beyond the scope of one local church.

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Commentary: The Holy Spirit and missions

By Gordon Taylor

Jesus said to the paralytic, after he had forgiven his sins, “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home” (Mark 2:11).

How can a paralytic man rise? Paralysis precludes the possibility of walking. Yet the man did take up his bed and go home because the command came from Jesus and with the command came the power to obey the command.

Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . .” How can the church make disciples of all nations? The church is despised and seems to lurch from one disaster to another as Samuel J. Stone so eloquently penned in his hymn:

*“Though with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder
By heresies distressed
Yet saints their watch are keeping,
Their cry goes up, ‘How long?’
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.”*

Yet, the gospel does go forward because with Christ’s command comes the power to obey and fulfill the command. Jesus told his disciples to stay in the city until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:48). They did stay. Pentecost did come.

The 120 spoke the praises of God in at least 12 different dialects. Peter stood and preached with Holy Spirit power. There were 3,000 baptized on Pentecost Day. The religious authorities in Jerusalem threatened the church so they prayed. “And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit for his missionary work: “And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:17).

What application does this have for the church today? We all agree that the revelatory/supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased. But we all agree that we desperately need the continuing ministry of the Holy Spirit for worldwide evangelism and missionary progress. I suggest several applications and also suggest that each of these must always be kept before our minds and the minds of God’s people as we think about and pray for missions.

1) We must look for men and pray for men who are filled with the Holy Spirit. The early church sought out seven men who were to serve tables. The apostles required the saints to seek men who were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3).

Since those serving tables must be full of the Spirit, how much more those who serve Christ in the proclamation of the gospel! Each church and the RBMS missions committee must pray for discernment as to whether a missionary candidate is full of the Spirit.

2) The churches of ARBCA need to pray for the continual

supply of the Holy Spirit for those missionaries laboring among the nations of the world. Acts shows that there were repeated fillings of the Spirit. These came at critical times when new difficulties were faced.

Missionaries at home and abroad face the reality of spiritual darkness. Some places are darker spiritually than others. Some face the opposition of religionists, other the opposition of atheists, other the opposition of indifference, others the opposition of tolerance for everything except Christianity, etc. How can these challenges be met? It will be through the careful teaching of the Word of God.

Yes, but that Word must be accompanied with the conviction of the preacher and the power of Spirit. Paul says in 1 Thess. 1:5 “Because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.”

3) I believe our local churches need to pray for special outpourings of the Holy Spirit because spiritual darkness is increasing in many places around the world. Certainly, here in the USA the forces of evil are increasing. What are we to do? The more difficult the times the more we need to plead with our God that He will work wonderfully through the means He has ordained.

Who of us would not delight to see another William Chalmers Burns, Adoniram Judson, George Whitefield, or C. H. Spurgeon raised up to preach the gospel? These men appeared to have an anointing of the Spirit that was greater than a lot of preachers.

Several years ago I heard David Vaughn preach a series of messages at a family conference on revival. I was so moved that I asked him to summarize these messages in a series for the ARBCA Quarterly Update. He kindly agreed. I encourage you to read them again, or for the first time. Here are the links to the four articles:
Revival Part 1: http://s3.amazonaws.com/churchplantmedia-cms/arbca_carlisle_pa/fall-09-arbca-update.pdf
Revival Part 2: http://s3.amazonaws.com/churchplantmedia-cms/arbca_carlisle_pa/winter-2010-update.pdf
Revival Part 3: http://s3.amazonaws.com/churchplantmedia-cms/arbca_carlisle_pa/spring-2010-arbca-update.pdf
Revival Part 4: http://s3.amazonaws.com/churchplantmedia-cms/arbca_carlisle_pa/summer-2010-arbca-update.pdf

I conclude this article by quoting from David Vaughn’s last article on revival: “May God teach us to seek revival in His way: (1) Looking to God as our only help in the midst of our spiritual decline, (2) Responding in faith to our spiritual decline, (3) Bearing God’s chastisements with meekness and patience and (4) Leaning expectantly on the saving righteousness of Jesus Christ.

If He finds us seeking Him in this way, will He not be pleased? And whatever measure of the Spirit He pleases to give, will we not know that our Lord has visited us again and brought us out into the light of His victory? And will His glory not be seen in our land once again?

May it be so, Lord Jesus! Amen.

– Gordon Taylor is ARBCA Coordinator

RBMS missions around the world



We have now been in region of Aix-en-Provence in the south of France for about a year and a half.

In January we moved from our rented house, which was too far out from Aix to make ministry feasible. We found a house in the suburb town of Bouc Bel Air. From Bouc Bel Air we can drive to Aix in 15 minutes or to Marseille (France's second largest city, with a population of 1.7 million) in 22 minutes.

The location makes Bouc Bel Air a very interesting place for the site of the church plant, especially since there is no Protestant church of any type in Bouc Bel Air. So we are looking at this point for a facility to rent in Bouc Bel Air.

I have met with one of the elected officials of the town a couple of times. The ex-mayor, who is now running to be elected as mayor again (and will probably win) contacted me and met me a couple of weeks ago. I am sure that he was seeking votes by having "Monsieur the Pastor" meet him just before the elections and hopefully speak favorably of him to the Protestants in town. Nevertheless, we had a good contact, and I trust that this may be helpful, in God's providence, in the future.

At the moment, we are still holding worship services in a very small school room in the city of Aix. However, this arrangement is less than ideal as the room can only hold about 17 people. For the moment, we are a dozen or so on Sunday mornings. One French family of seven left us several months ago because of a move for business reasons.

Since the beginning of January I have had a young man from the Jean Calvin seminary in Aix as an intern. He and his fiancée have been a joy to our little group. I am investing quite a bit of time into meeting with him and training him. He has become pretty much reformed through his seminary studies over the past couple of years. I am helping him to work through a couple of biblical doctrines that he is still

The Vaughns

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David, Nicky, Jonathan
and Michelle

FRANCE



struggling with, such as definite atonement and cessationism, as well as having him preach, lead meetings and go with me on pastoral visits.

He is a young man of conviction and is ready to stand up for what he believes. His fiancée is a real gem. Her parents are from Guatemala but she was born and grew up in Morocco as a missionary kid.

I continue to teach a class on the Spiritual Disciplines at the Jean Calvin seminary. This year when I asked the 12 first-year students how many of them have a daily prayer time, only one of the 12 students raised his hand!! This is typical of the weakness of the French church.

As this winter was taken up with packing up the house, moving, unpacking and with a ministry trip to train pastors in Burkina Faso, we are moving along with painful slowness in terms of progress in the church plant. However, I am starting to make some contacts through visits to a non-Christian family in Bouc Bel Air, whose house is something of a Grand Central Station.

This is a family in whose home I was able to present the gospel to 25 non-Christian adults a little over a year ago after the tragic death of the son of the family in a motorcycle accident. The mother of the deceased young man found out she had cancer several weeks after his death and has been struggling with the malady since. She just returned from having half of her liver taken out.

This family has had a constant

involvement with seers and mediums for years. It is a challenging situation to go into, but they are in great need. All sorts of people from the neighborhood are constantly coming in and out, which makes it difficult to have a moment just with them, but a couple days ago during my visit, the grandmother asked me what the difference was between Catholicism and Protestantism. As I was about to leave I told her that this was a question of great importance and one that I would like to take time to answer on my next visit. The grandmother then said, "We can invite some people over to listen to what you will have to say." My relationship with this family and their friends is a very important one and may open up great opportunity to bring spiritual help to many. We covet your prayers for this.

The highlights of the past year were a weekend preaching engagement at the Belgian Bible Institute in Brussels and a week of training pastors in Burkina Faso, West Africa. The Belgian Bible Institute's first director was Donald Grey Barnhouse. Unfortunately, after his departure long ago, the Calvinistic emphasis disappeared. About five years ago a new director arrived whose convictions are clearly Calvinistic. He has transformed the direction of the institute and its faculty and is emphasizing Reformed doctrine, expository preaching and holy living and piety.

I preached three messages at this

RBMS missions around the world



Over the last year the Lord has taught us much about trusting in Him. The Lord's instruction to "consider the lilies" is always on our minds as we continue to learn to rest and trust in Him for our daily bread and throughout this fund-raising process.

During the summer of 2013 our whole family went to Co. Louth, Ireland to get a glimpse of what it will be like to live there. We had our own place, our own car, and learned how we are going to have to do things. It also gave us a better idea of how much it will cost for us to live there.

Four months after we returned our family size increased by one. On Nov. 14, 2013 we welcomed Méav Yasmin Emadi to the world. She is a very sweet baby and we are thankful to God for her.

Michael has stayed very busy. He teaches at a public elementary school during the day and then teaches biblical Hebrew for the MCTS during the night. This is aside from co-teaching a Sunday School class on the parables of Jesus earlier

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in the year and also trying to fund-raise.

We continue to thank God for His kindness to us and His blessing us in this fund-raising process. We did not officially start fund-raising until September of 2013 and then we took November and December off to prepare for Méav's birth and adjusting to life with three kids. Nevertheless, we are currently at 41 percent of our monthly needs. We are praying that we would have what we need by the summer so that we can leave sometime in August. Please pray with us that Lord would continue to provide the

remaining funds for our monthly needs as well as for the start-up costs.

Please also pray about whether you would be interested in being a part of our support team. If we had 43 more supporters (churches or individuals) at \$100/ month, we will have met our monthly needs goal!

"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." (Eph 3:20-21)

Acceptance of the Reformed faith continues to increase in the Colombian Evangelical church, but slowly and not without weaknesses and defects. Internet has been a contributing factor to this growth, along with efforts of Miami International Seminary, Reformed Baptist Seminary of Easley, S.C., Gospel Through Colombia, and the various Reformed publishing houses. These all have their respective representations in Colombia.

From all these efforts, we ask the Lord to raise up more pastors and maturing churches. Most of Colombia's major cities now have Reformed witness.

Last Nov. 5, Grace and Love Christian Church in Bogotá, La Alborada, received with gratitude a much-prayed-for pastor in the person of José Augusto Ramírez. Both congregations, the other pastored by Marco Antonio Orjuela, have increased in attendance, although with few conversions. The same is true of other sister churches

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(perhaps numbering 10 now) in Bogotá.

In December, the Christian School celebrated its third graduation exercises. Enrollment for 2014 was already full by then. Our double concern is first for conversions as we seek to provide Christian education, and secondly, for sufficient teachers of a Reformed perspective.

Colombia continued its history of the past 60 years of guerrilla warfare. Peace talks being held in Havana, Cuba, hold out little prospects of peace unless major concessions

are made to the political left. Outstanding problems of idolatry, corruption, and social and economic injustice are not likely to be resolved by routine elections held for Congress in March of 2014, and for president in May. The incumbent president is up for re-election. The political pendulum is toward the left in practically every country of South America.

We are retired now, but we are grateful for continued opportunities for evangelism and support of the churches.



RBMS missions around the world

I arrived to Ft. Hood, Texas, in May of last past year to begin an atypical military assignment... that as a student. Having earned a Ph.D prior to entering the Chaplain Corps, I thought days of formal education were a thing of the past.

Nonetheless, under the wise and gracious hand of divine providence, the Air Force selected me to attend the Army Family Life Chaplain training program.

The Army Family Life program is an intensive counseling program that lasts for 15 months.

Weekdays are spent conducting counseling sessions, facilitating psycho-educational seminars, receiving individual supervision, engaging in group supervision, and discussing theological integration. Evenings are spent either in a classroom at Texas A&M University - Central Texas or completing assigned tasks.

Up to this point, we have completed courses related to personality and counseling theories, human development, methods and practices, family counseling, psychopathology, and crisis intervention. This semester we are enrolled in research methods, the assessment and treatment of marriage and family, and family relations and development.

Some of the materials are helpful, and will prove beneficial as I begin a new assignment later this year. Other lessons will be discarded due to their irrelevance. Some of the material is necessary to learn for the degree program, but irrelevant on a pragmatic level.

Not many chaplains are engaged in research requiring behavioral statistic skills, for example. Some of the professors have a politically correct ax to grind, yet such an instrument is extremely dull when seeking to help real people in the face of crisis.

There are six other chaplains going through the program. Russ, a Presbyterian endorsed by the Evangelical Church Alliance, and Steve, from the Church of the Nazarene, are my fellow Air Force

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chaplains. Dave (Assemblies of God), Ron (Brethren Church), John (National Association of Free Will Baptists) and Nelson (Southern Baptist Convention) are our Army counterparts.

I enjoy working with each of these godly men. Though there are some obvious theological differences between us, we have a great deal in common. This commonality has especially been evident in the classroom.

We have been informed on several occasions by various professors that our task as counselors is to put our own views and values into a "drawer" and to be guided by the client's moral (or immoral) perspective alone.

Rather than placing our own perspectives in a "drawer" and simply nodding in agreement when such statements have been made, several of us have voiced a reasonable objection or asked very pointed questions in regard to this approach. It certainly made for some very lively discussions in the academic environment, yet we have earned a reputation on campus as "strongly religious yet very respectful."

It has enabled us to carry on outside conversations with fellow students in a positive manner. Please pray that the Lord may use such instances for the advancement of the gospel!

The program director, Chaplain Lt. Col. Mark Knox, and the assistant director, Chaplain Lt. Col. Jason Duckworth, are also very godly, humble men. It is a pleasure to work and study under their

direction.

From constant interaction with them, it is evident that they want each chaplain to not only excel academically in the field of counseling, but, more importantly, to serve primarily as a pastoral counselor who honors the Lord and remains grounded theologically.

It is a tremendous blessing to serve under these two officers.

As a military member assigned to an academic slot, my duty is quite literally to study and excel academically. It has been a challenge to juggle a very condensed graduate program with family time. Sharon, as usual, has been outstanding in taking care of many tasks in order to provide the flexibility I need to tackle my studies.

Living in Texas has permitted us to be closer to her elderly parents, so she often makes her way to the Ft. Worth area to spend time with them.

Unfortunately, her own health has been less than ideal recently. She has undergone several tests, and will undergo several more, in order to ascertain the exact nature of her difficulties.

Please keep Sharon's faith and health in your prayers!

Jenna is now in her first year of college. Next August she will stay in the area with a local pastor and his wife and continue her studies while Sharon and I make our way to a new assignment with Jameson and Jonathan. Mom and Dad will face this

RBMS missions around the world



Here in Clonmel, I suspect that, as with many other 21st-century churches, change seems to be normative for church life.

This time last year we were grateful to God for the measure of growth we had been maintaining. Our numbers were at the highest they had ever been. A year later we have seen almost 50 percent of our church move away. Work situations have taken the majority of those who have moved; however, 12 did start a new work in Limerick. We are hoping that the exodus has stopped and that we may see the situation change again for the better before next year!

Having said all that, we have had great delight in baptizing five new members and adding them to the church. Four of the five are all related to each other. The way the Lord brought each of them to Himself was just a delight to hear.

This year also saw the first two weddings from our congregation. It was the first time I had ever taken a wedding service in all my years here – plenty of funerals, but no weddings.

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David Shedden was one of the men who got married. David, as well as working with the church here, has been providing pulpit supply to a struggling cause 50 miles northeast of here but sadly nothing has come of it.

The church had a great opportunity in the summer of 2013 when we had Brett and Shelly Shaw from Christ Reformed Baptist Church of Vista, Calif. They worked with us for six weeks during their summer vacation and it was a marvelous experience all around.

Our evangelistic efforts vary. We run

a youth club every Friday night, a Tuesday night Bible study and I have a 50-minute radio program every fifth Sunday on local radio.

I have preached through 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Luke's Gospel and am working my way through Hebrews at present. David has been preaching through the Sermon on the Mount as well as the early chapters of Genesis.

As you read the various reports, we thank you for taking the time to read ours and would ask you do one other thing – whenever you think of Ireland pray for us.

Galyons

From page 6

transition with a bit of uneasiness, to say the least, but we are hopeful because of the Lord's grace in Jenna's life. We are also glad that she will be in a home with godly "foster" parents for her first year away from her home of origin.

Shortly after we arrive to our new base, Jameson will begin his junior year of high school while Jonathan starts his last year of junior high. Jameson has been very studious in regard to worship on the Lord's Day, as well as being quite committed to involvement with the Ft. Hood Chapel youth group.

These things are very encouraging to Mom & Dad!

Jonathan still shows no inclination towards spiritual things, although he has

developed a recent fondness for reading. His favorite author is C.S. Lewis, and Dad is hoping especially that this will lead him to think about spiritual matters more seriously.

I have been informed that I will be assigned to the 1st Special Operations Wing (1 SOW) at Hurlburt Field Air Base, on the west end of the Florida panhandle.

The 1st Special Operations Wing is one of three Air Force active duty special operations wings and falls under the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC); and is a pivotal component of AFSOC's ability to provide airpower to conduct special operations missions worldwide.

The primary mission of the 1st SOW is to rapidly plan and execute specialized and contingency operations in support of national priorities. The wing's core missions include close air support, precision

aerospace firepower, specialized aerospace mobility, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) operations, and agile combat support. Hurlburt Field has over 8,700 military members, and employs nearly 2,000 civilian personnel.

The 1st SOW and Hurlburt Field also host 34 partner units from six major commands including Air Force Special Operations Command, Air Force Special Operations Air Warfare Center, United States Air Force Special Operations School, 505th Command and Control Wing, 24th Special Operations Wing, and 823rd RED HORSE Squadron.

It will be difficult leaving Texas once again, especially since Jenna will still be here. Nonetheless, we trust that the Lord is always faithful and wise. Please feel free to contact me via email at: j.galyon@me.com.

Pro Deo et Patria.



RBMS missions around the world

As the years go by, I cherish more and more the privilege of being called to serve our Lord and His Church. Our God allowed us to experience another season of peace and growth in His sovereign grace. I am most thankful for all the opportunities for service I had these past months.

First of all, I am still serving as a co-pastor in our church in Quebec City. Our regular attendance for our Sunday worship services number between 100 and 125, which means that our building is pretty full. This year, we are expecting to ordain a new elder; he takes the call very seriously and he is still in prayer as he gives consideration to this possibility.

In our last church annual assembly, we shared with the congregation our burden to be more involved in missions. It has been well received and it seems that our people caught the vision so much so that, for the first time, we have been able to make significant financial contribution to missions.

And in our 2014 budget, it is going to be about three or four times more. Talking about missions, our church in Quebec City has agreed to send our brother Marcel Allain to help André Pinard in the Aylmer church planting project. Marcel is not a pastor but his theology is sound and he is very gifted in teaching. We believe he will show a good asset for the work in Aylmer.

I keep teaching a group of people meeting every other Friday in a house not too far from ours. I have committed myself for six months in order to bring them to a certain level of understanding of the Christian faith. So far, two families attending these meetings have joined our church.

I am also mentoring a young pastor whose church is passing through a very rough time. He came in touch with me through the radio station and we are developing a good relationship. God knows what will happen to his church but I try to be as helpful as I can to him and

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his congregation.

In February 2013, I started to teach a course on the 1689, specially at the intention of our new officers as well as for those we consider as potential officers; I have two men who seem to have the potential for a pastoral ministry. Though the course is primarily for them, I opened it to all those who are interested and I now have 37 students,

I am still in touch with the *Faculté de théologie évangélique* in Montreal. I was the main speaker at the last graduation in May and lately I have been invited to be on the panel of a dissertation defense. The dean is also repeatedly asking our church to become a teaching point for the faculty in Quebec City.

They would like me to teach courses for them. We are still evaluating all the implications of such collaboration with our own CERB (*Centre d'études réformées baptistes*). Speaking about our CERB, I have planned two courses for 2014-2015, one on *Worship* and the other on *Pauline Theology*.

My teaching ministry spread its wings last summer as, on Dr. Jim Renihan's recommendation, I was invited to teach a course on *Theology Proper* in New Zealand. It is a course that will also be used in the IRBS extended education program. I was grateful for this wonderful time with our New Zealand brothers.

On my return from New Zealand, I stopped by Los Angeles for a visit to my sending church. I spent a few refreshing

days with Pastor Arden Hodgins and his family. On Sunday morning I preached at the worship service and in the afternoon, I spoke at the Southern California Association of Reformed Baptist Churches meeting. Great time again!

I am thankful to our Lord for the doors he opened in the last months as I had the opportunity to preach in different churches, even churches that are not part of our association.

Our radio station ministry is still taking a big part of my time and energy. I preach for half an hour every morning at 8 a.m. on a program called "*Parole du matin*." I am also the host of a new program called "*Parole en musique*," in which we consider the great hymns of our hymnal. I have a co-host who translates the hymn in French and then I bring the theology that it contains. We expect to be able to broadcast a new program in Arabic in the near future as we are discussing this possibility with a Reformed ministry in Cyprus, *Middle East Reformed Fellowship*.

We have also received a request from a group of pastors who would like to have a repeater of our station in their area; they have the budget for it and they would take care of all the expenses involved in the project. There is a new Christian radio station that is starting up by HJBC mission in Brazzaville, Congo and they may possibly broadcast my morning program.

See **Perrons**, page 9



RBMS missions around the world

A look back at the past year should fill our hearts with gratitude.

We are very encouraged by the maturity of the men in our church as they take seriously their family responsibilities. We believe that serious men make strong families and a stable church.

Christophe is an example of this. I met him when he was a teenager at a Christian camp. He sought the truth. He asked a lot of questions that his pastor had no answers to. He wanted to leave his Charismatic church to come to ours, but hesitated to take the step.

One day, he took a course in theology given by Raymond Perron, who led Christophe to be consistent in his thinking. Christophe came among us. He was very unstable. That was in 2004. At that time, Christopher Christophe had a girlfriend, Rina. They married in 2006, and I have seen them grow since. They have three children.

Today, this couple is a model for all. And for me, it is a huge encouragement to see the fruits of the Word of God in their lives. Christophe assumes more and more responsibilities in the Church. He aspires to the office of elder, which encourages me too.

Another brother, Christian, whom I studied the Bible with for two years, has been recently baptized although he was converted 14 years ago. Christian is increasingly being recognized by the congregation a faithful brother.

Another brother, Eric, came to our church four years ago, with his wife and their five children. The change of church was motivated by a desire to be taught in the Word of God. In four years we've seen Eric grow and take responsibilities as a husband and as a father. Now, he spends time with his family. He teaches and his wife is greatly pleased.

We started lunches for men in 2012, and we are very encouraged by their desire to apply the gospel in their lives as husbands, fathers, and citizens. Women

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CANADA



also hold lunches where they spend time in the Word of God. We thank the Lord for the quality of our sisters. They are a gift from God in our lives.

Sermons and Bible studies

In June 2013, I began a series of sermons as an overview of each book of the Bible. Each sermon is spaced so as to allow people enough time to read the book two chapters a day before I preach. We just finished the book of Psalms. Many were encouraged in reading the Scriptures, and we receive testimonials from people from other churches who listen to sermons and read the Scriptures. I am also pursuing a series on the Gospel of John that I began in 2008. We are now in Chapter 14.

Wednesday evenings, I teach on the 1689 Confession of Faith. Since we have only two formal meetings a week, the teachings on Wednesday have a more doctrinal angle.

In sermons and teachings, Andy, Georges-Émile and Meine sometimes occupy the pulpit.

Aylmer

The Aylmer group (near Ottawa), under the leadership of André Pinard, perseveres despite difficult conditions. André has a secular full-time employment. He and his wife Carole hold meetings in their home. Therefore, André must do much in a short time, and they have no visibility.

In 2013, while a brother from Africa had to return home, a Reformed family with three children arrived in the group. Now, the attendance has about a dozen people with children. Thank you for your

continual prayer for them, especially that the Lord may send a pastor in this little flock.

Faculté de théologie

Finally, I continue in the chaplaincy at the Faculté de théologie évangélique de Montréal. It is always an opportunity to have an impact in the theological thought of the students. I thank the Lord for this opportunity.

I want to thank you for your support. Whether financial or in prayer, it is a real encouragement to us all.

Perrons

From page 8

By the time you read this, we will have had our association GA, his year in Lac Megantic. We are very thankful to our brother Gordon Taylor who so kindly accepted to be our guest preacher; we have asked him to bring three messages on missions. Gordon will also preach in our church in Quebec. And on May 17-18, we are going to celebrate our church's 25th anniversary.

On this occasion, we will benefit from Arden Hodgins' presence as he has agreed to come with his wife and their daughter Milly. Arden will preach twice and he will also participate in our anniversary banquet.

By the time you read this, I'll have the privilege of celebrating the wedding of a very fine couple from our church.



RBMS missions around the world

Since the 2013 General Assembly I have spent most of my time with Marines in Afghanistan. My unit is the command element for the 3,000 troops that patrol around the outside and inside perimeter to provide defense for the entire camp – a fascinating coalition of British, Jordanian, Georgian, Tongan, Danish, Bosnian, Estonian, and American forces.

With the drawdown actively grinding away at the base itself as well as the available personnel, our enemy takes advantage of our very restrictive and politically tenuous rules of engagement. Injury and death linger in the air, bringing the accompanying confusion, fear, and anger to our leaders and troops. The demands made upon the infantry seem at times impossible, particularly with the tense political situation, whose effects are felt with every patrol.

This is a great place for the Gospel of grace and sound theological application – called upon daily. I have had the unique opportunity to be a pastor to several commanders who ask tough questions about what God thinks of all of this and how He would have us go forward.

It is my privilege to spend my days doing pastoral visitation to Marines in their work places, guard posts, patrol bases, and chow halls; to proclaim the Gospel at three services each week and lead two Bible studies; and to counsel troubled Marines in the aftermath of the death of their fellow Marine or visit the wounded in the hospital. Of course, besides being in a combat zone, most of these men have families that must carry on without them day by day, dealing with the normal demands of life as well as those unwelcome tragedies and difficulties, leaving them mostly helpless to assist at home with no lessening of the demands in battle.

I witness first-hand every day the bankruptcy of lives lived without Christ and the accompanying vulnerabilities families endure because of it. My most unexpected joy has been to worship with

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Patrick, Rhonda, Audrey, Jordan, Maggie, Noah, Laurel Anna, Mary M'Cheyne

Chaplain, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, USMC



The Joyner family in a recent photo.



Talking with a Marine, above, and leading a service, right.



many of the Kenyans who work on the base in supporting roles to the Marines. They are very sweet and gracious and have been a real encouragement to me as they too are away from home.

Ephesus and West Suffolk Churches

have been very gracious to send care packages to me and the Marines along with other helpers who have assisted in the purchase of two books I have given away

See **Joyners**, page 17

RBMS missions around the world



What a privilege and blessing it has been to join ARBCA as a chaplain and to enjoy the prayers, fellowship, support given from our association and churches spread across the country and world.

The past year has been a year of blessings, change, and new opportunities for our ministry and service in the military. At the end of May we concluded four years of ministry at Edwards AFB in California. While in California, I had the privilege and blessing to preach almost every Lord's Day for four years and to pastor the chapel community on base.

During our time there several came to faith in the Lord, many were baptized, and the community grew in faith, love and maturity.

But, as is the nature of ministry in the military, God saw fit in His sovereignty to use the military to move us into a new ministry in Las Vegas, Nev. We packed up and moved at the very end of May last year and began our new life and ministry the first of June. Our new ministry context is very different from our experience in

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HOME MISSIONS

California and comes with new challenges and opportunities.

In this new assignment I am focusing the majority of my efforts on visitation and counseling. One of the great opportunities military chaplains have is that we can see and visit our community in their various work centers. This often opens doors for gospel-centered conversations as people become more used to seeing their chaplain around from week to week.

After moving to Vegas, we learned that not only did our ministry environment change, but that our home environment would be changing as well. The Lord has blessed us with another child, whom we



expect to welcome at the end of May this year. Janet, our other three children, and I our very excited at the addition and cannot wait to welcome him in just a few short months.

As we settle into our new life and ministry we would covet your continued prayers.

All ministry is challenging and military ministry adds certain unique challenges as well. Nevertheless, we trust that the Lord will sustain us through these and that He would use our service to the praise of His glory. We look forward to the year that lies ahead and to the continued blessings and opportunities He will bring.

The year 2013 began with me overseeing the operations of Grace Reformed Church and Faith Missionary Church, with the help of Dr. Clinton Chisholm who lectured at the Jamaica Theological Seminary.

He helped with the preaching on Sunday mornings at Grace, giving the Lord's Supper and also teaching Bible Study on Wednesday nights.

Unfortunately, in the month of May, he had to leave for the United States of America to support his wife there. Since then, Boysie Williams and I have carried on, with the major part of the work done by me. While at Grace, we tried to secure a pastor to replace me.

There was a young man who graduated from one of our Bible Colleges in Mandeville.

His name is Ryan Campbell. We invited him to speak at Grace with the intention of

Oscar Bloise

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JAMAICA



having him as the Pastor. I interviewed him and he spoke well with me about coming to Grace. After giving us a time period to come, we were disappointed to learn that he had gone to the Baptist Union.

I tendered my resignation to Grace in July with much regret, and that was after our Daily Vacation Bible School with the friends from Hazleton and Carlisle Baptist Churches.

During the Bible School at Grace, we saw 86 young men and women, boys and girls, coming to hear the Word of God explained and also to converse with Dan Stuber and the team.

In the same period, Elder Kelly Knowlden gave a seminar on leadership. It was very good. A few pastors from other

See **Bloise**, page 12



RBMS missions around the world

By God's grace we have seen a number of visitors come through our door in recent weeks.

Some of these visitors (who initially came to "check us out," having seen our signs) have returned again and again, appreciating the focus on the Word of God and the faithfulness with which it is proclaimed.

They are from church backgrounds that are very different from ours and we need wisdom and grace in our conversations with them: they come fairly regularly to our evening services while attending their usual churches in the mornings.

Please join us in praying that the Spirit will speak to their minds and hearts through the preaching of the Word and bring them to a deeper understanding of his truth.

Since the last Quarterly Update, in addition to the visitors described above, we have had a couple attending our Sunday morning services since January, and a young family started coming at the end of March. While at the time of writing the family has only been a couple of times, they have indicated their desire to make Crosspoint their church home.

We are greatly encouraged by these additions to our regular Sunday morning congregation which has raised attendance from a dozen to about twenty.

Please pray that as we get to know each other there would be a growing love, unity and joy in serving Christ together in the church.

Each year in July we have the great privilege of hosting a School of Theology

The Hugheses

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Dafydd, Maria, Ajinkya and Anjali
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Palmerston North

NEW ZEALAND



as a service to the Fellowship of Reformed Baptist Churches in New Zealand (FRBCNZ), a group of eight churches of which Crosspoint is a member. Dr. James Renihan taught us for six consecutive years, Dr. Raymond Perron came to us in 2013, and this year we are looking forward to Dr. Fred Malone taking us through his course on "Preaching Christ in all the Scriptures."

The School of Theology is an intensive week of teaching which has been of great value to us in the past.

It has also been a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, and we have seen links between churches in New Zealand, Australia, Fiji and the USA created and strengthened as a result. Please pray for grace and strength for Dr Malone as he teaches his course and preaches in the church, and pray too that his ministry will be a help and blessing to all who attend.

In addition to our two Sunday services, we have a mid-week meeting for Bible Study and prayer, and on the fourth Sunday each month we have an afternoon service in a home for the elderly. Dafydd's sermons are broadcast each Wednesday on a local

Christian radio station, for which he has recently begun to serve as a board member at the request of the station's founder.

For the past couple of years we have not had regular children's nor youth meetings, due to our limited numbers, but as we begin to grow we are starting to review the needs of the church and ask that you pray for wisdom for us to use our time, energy and resources well for the glory of God and the good of his people.

We would also very much appreciate your prayers as we contemplate hosting mid-week lunchtime meetings as an outreach to Christians who are hungering for faithful preaching and to non-Christians who are seeking light and truth as the Spirit of God begins to draw them to Christ.

Crosspoint members agreed to begin such meetings in October 2013 but this had to be postponed as Dafydd was suffering from exhaustion at that time.

Please pray that the Lord will guide us as to the focus, content and timing of these meetings, and pray that if we proceed with them they may be used of the Lord to bless many through his Word.

Bloise

From page 11

Baptist churches and some of their members were present for the two nights. We were very much encouraged with the results.

I went to Faith Missionary Church

in July full time. We began a weekly visitation in the community with the hope of getting children and young people to restart the Sunday School there. We got them to come over for a day of fellowship, feeding them and playing with them even on the bounce-a-bout.

Because we have shown interest in

their lives, many of the children are coming out to Sunday School. A schoolteacher who lives in the community has agreed to help us and she is teaching them; the children love her.

The year ended with both churches carrying out their regular services and activities as were planned.

Church Planting: Paul's preaching in Lystra and Athens

By Brad Swygard

Lystra was an exciting place to start a church.

Paul heals a lame man. The miracle is misinterpreted by the local people so that they want to sacrifice a bull to the apostles. Yet, in the midst of all of this, God raises up a church.

In a recent article, we talked about the church planted in Athens. Here I want to compare and contrast the two situations in Athens and Lystra because they are the two recorded sermons of Paul to non-Jewish audiences. There are some obvious differences, but also some striking similarities which become all the more instructive in light of the differences.

By looking at the two audiences, the way they were misunderstood, and the apostles' responses, we will see some key themes that the world needs to hear through our church planting efforts.

Athens was a university town and Lystra was a rural community. Yet, in both places idolatry was the issue. In Lystra the local priest of Zeus plays a part in the story. In Athens, Paul is vexed in a city where it was easier to find an idol than a man and even critiques idolatry before the philosophers.

This tells us that the basic human problem is the same everywhere. All people "suppress the truth" and exchange the glory of the incorruptible God for images of mortal man and animals (Romans 1). They believe the lie that humans are "like God" and if they do not claim atheism, they construct a theology of a reciprocal relationship between creation and God.

Not only is this true outside the church, but this is rampant even in churches across America. In one of our rural western Oklahoma communities there was a billboard that had a cheesy picture of "Jesus." The Jesus represented said, "Are you lonely? I am lonely too. Let's talk."

This is seeing God like us and we "like God" in a reciprocal relationship. This is saying God needs us as much as we need God.

There is great need for planting confessional churches that preach that

God is not in a reciprocal relationship with creation. This is the message that indicts the human heart. The sovereign independence of a gracious God needs to be the framework of our Gospel presentation.

Another practical thing we can learn by comparing the two encounters is seen in the audience's misunderstanding of the message. In Lystra, the locals interpreted Paul and Barnabas within their mythology as representations of the gods Zeus and Hermes. In Athens, Paul is charged with the same exact charge that brought the death penalty to Socrates. They say he is a "proclaimer of strange deities."

Luke then explains that they said this "because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection" (v. 18). Apparently, they reinterpreted Paul to be promoting a male and female pair of gods to add to the other idols. This is fascinating and instructive that, in both pagan contexts, the same kind of misunderstanding takes place. As we share the message of the Gospel, it should not surprise us that people run it through a grid and totally miss the point.

First, this points to the depravity of the human mind and the need for the Holy Spirit's illumination. Second, although the grids may not be as openly idolatrous, they will run the gamut from some kind of vague "spirituality" to a works-based righteousness.

One time, while witnessing to a terminally ill cancer patient, we repeatedly shared the gospel of justification by faith. But each time we asked the man to explain to us what we said, he would say, "You are telling me if I am a good person, I will go to heaven."

We could not seem to get past the grid. We may give the clearest gospel presentation possible, but it could be completely misunderstood. We need to depend on the Holy Spirit to open the mind of unbelievers because we cannot do it. And it would be safe to assume we are being misunderstood until we have evidence to the contrary.

But does that mean that we should not strive for clarity and try to say exactly what needs to be said to get at the heart of the issue? No. For this is what we see

Paul doing in both situations. In Lystra we are told by Luke that even with Paul's message, they had a hard time restraining the crowds from sacrificing to them (v.18). Paul's words were intended to clarify the misunderstanding.

In Athens, Paul's whole message was aimed at the heart of the problem. Interestingly, Paul preaches not only against idolatry, but the heart of idolatry, the idea of a reciprocal relationship to God.

Just like in Lystra, Paul proclaims God as the sovereign creator of all things. But in Athens, he goes on to clarify the implications of this by teaching the aseity of God. This is the idea that God is self-sufficient and does not need anything from his creation and in fact supplies all that the creation needs. Humanity is dependent on God, but not in a reciprocal relationship. This is the true God and the God that all people, rural or sophisticated, need to know.

So let us summarize how this applies to church planting. First, wherever we proclaim the gospel, people have the same basic worldview. The problem is the same and the answer is the same. Whether in a rural setting or a sophisticated setting, a local setting or a foreign setting, people have the same fallen false worldview.

Francis Schaeffer once said that the message he preached should be the same whether he spoke to professors or dock workers. All he needed to do was change the jargon a little with each group. Paul's responses at Lystra and Athens demonstrate what Schaeffer is saying.

Second, we should also be aware that our audiences will have grid issues. This is true concerning our initial presentation of the gospel, as I described above, and our teaching to those who want to join the church.

At the second church plant I served in Nebraska, I was very clear about my reformed views when I was a candidate. I have the minutes on file to prove it. But three years later, those same people said, "You believe what?!" We need to be good

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Vaughns

From page 4

year's fall retreat for students and was overwhelmingly encouraged by what I saw there. This is the first time in memory that there is a place in French-speaking Europe where future pastors can be taught Calvinistic theology, expository preaching and reformed piety in an atmosphere of prayer and thirst for God and holiness. (The Jean Calvin seminary in Aix where I give some courses is of a very different character – very academic and intellectualist. Until last year there was not even a course on preaching in the curriculum! However, things may be changing there too. We pray to this end.)

James Hutchison, the director of the Belgium Bible Institute, and I had a wonderful time of fellowship together this fall. He just wrote this week and asked me to come up seven times next year (for two to three days each trip) to teach on the Spiritual Disciplines, the book of Romans and to help out in the Preaching Course. As the BBI is going to be a key place for the training of men to go out into France, Switzerland and Belgium for years to come, I am going to make the effort to respond to James' request though it will be difficult in light of all I have to do here already.

In January I was in Bourroum-Bourroum, Burkino Faso, for the third straight year, finishing up a three-cycle training with about 170 pastors and 20 theological students of the Evangelical Protestant Church of Burkina Faso. It was a time of rich blessing. The high point of the week was the last day when the Lord truly put His hand on the assembly during a session on the Atonement and Message of the Gospel.

Later that day, at the closing ceremony, the denominational president said that he was very moved and on the edge of tears during that message. Several men prayed at the end of the session, or said later, that they had slipped into preaching a false gospel in which the Cross and Christ's propitiation were not central. They expressed thankfulness for the teaching and resolved to return to the glory of the gospel as the "message of the Cross."

A couple of pastors came afterwards

to ask if the message could be recorded and put on Christian radio in Burkina. The "prosperity gospel" has become a huge problem there and it is what one so often hears on Christian radio. The denominational leaders have asked me to come back and do more training but I told them that I need to take a two-year break in order to concentrate more on the church planting efforts in France.

We have also received requests from Ivory Coast and Senegal to come and do the same training there. This is Reformed teaching on the core of basic doctrines, such as the doctrine of Scripture, of the person of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, of atonement, of justification, conversion, the new birth, of the Church, as well as sessions on the character and work of the pastor, expository preaching and other topics. Though the men were not used to Reformed teaching, they have warmed to it and even seemed to learn to embrace and rejoice in it over the last three years.

We learned during our trip this year from one of the national leaders that some of the missionaries tried to stop our training after the first year. They pleaded with the national pastor to not allow us to come back, insisting that we were teaching heresy. But the national leaders did not agree, went against the missionaries and are now even asking us to do more than the planned three years of annual training!

I was up in Grenoble two weeks ago preaching and had a very encouraging weekend with the church there. They still have no pastor, but are persevering and seeing God's blessing. An evangelistic Bible study with three non-Christian women which started shortly before we left is continuing. All three non-Christian women have given evidence of marked conviction of sin and now a real thirst for God's word. They seem to have grasped the gospel of grace at some level and have told the woman leading the study that the study is changing their lives.

Please continue to pray for the provision of a pastor. We thought that Joel Favre, son of Olivier Favre, would go to Grenoble as pastor at the end of this school year when he finishes his theological studies. He did an internship at the Grenoble church before we left and was very appreciated

by the congregation. He went back this past summer and spent three weeks there preaching and the church expressed to him their desire for him to come as pastor. Joel was desirous to respond to that call.

He has just informed us, however, that he does not feel that he is ready and would like to rather come to Aix for a year or two to finish up some theological studies and to join the church plant with us and get some experience under my supervision. This news has been bittersweet. We so wanted to see Grenoble have him right away as their pastor. But Olivier, the Grenoble elders and the professors at Joel's seminary have all agreed that his thinking is probably wise.

We love Joel and his wife Anne very much and believe they are very gifted. If they do, in fact, come to help us next fall, it will undoubtedly be a turning point for us in the Lord's provision for the church plant here. And it will be the first time I have had the privilege of working alongside another called missionary, in accordance to the New Testament pattern.

This is an answer to prayer, especially in our present situation where I am making little progress alone.

Lystra

From page 13

communicators who are faithfully initiating feedback from our audiences to see that we are truly communicating the message.

But more, no matter how clear we try to be, we must depend on the Holy Spirit through prayer to make it clear to our audiences.

Third, a central aspect of the message that audiences need to understand is that God is absolutely self-sufficient and in no way needs anything from the creation. This framework provides for the gospel a direct challenge to the basic fallen worldview.

And last, we need to be planting confessional churches that preach and teach these things.

Even in rural Oklahoma.

Brad Swygard, a member of the Church Planting Committee, pastors at Grace Baptist Church in the Bartlesville, Okla. area.

G.A.

From page 1

to build His church, despite the difficulties that come upon churches and their pastors. On Thursday, Pastor Doug VanderMuelen of Community Baptist Church in Fargo, N.D., spoke on II Cor. 3:18-4:6 – preaching for spiritual transformation.

Audio downloads of these and other messages and reports from the G.A. are posted at sermonaudio.com under “ARBCA GA 2014 Series.”

Jason Walter, a pastor at Christ Reformed Baptist Church of Vista, Calif., presented the annual circular letter, entitled “The Pastoral Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith 2:3.”

Doug Van Dorn, chair of the Church Planting Committee, said there’s good news and bad news in that area. The “bad” news is many church plants have become member churches, which didn’t leave a lot of church plants to talk about at this year’s assembly.

The “good” news, he said, was that “Our committee has had lots and lots of inquiries about church planting. Even though we don’t have a whole bunch of church plants at present, there needs to be because this is how God grows his church.”

John Miller, a church planter in Clarksville, Tenn., said two years ago he thought the work was over, but “by God’s grace, next month we’re constituting.” He said some people have been saved, including a Jewish woman who has been coming with her family and was to be baptized two weeks after the G.A. Another man, estranged from his children for years, began attending and through various circumstances, his youngest son moved from Florida to Clarksville and was saved and was baptized. They are Puerto Rican and speak Spanish fluently and are interested in Spanish-language outreach, Miller said.

He said the church struggles with military turnover – “last year we lost three families, but got four more,” and has members who travel great distances to attend. The church also needs officers, particularly as it was to constitute May 18.

Van Dorn noted that one of the benefits



Photo courtesy of Ryan Marble

Delegates engage in one of the most memorable and enjoyable elements of the General Assembly: congregational singing.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Marble

Pastor Rob Cosby of Tucson Reformed Baptist Church, a former church plant that has constituted as a separate assembly and joined ARBCA this year, reports on his ministry.

of an association is to be able to support church plants, which often cannot sustain themselves, even through difficult times such as Miller’s church experienced two years ago. Miller said the church is on the verge of being able to support itself.

Brad Swygard and Trace Foote of Grace Baptist Church of Bartlesville, Okla.

reported how they heard last year from a group in Lawton, Okla., located about four hours from Bartlesville. Foote, who has done the bulk of the ministry in Lawton, said it was the most “diverse group I could imagine,” including a Presbyterian and a

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“very strong home school” family. Lawton, located about an hour north of Wichita Falls, Texas, is near the Fort Sill Army base and the group has had military people attend, Foote said.

He said the men have been working through the process of establishing a constitution, which has been “tricky” with such a diverse group, which is up to eight families. “We are running close to 40 people a Sunday.”

“There are great challenges involved,” Foote said.

Nick Kennicott of Ephesus Church in Rincon, Ga., reported on a Bible study that he another member, and James Eady, began in 2009 among predominantly African-American families in Savannah, Ga., most from backgrounds in “extreme charismaticism,” many with backgrounds in gangs. Many of the men have been incarcerated. Many have children out of wedlock and other difficult family backgrounds.

In July 2011, they began meeting on the Lord’s day, and are up to about 40 people.

“It’s a unique experience, talking to a man who used to be the top drug dealer



Members of the ARBCA Administrative Council are, from left: Ron Baines, Steve Marquandant, Jeff Oliver, Arden Hodgins, John Giarrizzo, Fred Pugh, Doug Van Dorn, Gordon Taylor, Steve Woodman, Doug VanderMeulen, Dave Johnston, Matt Foreman and Brandon Smith.

in Savannah, with a mouth full of gold teeth, pulling me off to the side last Sunday and asking me about superlapsarianism,” Kennicott said.

Kennicott said one woman recently told him that the emphasis on the regulative

principle “has been difficult” but she and other women who chose to follow their husbands, despite their own lack of enthusiasm, have begun to see the wisdom of that course of action.

Aaron Hoak of Grace Fellowship Church, pastoring a church plant in Warsaw, Ind. that has recently constituted, reported on the challenges with their facility, lack of a pianist and some “difficult days” that have included departures.

He said attendance is around 40, but has a strong core group of people and “God has sustained us.”

During the business meeting portion of the assembly, delegates voted in four new churches, bringing the total membership to 79. They are:

- Tucson (Arizona) Reformed Baptist Church, a church plant sponsored by Grace Covenant Church of Gilbert, Ariz., pastored by Rob Cosby.

- Grace Reformed Baptist Church of Owensboro, Ky., sponsored by Kemp Road Baptist Church of Dayton, Ohio, represented by Pastor Sam Waldron.

- Emmanuel Baptist Church of



Photo courtesy of Ryan Marble

Coordinator Gordon Taylor speaks to the assembly.

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From page 16

Georgetown, Texas, pastored by Bob Curley and Steve Garrick, the latter from Heritage Baptist Church of Mansfield, Texas. Emmanuel was sponsored by Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Ontario, Calif.

■ Mariposa Reformed Baptist Church of Mariposa, Calif., outside Yosemite National Park, sponsored by Grace Reformed Baptist Church of Palmdale, Calif.

Delegates also elected five Administrative Council members to two-year terms: Ron Baines of Grace Reformed Baptist Church in Topsham, Maine (fourth term); Matt Foreman of Faith Reformed Baptist Church of Media, Pa. (second term); Doug Van Dorn of Reformed Baptist Church of Boulder, Colo. (second term), Doug VanderMuelen of Community Baptist Church of Fargo, N.D. (second term) and Steve Woodman of Kemp Road Baptist Church of Dayton, Ohio (second term).

They also voted Foreman, Dave Hendrickx, Jim Adams and Donny Martin to one-year terms on the Foreign Missions Committee, which serves as the corporate Board of Trustees for Reformed Baptist Mission Services.

ARBCA Treasurer Jeff Oliver reported a surplus of \$29,926.03 in 2013 after several years in which ARBCA experienced deficits. "We're thankful to the Lord for that," he said. He said that, as of Jan. 1, the association had \$115,753.69 in the available funds.

He also announced a proposed 2014 budget of \$376,212, which included a



Photo courtesy of Ryan Marble

Joel Beeke preaches on the Sufferings of Christ during an evening session.

late request by IRBS trustees for a \$3,000 deduction to the Fall Adjunct Instructor category and will place the Secretarial Assistant Category into the Fixed category.

The only special project requested was for \$40,000 by Heritage Baptist Church of Owensborough, Ky. for start-up costs for the Emadi family as they begin mission work in Ireland.

ARBCA Coordinator Gordon Taylor reported that he visited 27 churches in 2013, all but four in the United States, most with his wife Rayna along. They also visited Israel, Jamaica and Colombia.

Taylor said he preached 61 times and gave 30 missions presentations.

"I know that in the places I've visited, God is doing wonderful things," Taylor said.

He said the Reformed Faith is "blossoming" in Colombia and that many souls are being saved in Israel, thanks to "aggressive" evangelical efforts by the church there.

He said the quarterly Update has not been read as extensively as it was when it was printed on "hard copies."

Taylor, who has served as coordinator of ARBCA since 2008 and will turn 70 this summer, read a letter announcing that he is resigning as of the General Assembly in 2015. He said he originally planned to serve in the position till age 70.

"I just don't think it's wise to assume that I can continue this kind of activity indefinitely," he said, and added that he will look for work – "this is a letter of

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Joyners

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here: J C Ryle's "Thoughts for Young Men" and Don Stephen's "War and Grace."

But of course, I am not the only one involved in ministry in the family! Rhonda remains fully engaged in hospitality and mentoring young wives and mothers and invests much time in assisting the homeschooling efforts of many newly involved in teaching their children.

Audrey and Jordan involve themselves with assisting in the care of Pastor Doug and Selah Helms' family in Fort Worth (with whom they live) as well as their son, Peter, who as been in a coma for several years – along with frequent visits to assist in worship in nursing homes, evangelism in the malls, and of course their college work.

Maggie and Noah provide instrumental accompaniment at our church in Jacksonville, N.C. and frequently assist

with child care. Will and Natalyn are fully involved at the same church Audrey and Jordan attend and are also slugging away at school in preparation for Gospel labors. LaurelAnna and Mary M'Cheyne are very comfortable in their vocation as hospitality assistants in our home.

By the time you read this, my family will have had a sweet reunion as I return home on March 1. By God's grace He is working His work in us and doing Gospel labors through us.

G.A.

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resignation, not retirement.”

Chairman John Giarrizzo said he, Taylor, Personnel Committee Chair David Campbell and Earl Blackburn will serve as an ad hoc committee to explore possibilities for a new coordinator.

“We do not want to leave member churches out of the loop. We are asking any churches that may have suggestions to give us those as well.”

Secretary Matt Foreman reported that the 13-member AC, plus Taylor, met eight times by phones and held a face-to-face meeting at La Mirada, Calif.

Institute for Reformed Baptist Studies Dean Dr. James Renhinan reported that IRBS has 21 students enrolled, with more showing interest.

“I’m thankful to God for fine students who are showing great giftedness and growing in grace,” he said. “It’s a delight to see them learning to better minister, to help people. Really, that’s what it’s all about, helping those men to prepare for gospel ministry.”

He said the IRBS website has sample lectures posted for those interested in finding out more about what the school offers.

Fred Pugh, chair of the IRBS Board of Trustees, said that a successful businessman in one of the ARBCA churches has expressed interest in developing a stand-alone seminary. IRBS trustees have put together a plan to make that move. He said “because it is so early in the process, we are purposefully being limited in what we say,” but that the new location would not be in Southern California.

He said that IRBS has long had an excellent working arrangement and relationship with Westminster Seminary West, where it is currently located, and so trustees are moving carefully and deliberately.

“Dr. Renihan and I have been involved in seeking counsel and advice and are doing investigative work to gauge the feasibility of doing so,” Pugh said.

Mission reports were presented by Daniel Durand and Raymond Perron of Quebec, and Michael Emadi, who is seeking financial support for missionary endeavors in Ireland.

In addition to the scheduled reports



Photo courtesy of Ryan Marble

Delegates enjoy some fellowship at Grace Covenant Church.

and presentations, leaders of the host church, Grace Covenant, gave two talks on outreach efforts their church has been involved in over the past two decades in counseling, evangelistic outreach to Mormons, university campus outreach, evangelistic efforts at various other public events, and much more.

Also, Beeke, who heads the Puritan Reformed Seminary in Grand Rapids, gave a presentation on the school and “Why

Seminary Training is Necessary.”

“If you don’t train men well, they don’t tend to go out and be effective missionaries and pastors,” he said.

Grace Covenant members provided warm hospitality, with plenty of border flavor, and led afternoon tours of surrounding tourist attractions.

Delegates learned that next year’s G.A. is scheduled for April 13-16, 2015, at Ephesus Church in Rincon, Ga.



Michael Emadi reports on his plans to serve as a missionary in Ireland.