



Winter 2011

BTC aims to stir up next generation

Conference is in 4th year of encouraging young Reformed Baptists to be active

By John Giarrizzo

Building Tomorrow's Church (BTC) is an annual conference designed to encourage young adults of Reformed Baptist churches across the country to become active members in their local churches.

The BTC conference is geared towards anyone between the ages of 18 and 30-something, single or married, who desires to help build up the body of Christ. This yearly conference was the brainchild of my son, David Giarrizzo, who, at the age of 23, began formulating thoughts for such a ministry.

There were various reasons that seemed to warrant such a conference. Primarily, David was troubled to see some of his old friends from high school drifting away from the churches in which they were raised. Some denied the faith and left the church altogether. Others exchanged



A little paintball action livened up the 2008 Building Tomorrow's Church conference.

the church of their parents for the church of their college friends. Still others embraced the "bigger is better" idea and joined the consumer-driven church in town with the Saturday services, varied programs, rock-n-roll bands, and multi-media presentations. He wondered how some of his friends

could change churches so suddenly and for reasons that seemed so superficial.

"How can we encourage those currently being raised in Reformed Baptist churches to stay there and to embrace the faith of

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ARBCA Update

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Trinity Reformed Baptist Church, Mercer Island, WA

West Suffolk Baptist Church, Suffolk, VA

Commentary: Cultivating a delicate flower, humility

By Gordon Taylor

Many years ago I wrote a quotation in the back flyleaf of my Bible. It came from the man who was my pastor during my first year of life, Rev. Gus Dahlburg. While I was in seminary I had the privilege of teaching a Sunday school class of which this dear retired pastor was a member and so I got acquainted with him. Here is the quotation:

*"Humility is the fairest, loveliest flower
That grew in paradise,
And the first that died.
Has rarely flourish'd since on mortal soil –
'Tis so frail, so delicate a thing,
'Tis gone if it but look upon itself –
And they who venture to believe it theirs
Prove by that single thought
They have it not."*

One of the root sins of the human heart is pride. Who can deny it? It was the sin that destroyed Haman, humbled Nebuchadnezzar, brought death to Herod, and showed the deficiency in Hezekiah's life. This later example is most sobering because at one time Hezekiah was humble.

Hezekiah's humility led to tearing his clothes, covering himself with sackcloth and going into the house of the Lord to seek deliverance from Sennacherib, king of Assyria. His prayer was God-centered and God-honoring. The answer from God, through Isaiah, was swift. The Lord struck down 185,000 Assyrians and then Sennacherib was killed by his own sons when he returned to Nineveh (2 Kings 19).

If only the story would have ended there we could use Hezekiah as one of the greatest examples of humility! However, the Lord tested him. Hezekiah was near death with a deadly boil. He prayed. God sent Isaiah to assure Hezekiah that his prayer had been answered and then Isaiah asked him what sign he wanted. Hezekiah chose to have the sun go backward 10 steps. It happened and the Lord healed him.

You know the "rest of the story." The messengers came from Babylon and Hezekiah, with pride filling his heart, showed these ambassadors all his treasures. As a result of this prideful act from a prideful heart, the Lord pronounced judgment on Judah. This judgment would be executed by the very nation to whom Hezekiah had shown the trea-

asures: Babylon.

We need to meditate on the lessons we can learn from Hezekiah. Pride in the human heart can emerge after the Lord has performed a great miracle. Such a miracle should have humbled Hezekiah. We could sermonize: "Hezekiah, instead of showing the treasures of your kingdom you should have told these men about the great God of Judah who healed you and this same God who delivered you from the Assyrians."

Our sermon would be theologically correct, and yet the fact is, that our hearts could be full of pride as we preached it! We might be thinking as we preach, "Why couldn't Hezekiah figure this out and avoid the blunder he made?" Such are the deceitful ways of the human heart, who can know it?

We need to realize that pride can emerge from many good blessings that the Lord gives us. As Reformed Baptists do we pride ourselves that we have correct theology? I hope not! What pride can there be in this? Anything we know has come from the hand of our gracious God.

This kind of pride can rear its ugly head in different ways. It may be evidenced by an unwillingness to learn from those who are less sound than we believe we are. It may be evidenced in judging a man's godliness by what he confesses in his creed. It may be evidenced in feeling the necessity of prefacing a remark about a good trait in a brother with a disclaimer regarding his defective theology.

All of this shows the need to do what we can, by God's grace, to cultivate this delicate flower of humility. Recently I began to read "The Unsearchable Riches of Christ" by Thomas Brooks from Volume 3 of his works. I was fascinated by his delineation of the 18 "properties of humble souls." I want to give you just a taste of a few of them and perhaps you will want to read them for yourself during a peaceful and quiet Lord's Day afternoon.

1) An humble soul under the highest spiritual discoveries, and under the greatest outward mercies, forgets not his former sinfulness and his former meanness.

Brothers and sisters, do we think we have correct theology, reverent worship, and careful adherence to our Confession? If we

think those thoughts, then let us heed the exhortation of Mr. Brooks, and not forget our former sinfulness. One of the ways we may forget our former sinfulness is in the failure to acknowledge our sinful acts in the present. The seeds of our former sinfulness, as Paul says in Romans 7, are still present with us.

5) An humble soul lives not upon himself, nor upon his own actings, but upon the Lord Jesus and his actings.

Brooks goes on to say: "Poor men, you know, they do not live upon themselves, they live upon others; they live upon the care of others, the love of others, the provision of others. Why! Thus an humble soul lives upon the care of Christ, the love of Christ, the promise of Christ, the faithfulness of Christ, the discoveries of Christ. He lives upon Christ for his justification, Phil. 3:7-10; he lives upon Christ of his sanctification" (p. 15).

7) An humble soul doth highly prize the least of Christ.

"The least smile, the least good word, the least good look, the least truth, the least mercy, is highly valued by an humble soul" (p. 16).

14) It can rejoice in the graces and gracious actings of others, as well as in its own. "An humble Moses could say when Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp, 'Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them,' Num. 11:26-30" (p. 22).

15) He will rather bear wrongs than revenge wrongs offered.

Brooks explains that the humble soul believes that God will avenge the wrongs and he has no need to take action himself. The Psalmist is an excellent example of this.

16) An humble soul, though he be of never so rare abilities, yet he will not disdain to be taught what he knows not, by the meanest of persons.

The humble soul will be like Apollos, though a mighty man in the Scriptures and an eloquent man, (he) sits by Aquilla, a tent-maker and Priscilla, his wife to be taught.

The other observations by Mr. Brooks are also worthy of meditation. We still have

See **Humility**, page 14

Institute for Reformed Baptist Studies

Internship story has two (good) sides

After reading the recent articles about internships for students of the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies, the elders of Grace Covenant Church in Gilbert, Ariz. asked if they could communicate their own story about Rob Cosby and his present and future work. Here is their contribution:

First, Rob's reflections upon his internships in seminary and now at Grace Covenant Church in Gilbert, Ariz.

Over the years I have heard various arguments concerning what is the best way to train a minister of the Gospel. Is it better to send one to seminary, or is it better to train one in the local church? Those who are against seminary, or at least against going away to seminary, usually raise this argument. They frequently argue for all of the things that can only be learned on the job and then argue for getting rid of normal seminaries.

In contrast, the training I received through Westminster Seminary California (WSC) and the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies (IRBS) was just as valuable and irreplaceable. The internship program is where these two extremes are brought together. There is no substitute for the classroom theology training or for the personal instruction in homiletics, but they alone are not everything that is needed for well-rounded training. This is where the internships come in.

Upon finishing seminary I was likely similar to many others. I had spent four years being inundated with information. So much so that it was difficult at that point to fully implement all that I had been taught. This last year and a half interning with Grace Covenant Church of Gilbert, Ariz. has helped me grow with the training. (I also interned during Seminary with Grace Covenant Church of Cleveland, Ohio and Escondido Reformed Baptist Church of Escondido, Calif., and am just as appreciative for my time at those churches as I am for the time at GCC.)

One discussion while I was in seminary was the realization that in ways we were worse preachers than we were before we started because we had been so deconstructed in our preparation and delivery. I know for myself I was still trying to figure things out upon graduation, but at GCC I have been able to implement the training that I received and have it refined further by those who have been in the ministry for years.

I am reminded of my high school basketball coach, who used to stress proper mechanics. Even though in the short term you might actually make fewer shots, in the long term it would improve your game. By the same token, seminary gave me the proper "mechanics." But, just as you can drill all day in basketball and, until you get some game time you will never understand how to use those tools, during the internship I am able to get into the "game" and apply the training.

I have taken the homiletics training and now am refining my preaching. I am taking the theology and now using it in



Rob, Chrissy and Keira Cosby

other areas of the church. In the end, I cannot see getting rid of either part of the process. I find the sacrificial support of churches like GCC and others to be an important part of my preparation.

I once read a quote by Spurgeon, though I cannot find it now. He wrote that God would have a special blessing for the church that was patient with a young pastor while he learned how to be a pastor. It is a sacrifice in many ways for churches to bring on interns, but it is an important part of the life of a church and is a huge part of the refinement of ministers. It is most definitely a step not to be skipped.

Second, the elders of GCC reflect upon having Rob as an intern for almost two years by the time Rob moves to plant a church in Tucson, Ariz.

"In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps" (Prov. 16:9).

This verse comes to mind when we look back on the manner in which God, in His providence, brought Rob Cosby to Arizona. It all began on Jan. 25, 2009, as Pastor John Giarrizzo was preaching in Riverside, Calif., at the Southern California As-

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RBMS missions around the world

It's vacation time and very warm in Chile, but God's work goes forward and we are very excitedly preparing for the "Shepherding a Child's Heart" conferences in March. There are many details yet to be worked out, but God has guided us and we have been working on the aspects yet to be decided.

We are thankful to God that we have a large place to hold these conferences and much support from the Christian community, including other churches that have expressed their desire to participate and promote these conferences. For these reasons we are expecting a very large attendance.

At "home" we thank God that we have

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more than 10 new candidates for membership in the church, some of whom will be baptized the end of February or first of March. We beg your prayers for both of these important endeavors that remind us that God is good and deigns to use us, in

spite of our weaknesses and sins, for His glory.

Receive our affectionate greetings from the "end of the world," Chile.

Your co-laborer and servant for the extension of Christ's kingdom.

One of the realities of living in Canada is the arrival of winter. Ironically, here in Toronto we have received less snow than many other locations so far this year.

We had one of our heavier snow storms last week and I was struck by the beauty of it when I went outside the next morning. Everything was covered. To my eyes, it is a beautiful picture of the sanctifying work of God that covers the mess and ugliness and dirt of the city with a beautiful cleansing robe of purity.

As Isaiah puts it: Isaiah 1:18-20: "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." Creation reflects the work of its Maker. May we all rejoice in it and in His work in our lives and churches.

We have begun two new expository preaching series in our worship services. In our morning services we are looking at the Gospel of Luke, "Introducing Jesus Christ," and in the evening the very

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practical workings of the God's servant Nehemiah in "Rebuilding and Renewal." Please pray for the power of the Gospel to transform hearts and to renew minds this year in 2011. We are praying that this will be the year that God will change hearts of some we have been praying for.

Our discipleship groups continue to be a source of encouragement. In January, the men will take a brief break from their studies through the Bible. Originally, the lofty goal was 66 books in 66 weeks, but, we are now 53 weeks into our studies and we have just finished 2 Chronicles. It now looks like it will be more like 66 books in 208 weeks (four years) which is just fine.

We've had some great discussions and interaction over the past year. In

January we will take a brief break to read Walt Chantry's "Today's Gospel" together and we will take some periodic breaks to do some book studies together.

The Ladies Discipleship group, led by Val, is also going strong. They continue their studies in Titus 2 and they will be looking at the biblical concept of purity over the next few months.

The Covenanter Youth Fellowship ended a year of looking at the identity of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark with a night in which several of the adults who were converted as teens shared their testimonies with the teens about their conversion

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RBMS missions around the world

God is the King of all the earth.
(Ps.47:7)

It is worth remembering that the Lord will reign over the earth. The difficulties that mark our times do not undermine the faith of the elect. Instead, we look to our heavenly city.

In the photo at right, you can see Andrew, the group leader of the Aylmer church plant (near Ottawa), and his wife Carole standing at the right. The others are two families of African descent. This photo was taken after the meeting on Jan. 2.

Andrew and Carole are working very hard at making contacts, organizing meals and preparing for meetings Sunday and midweek.

We thank the Lord for this couple who is so devoted to the Lord's work.

The year 2011 will witness four major events for a small congregation like ours: two marriages are planned and two babies are expected.

Regarding marriage, two of our sisters have met Christian members from another assembly. And regarding infants, Rina, married to Christopher, will deliver a second child. And Stephanie, our daughter-in-law, will give birth to her first child. Loraine and I will be grandparents, which gives us great joy.

Since November, a new family has come to our church. They have five children between 15 and 25. They must drive an hour and 15 minutes to come to church. They love the Word of God. Since December, a man has also joined our church. He is a doctor of Syrian origin who has rediscovered the Doctrines of Grace.

In recent months we have tried to organize church dinners. We were having the meals here at home when we were a smaller group. But now we are holding them in a room that can handle more people, as shown in the photo at the right. These meals are always an opportunity to social-

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RBMS missions around the world



As we start the new year we cannot help but thank God for His perseverance with the saints as He keeps pouring His rich covenant blessing upon our work. Though we often face discouragement, we always find comfort and renewal in His blessed and sweet presence.

In the course of the last trimester I had the privilege of visiting some of our ARBCA churches as I was invited to preach in Cleveland (Pastor Fred Pugh) and Greentown, Pa. in the company of Gordon and Rayna Taylor. During my time in Pennsylvania, I also had the blessing of visiting again the church in Scranton with our dear brother, Pastor Jeffrey LaSpina, who so kindly invited me to preach.

I have also spent time with some of our churches here in the province of Quebec, in Rouyn-Noranda and Montreal, and I have been encouraged by God's work in their midst.

We are very thankful to God for His provision of a retiring pastor who is looking to help wherever God sends him. His name is Marcel Longchamps and we have been in touch with him for about two or three years. He is strongly Calvinistic and he has also, in the course of last year, embraced Covenant Theology.

He joined our Church about seven months ago and we have interviewed him for the prospect of sending him to Rouyn-Noranda to help Pastor Jean Lépine. Pastor Longchamps has even paid a visit to the church, where he preached and met with the committee. It was a very positive meeting.

At this point, the plan is for Pastor Longchamps and his wife Lucy to move to Rouyn-Norand in May or beginning of June. Since he will be retiring shortly and getting a government pension, he won't need a lot of support from the church. So the Church on Rouyn-Noranda is very excited and encouraged by this prospect and so are we.

Our radio ministry keeps going and

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making some inroads. Lately, two listeners (men) visited our church in Quebec City and a lady has begun to attend our Wednesday prayer meetings for about six weeks now.

The radio ministry should expand in the coming weeks as we expect to get a new license for a repeater in St-Jérôme. Our brother Pascal Denault is involved with me in this project and he is working on a blog that will also allow people to listen to us on the Internet. It will also make our programs available for downloading.

I just finished a series on Romans 1-8 for my morning program on the radio and I have started a new series on the Gospel of John. I have been very encouraged by the comments on my series on Romans. Many listeners have called or sent e-mails and some have even requested copy of the whole series on a CD. Next spring, we will broadcast a series on the 1689 Confession of Faith, in English, taught by Pastor Arden Hodgens.

The coming months are already presenting many challenges. Among them we are preparing for our Quebec Association General Assembly in April as well as for the ARBCA General Assembly. In May we are having an intensive week class on Worship with Dr. Joey Pipa from Greenville Seminary.

We are rejoicing with our Brother Pascal Denault over the completion of his master's thesis. Pascal did a masterful job on the following subject: Covenant

Theology in the 17th Century: A Comparison Between Paedobaptist and Baptist Understanding. In fact, he did such a good job that we will publish it in French and we are discussing the possibility of publishing it in English.

Thank you to all our sister churches for your prayers and love! Thank you also for your support that you express in so many ways.

May our gracious and compassionate God be magnified for all His grace. Though we are sometimes sailing on risky water, He is still the captain of our lives and service.

"Then they were glad because they were quiet; So He guided them to their desired haven" (Ps. 107:30).

Durands

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ize.

In January, we began a study of the epistle to the Ephesians on Wednesday evenings. We want to teach not only the content, but also to teach about how to study a book of the Bible. We particularly want to equip fathers so they can in turn build their families.

We are grateful to the Lord for His work. He reigns over all the earth, His word is preached to all nations. May His name be glorified.



RBMS missions around the world

We have a “pastor in preparation” in La Alborada. He is Joel Zartman, the son of missionaries first in Uruguay (where Joel was born), then in Colombia, where we knew the Zartman family, and then in Mexico where Joel also lived.

Joel is “in preparation” because when he came back to Colombia a couple of years ago (with his wife, Katrina), although well prepared theologically, his desire was to be a teacher, not a pastor.

He took a job here teaching English as a second language. As of about eight months ago, Joel began to teach the adult Sunday School class and to preach occasionally, and gradually he and Katrina have become acquainted with the church and the church with them, so that he accepted being presented to the church as “pastor in preparation” for the year 2011 under pastor Antonio’s mentorship.

The church responded with a unanimous vote of confidence. Joel studied at the Bible Institute of Ohio, Northland Baptist Bible College, and Central Baptist Seminary. Katrina plays the piano for services when Gabriel Leonardo is absent because of requirements for his medical studies.

Joel speaks Spanish, although he had allowed it to become very rusty during his time living in the USA. Katrina is learning very rapidly. We’re very grateful to the Lord for sending Joel and Katrina this way, and we ask your prayers for them.

The church plant effort in San Gil now

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COLOMBIA



has a more centrally located house for their meetings. Roberto Rodríguez continues to lead this effort.

We plan to close the Library for Pastors in June. Very few pastors are using it. We hope to continue the monthly meetings for pastors, however, using perhaps the La Alborada chapel for these. Rocío Herrera will find another location for the Hebron Reformed Bookstore.

Thanks for praying for the Christian school. The need is for teachers with some understanding of Reformed truth for the 2011 school year and for sufficient students. This will be the first year we’ll have all grades of the Colombian school system, preschool to 11th. We still don’t have all the permissions for beginning to rebuild.

Nor has the Bosa congregation been granted permission to build their chapel on the lot they purchased. It seems that the lot will have to be sold and another location sought. It’s extremely difficult to find one where permission will be given for a church

to function.

This coming year, 2011, Bev and I plan to visit other congregations where I have opportunities to preach, this both in Bogotá as well as Curití and the cities of Barranquilla and Neiva.

We thank the Lord for the 20 people baptized the end of November, 12 from the San José de Bavaria congregation, and eight from La Alborada. It was particularly encouraging to see seven young men among those baptized.

Efforts continue, especially those of the Gospel Through Colombia mission, to foment fellowship among pastors professing to be Reformed or in the process. With this purpose, 60 pastors met Dec. 6-10 at a conference center close to Medellín. The speakers included a number of Colombians as well as R.C. Sproul Jr.

Miami International Seminary and Reformed Baptist Seminary of Easley, S.C., offer studies for pastors and others in Bogotá and other cities.

Powells

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and their struggles to identify with Christ in the very secular culture they grew up in.

The teens’ response to the December session was very positive. Please pray for the conversion of our teenagers. We have between 10-15 teens and young adults at-

tending every monthly session taught in our home.

In addition to our youth group, evangelistically, we continue to focus on relational evangelism through family, friends and co-workers. In November we had our annual Church Outreach Supper. This is an opportunity for church members to invite family, friends and co-workers out to a full holiday meal with all the fixings put on by the church and followed by a Gos-

pel presentation and carol-sing.

One of the guests who attended the event has started to regularly attend the church. We have been encouraged that people are inviting their friends to come to church and some are coming. At the moment we have several non-Christians attending our services and we are earnestly praying for their conversions.

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RBMS missions around the world



As there are ups and downs in our daily social life; so there are rejoicings and calamities in the Church; as there is joy and sorrow; so there is summer and winter in the Church.

Solomon indicates in Eccl. 3:3, that there is an appropriate occasion for every human event or activity.

Life is very complex (*Oscar recently lost his wife Dolly and so knows by experience the joys and sorrows of life – Editor*). And so it is that in the general fellowship of churches, some pastors have been reporting steady growth in membership while others contend with glaring immorality.

Grace Reformed Church, by God's grace, has remained true to the Word and so has been well sustained spiritually. But there are reasons that some churches here face spiritual decline. These include a ministry that produces emotionalism, a lack of commitment to sound biblical teaching and the weakening socio-economic standards that especially affect rural residents on a daily basis.

The two churches, Faith Mission-

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JAMAICA



ary Baptist Church and Grace Reformed Baptist Church (even though Grace has no resident pastor) have not turned to the emotionalism but are consistent in teaching the great truths of the Gospel with great delight.

I can truly say that our lack of growth numerically does not come from a lack of teaching or preaching but it could be that our congregation, being older, may lack the might and courage to move out with the Gospel.

And since Grace does not have a resident pastor who could motivate and lead them, their growth has been slow.

You may ask is there anything being

done to address this problem? I would say yes. I am in dialogue with a young man. I have spoken to him in a general way and the church is listening and observing him in the pulpit. If the church at Grace is satisfied with his delivery and content, we will be talking to him about our need for a pastor. In our next report I will be able to give you added information about this young man.

None of us in the churches are comfortable with the existing condition so pray with us as we with great determination make plans to improve our situation. We know that this can only be done with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Hello from Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.!

We are doing well and staying busy. The Chapel worship services are going well; I am continuing to preach a sermon on each book of the Bible, alternating between the Old and New Testaments.

This brings me to Lamentations this week and 1 John the following week, Lord willing.

Our Sunday School hour is moving along and we are hoping to add a new family that has been coming the last few weeks. We are working through the catechism with the children and adults.

I have been spending about 10 hours each week counseling Marines and families, mostly concerning their relationships.

We are excited about a few book stud-

The Joyners

Patrick, Rhonda, William, Audrey,

Jordan, Maggie, Noah,

Laurel Anna, Mary M'Cheyne

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Chaplain, 2nd Recruit

Training Battalion, USMC



ies coming up using "Shepherding A Child's Heart," "Spiritual Leadership," "Preparing Boys For Battle," and "Just Do Something."

Our Theology study is going on about the 40th week and we have been encouraged

by the spiritual growth it has facilitated and the faithfulness of the students.

Our family has been working toward being a blessing with our music and we just celebrated our oldest son, William, becoming an Eagle Scout.



RBMS missions around the world

At the beginning of the year we held our annual camp for university students. Thirty-six students were present and response from several of them at the end of the camp indicated that the Lord was present in a special way during the different times of the ministry of His Word.

At the end of the camp the students decided among themselves that they would commit themselves to praying 15 or 20 minutes every Sunday evening for revival. One of the student leaders is going to send bi-weekly emails to the others to encourage them to persevere in this commitment.

Tonight we are holding our next Discovering Christianity Bible Study in the home of one of our families. For the first studies in this home we only had one non-Christian present, but tonight five or six have confirmed they will be coming, including some colleagues of one of our members, who is a physical therapist. We are praying that we can start one or two other studies in other homes in the next several weeks.

Our youngest daughter, Michelle, has recently asked for baptism and her testimony and request have been favorably received by the elders and the congregation. We rejoice at the Lord's work in her life.

The leader of the Chinese group attending our church has also just informed me of a profession of faith among the Chinese young people as a result of his work with them. He will be following up this young person and in a few months he said there may be a request for baptism from this young adult who has been living in France for eight years.

I have had a young man with me since the beginning of December who is gaining experience in preaching and pastoral ministry with a view to going to London Theological Seminary to be trained. He is Joel, the son of Olivier Favre. He preached his first sermon ever last Sunday. It was the best first sermon that I remembering hearing.

Joel is still young, but his love for

The Vaughns

dvaughn@sfr.fr

David, Nicky, Caroline

Jonathan and Michelle

88 Place de l'Emendra
38920 Crolles

FRANCE



Christ and his gifts are encouraging. Pray for him as he continues to seek God's will for his life.

I continue to preach in the little group in Aix-en-Provence every several weeks. It was encouraging a couple weeks ago, during my last trip, to meet two new men attending the services of this small group. One of them has recently moved down to Aix from Luxembourg in order to study theology at the Reformed Seminary in Aix. He was able to do this because he is on a sick leave from his work for a year after a serious accident.

This Frenchman, who owned a construction business in Luxembourg (north-east of France), fell from a roof and broke a leg so badly that the doctors feared they would have to amputate. Fortunately the leg was saved, but the recuperation time has been long. It has taken 11 months before this man could walk without crutches.

I was amazed when this French construction worker told me that he decided to use this free time during his sick leave to study theology at a Calvinistic seminary because he had become a Calvinist years ago through listening to sermons of R.C. Sproul in English. He also told me that he has been an avid reader of John Owen for years.

When I asked how a French construction worker could learn English well enough to read 17th-century Puritan English, he just laughed and told me that he had more or less taught himself out of thirst to read good Christian literature.

My next question was obvious: "Would you be willing to think about staying in Aix-en-Provence and finding a construction job here when your sick leave is over so that you could help us plant a Reformed Baptist church?" With no hesitation he smiled and said, "Bien sûr!" (Of course).

Oh, for a thousand more like him!!

Powells

From page 8

We continue the hunt for new facilities for the church to meet in. We were pleased to receive a three-month reprieve from the United Church we rent our facilities from that is seeking to turn the current building into a seniors' facility. Their current congregation is now smaller than ours and is unable to sustain the costs of the building even with the 19 other groups that share the costs.

The building is used almost every day of the week. Everything from a dog obedience training school (that uses the same space we do on Sunday) to community groups and even a nursery school use the current aging building. As a church we now have until Aug. 31, 2011 to find a new location.

The United Church plan to redevelop the site is facing significant resistance in the neighborhood as the neighbors do not

See **Powells**, page 11

RBMS missions around the world



Hello from Clonmel.

The Christmas evangelistic efforts went very well with our being surprised by those who turned up for the Carol Service. David Shedden gave a gospel presentation that was well-received. We do hope that some of the people who came might be willing to come again.

The economic situation continues to bring much fear as many people have lost their jobs and are in arrears with their mortgages and the very real possibility of becoming homeless. We do not know how the present economic situation will play out in this year; signs are not good.

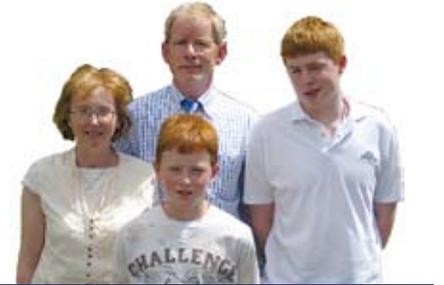
There is an election to take place for a new government in February or March. This has happened because the present government has lost the moral authority to govern and the junior partner in the coalition have announced they will no longer support the government after February. However,

The Brennans

Matthew, Barbara,
Simon and Timothy

<matthewmbrennan@eircom.net>

IRELAND



we do know who is in full control of our churches and our countries.

We expect to have David Shedden working with the church for the best part of 2011 and would ask your prayers that he would work well with the church as well as strategically in the community. We tried a series of special talks in a local hotel at the end of last year with no positive outcome, so we need to know how best to reach the community and the surrounding areas.

While reading Daniel 6, I was struck

by the spiritual routine of Daniel. These spiritual routines he maintained over many years even at the times when to do so could put his life at risk. It is the routine Christian life that God honors, the routine private devotions, the routine churches services, the routine preaching. I pray that the routine spiritual devotions of your life and churches will become the time that God manifests Himself.

The God of Daniel is our God too!!

Powells

From page 10

like the idea of a two-story church being replaced by a five-story building. It is possible that the application will be denied by the city, and, if so, the land will be auctioned off. We are praying that if God does not provide us another meeting place, He will find a way in His amazing providence to give us the current building.

One of the difficulties we are facing in our search in the city is a decrease in worship space as churches are redeveloped and an increase in the number of groups (not necessarily church) that want to use what space exists. Two of our strongest leads evaporated this past month and it seems the pattern that is emerging is that most churches either have multiple churches already meeting in them or the churches that have space have had a nega-

tive experience sharing their facilities and are not interested in pursuing a rental agreement with another congregation.

Space is at such a premium in the city that developers are offering to buy "air space" above existing church buildings. What this involves is a developer renovating and reinforcing the existing structure (or redeveloping it entirely) and building a condominium or office tower on top of the church. An evangelical Baptist church north of our location that is in a similar rental situation with a United Church is in the beginning stages of such a redevelopment negotiation.

On the home front, our children continue to grow and mature. Our times of family worship are more lively and interactive as the children act out the Bible history after I teach it to them. Please pray that God would save Hannah (5), Noah (3) and Abigail (1 1/2).

My parents have had a difficult fall and winter with existing and escalating

health problems. After a year's wait, my mother finally had surgery on her shoulder for a torn ligament. While this is an overall good thing, it has largely incapacitated them while she endures a painful recovery. My father's health has been somewhat variable, but, he continues to serve his wife and his church (as my fellow elder) very faithfully.

I praise God for both of my parents and I am humbled by their example to Val and me. We are also greatly encouraged by the care of God's people in the church who have come alongside and helped Val and me care for our parents through this more intensive time.

We thank all of you for your prayers for us. We are very humbled by the love that has been shown to us through ARBCA and RBMS church family and we are continuing to pray for you all as well often by name through the updates we receive. May God use and glorify Himself through us all this coming year.

BTC

From page 1

their fathers?" he pondered. As more young adults left Grace Covenant to join non-reformed churches, David's desire intensified for a conference that would be reformed, relational, and real.

When the ARBCA General Assembly came to Mesa, Ariz., in 2007, David was granted permission to explain the concept of this conference to the gathered delegates. After receiving advice and encouragement from many of the delegates, David developed a steering committee to help set a course for promoting a conference of national proportions. Working closely with our elders, the BTC committee took the necessary steps in securing the date, speaker and location for its inaugural 2008 conference.

Naturally, it required a lot of money to reserve a conference location and pay for the necessary advertising, honorariums, etc. Unfortunately, there were no funds available in the Grace Covenant Church budget for such an endeavor, so the BTC committee raised the needed money from car washes, yard sales, and other fund-raisers. The Lord's goodness must be credited in blessing the finances of BTC through the body at Grace Covenant.

Although the church budget couldn't support it, the generosity of God's people made the conference possible. Matt Johnson, one of the committee members and an accountant, did an amazing job of keeping the conference within its financial limitations.

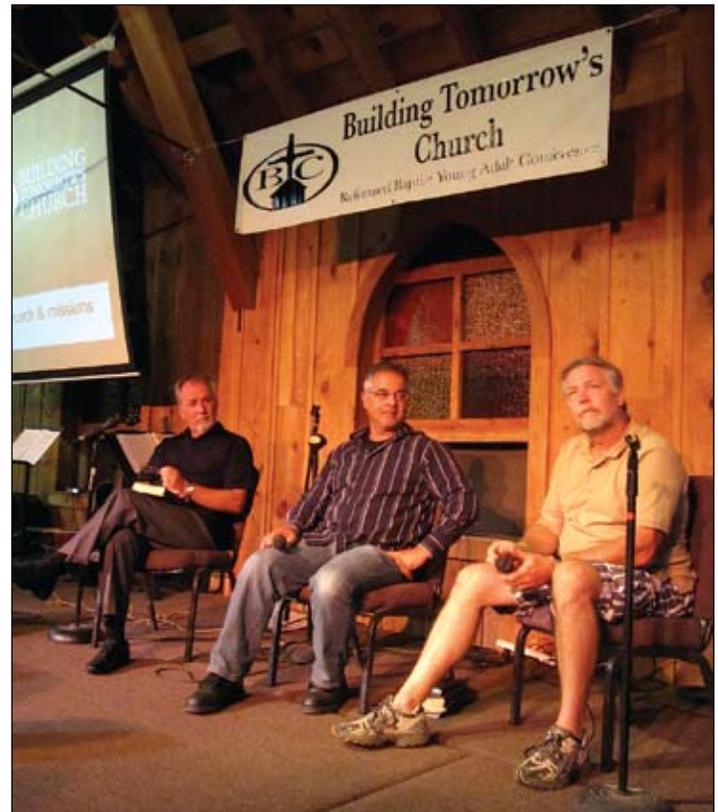
For the first conference the committee was able to secure a beautiful campground in Prescott, Ariz. It was agreed that Pastor Bob Selph would make an excellent choice as the first speaker for this inaugural event, since he had recently stepped down as ARBCA Coordinator and had personally visited many of the churches that would be represented at the conference. The theme for the opening year, "Helping Young Adults Find Their Place Within the Body of Christ," still serves as the purpose for each year's conference.

Pastor Selph's messages issued a clarion call for personal commitment to the local church and made a lasting impact on the 75 individuals who attended. Pastor Selph taught that committing to the church is like binding oneself to a covenant marriage—in love, work, fellowship, time, sacrifice, joy, humility, meekness, and patience. Jesus committed himself to the church as his bride, and as the bride we are responsible to build upon that "marriage."

Since the first conference we have been blessed to receive reports from pastors to the effect that many of the attendees came back with a newfound zeal for the church. They returned to become official members in their churches, to organize Bible studies, or to get serious about their own personal walk with Christ. Thus, this conference is not just a passing emotion, but it has been translated into practical service in the local church.

One young lady, Rachel Clark – who has attended every BTC conference for the past three years – reported the following to her home church (First Baptist Church of Clinton, La.) following BTC 2008:

"All in all, the teaching caused me to step back and look at my own church attendance and attitude, and challenged me to pursue Christ more by becoming more a part of his body. There was a



2010 BTC speakers were Raymond Perron, left, and Don Donell, right, with Pastor John Giarrizzo in the center.

great sense of responsibility yet joy, at the humbling knowledge that we are the future of ARBCA. The Building Tomorrow's Church conference was one of the richest and most defining experiences of my summer – the spirit and fellowship of the conference was very sweet. For instance, at any meal, the conference participants lingered as long as possible over coffee and dessert before having to leave for the next message or activity; we were so hungry for each other's company! It was the first time I have ever felt almost one-hundred-percent comfortable with a group of people; they were so like-minded and mature – it was really like meeting new brothers and sisters! Of course, the landscape in Arizona was absolutely beautiful! We were in the mountainous region of northern-central Arizona, at about 5,000 feet elevation."

For the 2009 conference the attendance increased to 90 people. We were blessed to have Pastor Robert Briggs of Immanuel Baptist Church, Sacramento, Calif., and Pastor Earl Blackburn of Heritage Baptist Church, Shreveport, La. for our speakers. They addressed the subject of "Sanctified Service: The Importance of Godly Living in the Local Church." Then, this last August 110 people attended the third annual conference in Prescott. Conference attendees Anita, Catherine, and Joshua Baines traveled all the way from Maine to be with the brethren and listen to keynote speakers Raymond Perron and Don Donell preach on the topic of "The Church and Missions."

Others traveled from Massachusetts, Tennessee, and South

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The 2010 BTC drew a crowd of 110 attendees to Prescott, Ariz.

BTC

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Carolina in the east, and California and Oregon in the west. First Baptist Church in Clinton, La., sent the most people, with 14 attendees. ARBCA churches in Bremen, Ind.; Mansfield, Texas; and southern California also sent large groups. These 110 conference attendees represented more than 25 different Reformed Baptist churches from 17 states. More importantly, though, these 110 people represent both a legacy and a future for Reformed Baptists in North America.

In order to avoid any confusion, it may be helpful to express some of the things that this conference is not.

It is not a youth conference geared towards high school teens. It is not limited to Reformed Baptists in ARBCA churches only. It is not a singles conference geared towards finding a spouse (although such things are known to happen). It is not a para-church ministry that competes with the church or undermines the authority or purpose of the church.

Rather, this conference seeks to challenge attendees to return home and help strengthen their churches. It is not a vacation away from home that is dominated by leisure time. After each conference message attendees are dispersed into assigned groups for “breakout sessions” where the message is discussed and applied in per-

sonal ways. These sessions are conducted in groups of about 12 people with a designated session leader.

Additionally, three of the elders from Grace Covenant take an active part in the conference each year. In addition to other ministries, Pete Smith facilitates some amazing ice-breaker sessions and Josh Rusev leads the daily morning devotions, while John Giarrizzo tends to the needs of the conference speakers.

Obviously, attending this conference requires a financial commitment in terms of registration and transportation. But as it has been attested to by those who have attended every year, thanks in part to the scholarships offered by their churches, it is money well spent. Pastor Jon Hueni of Grace Fellowship Church in Bremen, Ind., wrote the following regarding the spiritual investment it has been for their church to support BTC:

“The twenties are not an age that generally finds young adults well rooted in church life. In fact, statistics show that even those who grew up in church are leaving the church in large numbers during this decade of their lives. How refreshing to find a conference for young adults whose mission is worn on their sleeve: Building Tomorrow’s Church. The first year it was held we offered financial assistance as a church to any of our young adults desiring to go. They came back with a contagious vision and love for the church as Christ’s chosen bride. The following year they returned with

a desire to faithfully use their gifts to serve in the church. And this year their burden widened to bring the gospel to the lost outside the church. Each year we have offered scholarships and each year the number attending has increased. And each year our conviction has deepened that this is some of our best invested money for the building up of Christ’s church. Why not start by offering \$200 to help your young adults to attend next year? I believe that both they and your church will profit from it, and if so, Christ himself will delight in the growing beauty of his church.”

This year’s conference date has been set for July 29 – Aug. 1, and will be held at United Christian Youth Camp in Prescott. The intended topic is “The Need for Godly Men and Women in the Church,” emphasizing what the Bible describes as biblical manhood and womanhood. We are excited to have as the speakers for this year’s conference Pastor Mark Chanski of the Reformed Baptist Church of Holland, Mich., and Pastor David Dykstra of Grace Covenant Baptist Church in Willis, Texas. Both of these men have written and preached extensively on what it means to be biblical men and women and we are privileged to have them speak at BTC 2011.

In the future we hope to see the BTC conference expand to be hosted in different states across the country. We also pray that as relationships are built and congregations

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BTC

From page 13

strengthened through this annual conference, more and more Reformed Baptist churches will support the conference ministry and send their young adults to BTC each summer.

It is our great desire to see the lives of young people sanctified by the power of the Gospel through the Holy Spirit's conviction and encouragement in hearts that love the Lord and His people. We "expect great things from God" as we "attempt great things for God" through this annual conference.

We have yet to find out how many future missionaries, church planters, elders, deacons, or Sunday school teachers may be raised up through one of these conferences, but we look forward to what the Lord might do. "Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!" (Psalm 90:17) May God alone receive all the glory.

We ask that you keep the BTC conference and its planning in your regular



These 11 attendees all made the trip from Bremen, Ind.

prayers. Also, take a moment to visit www.buildingtomorrowschurch.com to stay informed of upcoming BTC '11 announcements.

For answers to any BTC-related ques-

tions, feel free to e-mail David or the BTC committee at buildingtomorrowschurch@gmail.com.

John Giarrizzo is pastor of Grace Covenant Church in Gilbert, Ariz..



The 2010 conference included young married couples such as, from left, Kelly and Steven Gonzales of Mesa, Ariz., Sonja and Paul Reader of Taylors, S.C., Jennifer and Aaron Lonsway of Fargo, N.D., and Paige and David Giarrizzo of Mesa, Ariz.

Humility

From page 3

that ugly pride in us that must be daily crucified. I fear we will never be fully rid of it until we see our Savior face to face and with that one look are transformed into His Own humble image. Oh, Lord Jesus, come quickly and rid us of this systemic sin of pride and grant us grace to be humble souls.

Gordon Taylor is ARBCA Coordinator.

Correction

The article on Canada that appeared in the Fall 2010 ARBCA Update contained the following statement: "In the center of the city the University of Toronto has 70,000 students without a strong consistent evangelical witness on campus." Evangelical groups and some Reformed efforts are active on campus. We regret this error and rejoice that the gospel is being proclaimed on the UT campus.

Church Planting: Carey was a faithful ‘plodder’

By John Miller

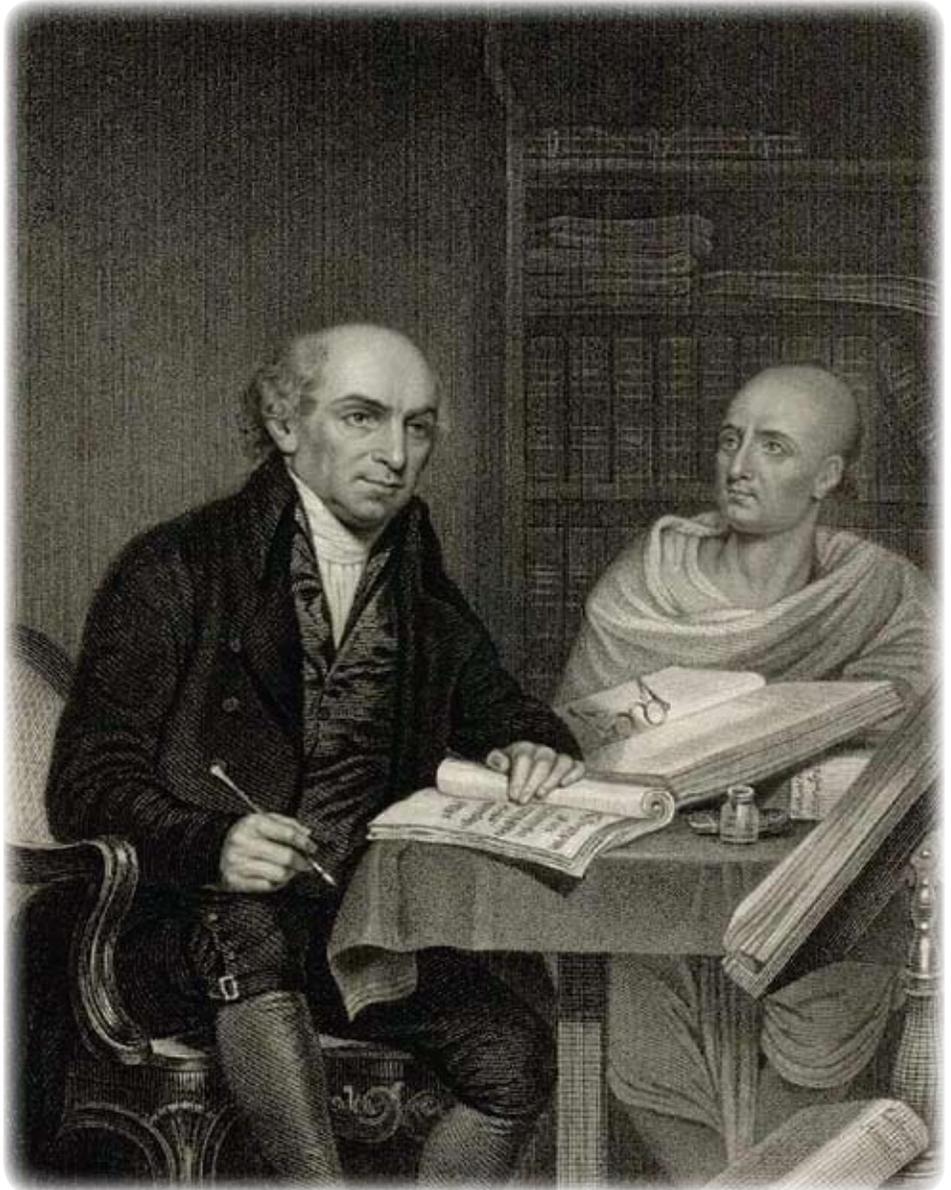
When it comes to the history of Christian missions and church planting, one of the first names to enter our minds is William Carey. For many of us, he is one of our heroes whom God greatly used to further the work of taking the gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations.

But Carey’s own assessment of himself was much more humble. In a letter addressed to Andrew Fuller in 1800, Carey wrote, “...respecting myself, I have much proof of the vileness of my heart, much more than I thought of till lately: instead I often fear that instead of being instrumental in the conversion of the heathen, I may sometimes dishonor the cause in which I am engaged. I have hitherto had much experience of the daily supports of a gracious God, but am conscious that if those supports were intermitted but for a little time, my sinful dispositions would infallibly predominate. At present I am kept, but am not one of those who are strong and do exploits.”

There was only one thing Carey would say about himself: He was a plodder. Writing to his nephew, Carey said, “Eustace, if after my removal anyone should think it worth his while to write my life, I will give you a criterion by which you may judge its correctness. If he gives me the credit for being a plodder, he will describe me justly. Anything beyond this will be too much. I can plod. I can persevere in any pursuit. To this I owe everything.”

Certainly, Carey persevered in the work of church planting through many difficulties and discouragements. Consider just a few of the difficulties Carey faced: the strangeness of a new culture, coping with little Christian fellowship, personal struggles with illness and depression, the loss of a child and a wife suffering from mental illness, along with seeing little to no fruit from the first several years of his labor among the people of India. What enabled Carey to continue to plod through so many discouragements? What will enable missionaries and church planters today to be “plodders?”

While God used many means to sustain Carey as a plodder, such as letters (which might take over a year to arrive!) and support from those holding the rope in England, ultimately it was Jesus Christ Himself who sustained Carey and gave him the ability to doggedly persevere. It was Christ who sustained Carey’s Spirit-born faith, giving him hope in the midst of every discouragement. As Carey once wrote to Fuller, “We are determined to hold on, though our discouragements be a thousand times greater. We have the same ground of hope as you



in England – the promise, power and faithfulness of God.”

Carey was able to hold on because he held on to the promises of God, that Christ is building His Church (Matt. 16:19) by gathering His elect from every tribe and language and people and nation (Rev. 5:9) through the use of means like Carey himself (Rom. 10:14-15). Carey believed in the power of God, that the same power that raised Christ from the dead is at work bringing spiritually dead unbelievers to new life in Christ (Eph. 1:19-20). Carey trusted in the faithfulness of Christ, that He would never leave him or forsake him, but was with him always. Let us pray that God would sustain in each of us, and especially in our missionaries and church planters, such faith to plod!

John Miller is a church planter in Clarksville, Tenn.

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Cosby

From page 4

sociation of Reformed Baptist Churches quarterly gathering. In his message John mentioned the existence of a Reformed Baptist Bible study in Casa Grande, Ariz., and expressed hope that one day a church might grow out of this Bible study.

Sitting in the assembly that day were Dr. Jim Renihan and Pastor Brad Knepp, of Escondido, both of whom later informed John that they had the perfect person in mind to head up this new church plant. His name was Rob Cosby, an IRBS student about to graduate in the spring, and who wanted to plant a church in southern Arizona. One thing soon led to another in short succession.

Pastor Darrell Gustafson from Grace Covenant Church went to Escondido for Rob's graduation, then asked a member to design a Web page for the Casa Grande work, and even helped move Rob and his wife Chrissy to Casa Grande in preparation for this new work. Pastor Darrell then located an existing church in town that was willing to open their facility for afternoon services. We even had Gordon Taylor come out to go over the steps of church planting and invited him and Rayna to one of the early worship services.

We were all amazed at how fast it all came together – and were equally amazed at how fast it all disintegrated. For various reasons, there was a lack of cohesion in the core group that resulted

in the dismantling of this work within six to eight weeks of its first worship service. In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.

Uncertain where to go from there, Grace Covenant Church took immediate steps to move our discouraged brother and his family back up to the Gilbert area. While still living in Casa Grande, Chrissy had given birth to their first child, a beautiful daughter named Kiera. We determined that it would be best for the Cosbys to get assimilated into the life of Grace Covenant in order to be fed and refreshed after their difficult ordeal.

So Rob was brought on board as an intern – home missionary. Rob had spent many years in southern Arizona and was familiar with the city of Tucson, a metropolitan city of 1.2 million, of whom 6 percent attend church. We knew that there was no Reformed Baptist church in existence in this great city and that the Lord had many people in this city (Acts 18:10). So, after much prayer and discussion, we then set a new course to plant a Reformed Baptist church in Tucson, with Rob at the helm.

In the meantime Rob and his family have been such a blessing to our church to the point that we are reluctant to part with them. Rob has been able to help some of our newer members work through various theological issues. His grasp of biblical doctrine has been both respected and appreciated. Rob has helped us think through areas that go by the wayside in the busyness of ministry. He has also

been able to have time to see that there has to be much patience developed in ministry to others.

Rob, Chrissy and Kiera have blended so well with our congregation that it seems it is as if they have always been here. It is so refreshing to have an intern so familiar with the Confession of Faith and our Reformed Baptist distinctives. Rob has had the opportunity to work in almost every part of the ministry at Grace Covenant Church. He even performed a wedding for a couple that Chrissy knew many years ago. These newlyweds are now becoming church members, thanks to the Cosbys' influence.

Rob is regularly preaching, teaching, leading a small group, and meeting one-on-one with several men. Chrissy has also been able to get a good sense for what it will be like to be the wife of a full-time pastor. It will be hard to see them go as they move to Tucson in August.

We would encourage other ARBCA churches to consider an IRBS student for a summer internship. You might even bring him on after his graduation if he is waiting for opportunities to become available for full-time pastoral ministry.

Because of the various internships Rob has served in, we believe that Rob and his family will be well equipped for the task ahead of them.

Blessings to all in your ministries from the elders, Pastor John Giarrizzo, Pastor Darrell Gustafson, Mark Flin, Pete Smith, Josh Rusev and intern and elder candidate Rob Cosby.