

# Presbytery Life

A Newsletter of the Regional Church of New Jersey in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

September, 2009

## Boardwalk Chapel Hosts Wedding Celebration



On a beautiful sunny Saturday in August, the Presbytery of New Jersey's Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, NJ hosted its very first marriage celebration uniting Lauren Zerbe and Colby Moore. The service was officiated by the Rev. Art Fox, Pastor of Calvary OPC, Middletown, PA—the groom's pastor and regular chapel speaker. Chapel Director and Best Man, Jon Stevenson read from Ephesians 5 during the service. The wedding homily presented by Rev. Fox was entitled, "A Declaration of God's Special Love for His People" based on the text from Ezekiel 16: 1-14. Several members of the bridal party have served as Chapel staff over the years. Wedding day helpers included current Boardwalk Chapel staff, friends and members of both Calvary and Central Bible OP Churches in Wildwood. Special music was provided by Tim Carroll and Richard and Deborah Adams. The Chapel was packed with friends and relatives, and many vacationers stopped along the Boardwalk to get a glimpse of the ceremony.

Lauren and Colby met for the first time five summers ago as they served as Boardwalk Chapel staff. They continued to serve the Chapel for four summers. Lauren is a member of a PCA church in Delaware. She recently completed a one-year Missionary-Associate ministry teaching English in the OPC's China Mission.



# News from the Churches

## San Juan, Puerto Rico

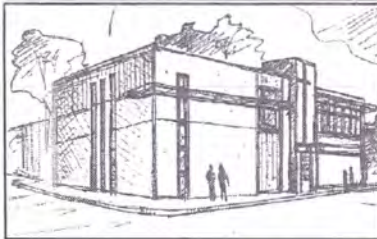
After waiting many months, on July 17th **Jesús es la Verdad OPC**, purchased the building that will become our new meeting place. We are grateful to God for this achievement in our brief history. Also to the OPC Loan Fund for their patience during this prolonged process so unusual in the states of the union.

As we became ready to work on the remodeling of the building, two members of our congregation launched a challenge and an offer, that if we were able to raise \$100,000, they would complete the rest of the cost for a new construction. The preliminary cost for a new building consisting of two floors, Worship hall on the first floor and classrooms on the second floor, is calculated around \$200,000.

These are not the best economic times for this project, but the church is full of enthusiasm and confidence that our Lord is powerful to provide more abundantly than what we ask for or understand. The Pro Fund Building Committee has initiated a series of activities to raise \$50,000 that is needed to complete our goal.

Meanwhile, we have executed a series of steps with government agencies, achieving correspondent permits for the installation of utilities and permit of use.

The greatest challenge is still ahead. Together we will attain it. "Through God we shall do valiantly." Psalm 60:12



On Friday, July 9, 2009, Orthodox Presbyterians in San Juan conducted what became the official commemoration in Puerto Rico of the 500th birthday of John Calvin. Held in the Professional Society Auditorium of the Ministry of Agricultural Science, the event was sponsored jointly by **Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada OPC** and their sister organization, the Reformed Seminary of the Caribbean. More than 100 guests were reminded that exactly 500 years ago to the day a man who helped to change the course of history was born in France. Two addresses were part of the celebration. Professor Nestor Del Valle spoke on "The Concept of God in the Writings of John Calvin." Pastor Carlos Cruz Moya of the new Reformada OPC congregation addressed the subject "Calvin and the Concept of Predestination." During and after their meal together guests were treated to a classical music tribute to Calvin



by the Conjunto de Camara Porta Coeli quintet. The young Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada congregation and their pastor have only recently been received into the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, but their passion for the Reformed faith was noticed this past summer as evidenced by a gift from an anonymous donor of more than \$600,000 for the purchase of a building to house their congregation and seminary ministry in San Juan.

## Covenant Coffee House - Vineland

Good Music! Good Food! Good Friends! On the second Saturday of each month, Covenant Church, sponsors Covenant Coffee House in their fellowship hall starting at 7:00 p.m. This is an evening of mostly original Christian music performed by an array of musicians--solo acts and groups, both acoustic and electric.

A typical night at the Coffee House includes music from four or five different performers, coffee and snacks, and a devotional from the Rev. George Kostas--all in an informal setting so that you can fellowship with the friends you come with or with the new ones you meet there. Those who attend are in all age groups and include entire families with children, as well as folk from high school, college, and post-college, through those in their 60s. You can come and go as you like at any time.

The groups that perform vary in style from a *cappella* gospel to alternative. You can check the schedule of performers on the website, [www.covenantcoffeehouse.com](http://www.covenantcoffeehouse.com). The hosts of Covenant Coffee House are Steve and Dana Kostas who have recently joined with brothers Justin and Richmond Carlton to form a group called Synaesthesia (Want to know what that means? Search for their group's name on Myspace or Facebook, where you can also hear a sampling of their music). They write: "We love to perform and we love to glorify God while performing! We are thankful for the talents he has blessed us with and hope that our music points people to God everywhere we go!"

The mission of Covenant Coffee House is to glorify God through Christian music and fellowship. Our message is salvation by faith alone, by grace alone, through Christ alone. Our mandate is to

proclaim the Word of the Lord to all who will listen. We also hope to facilitate fellowship among Christians, both OPC and non-OPC. We encourage area churches to promote Covenant Coffee House among their congregations so that people know of this opportunity, even if it is not an official event for their youth, singles, or other group. It is a good place for anyone

looking for a place to hang out on the second Saturday night of each month, and, best of all, it's FREE! The next Coffee House is Saturday, October 10, and we are trying to plan an outdoor concert during the afternoon (from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00)--so bring your lawn chairs or blankets and come enjoy a time of good music and hot coffee in the fresh, fall air.

Good music served alongside of good coffee, snacks and fellowship--that's Covenant Coffee House!



# Outreach, Fellowship and Educational Ministries

## The Reformed Bible Institute of the Delaware Valley

The Reformed Bible Institute (RBI) has been dedicated to teaching the Word of God and the historic Christian faith since 1976. RBI's goal is to educate and train Christians interested in advancing their knowledge and understanding of the historic Christian faith. Their primary purpose is Christian Education, to strengthen the local church, and to assist the pastor and church laity by providing Biblically-sound courses of study at an affordable cost. The doctrinal basis for the RBI rests solely on the Scriptures of the Old & New Testaments, the infallible Word of God – the only rule of faith and practice. The Westminster Standards contain an accurate summary

of the doctrines taught in the Scriptures and the RBI subscribes to these standards as their secondary standards.

The RBI sponsors a curriculum that can result in a "Certificate in Biblical Studies" when a student successfully completes 12 core subjects plus four electives. The core studies include: Bible Study Methods, Bible History & Survey, Basic Bible Doctrine, Church History, Biblical Theology and Apologetics. The electives may come from specialized studies in: Theology, Apologetics, Bible, Christian Education, Evangelism and Worship. There are no prerequisites for

anyone to attend. Students may matriculate or audit any class.

The faculty of RBI is primarily ordained ministers of confessional and reformed churches (usually from the OPC and PCA). Classes will usually be held at a local church during evening hours September through November and January through May. Historically classes have been held in four areas of the Delaware Valley: Southeast Jersey (Wildwood), North Jersey (Hackettstown), Southwest Jersey (Camden County) and Eastern PA. (Glenside).

The RBI is a corporation governed by by-laws. To receive a copy of the by-laws, an RBI trifold brochure and course registration forms, scheduled classes offered, please contact RBI Vice President Paul Hunter, 29 Barbara Terrace, North Cape May, NJ 08204 (609-898-1552). Plans are currently being developed to offer new elective courses; one in January entitled "Sharing the Gospel with Jews and Muslims" and "Christian Economics" next fall.



*of the Delaware Valley*

## Women's Presbyterian

The NJOPC Women's Presbyterian meets two Saturdays a year, the first Saturday in October, and the fourth Saturday in April. Our October meeting will be held October 3, 2009 at Calvary OPC in Ringoes, NJ. Our speaker will be Mr. John Grotenhuis, whose work is overseen by the PNJ and who is a member of Calvary Community Church in Harmony, NJ. Mr. Grotenhuis helped to establish Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) and has been involved in missions for many years. He will speak on the Church in the Horn of Africa.

Women are encouraged to arrive by 9:30 A.M. for signing in and a brief fellowship and refreshment time. The meeting begins at 10:00, we hear the speaker, and finish the morning by praying for the OPC mission works in small groups. After lunch, we have a brief executive business meeting consisting of the officers and one representative from each church, then the entire group meets, and we also hear any reports from mission works or churches. There is a nursery available, and children eat lunch with their mothers. We are usually finished before 3 P.M. We want to encourage all women to plan ahead to attend if at all possible. If no one is able to attend from your church, we would still love to hear from you. If you would like to send us a report about your VBS or anything else your church has been doing recently, please email our president, Mrs. Kim Flitcraft at [thekimethaconnection@yahoo.com](mailto:thekimethaconnection@yahoo.com).

## Emmanuel Church - Whippany

On Sunday June 7 Mr. Stephen Loreti was installed as a Ruling Elder to serve on the Emmanuel Session. Mr. Loreti was ordained at Mt Carmel Church (OPC), Somerset, NJ on Mar 10, 2002 and later in 2004 he transferred to Emmanuel OPC. Pictured after the installation are (l to r) Pastor Howard Currie, Elders William Stephens, Mr. Loreti, Garry Hoogerhyde and Bob Freeman.



## A Family's Journey with International Adoption - Part 2

by Martita McGowan

[Editor's Note: The December, 2008, edition of "Presbytery Life" reported the journey of Pastor John and Martita McGowan to the country of Ukraine to seek to complete an international adoption. This article updates the story....]

After six and a half weeks overseas in the country of Ukraine, we returned home to Vineland on New Year's Day with our newly-adopted boy: Maxim Joel McGowan. Maxim, now five years old, has been home with us for nine months and has had more changes in nine months than most of us have had in many years. He has adjusted to new parents, new siblings, new food, new friends, a new home, and a new language. He continues to need an extra measure of God's grace as he learns how to be a part of a family--and his family needs an extra measure of patience in the transition!

Three months ago (June), Maxim had an operation for bilateral cochlear implants to give him access to sound (he is profoundly deaf), and the results have been amazing. He is beginning to turn to our voices, notices sounds that are new, and has started saying new words. Recently he was diagnosed with a serious infection that is threatening his left implant. Please pray with us that the infection would clear up and that the implant would not have to be removed. Please thank the Lord with us for His providence in bringing the joy of our son Max to us. We continue to post updates to our blog:

[www.mcgowanfam.blogspot.com](http://www.mcgowanfam.blogspot.com).



Maxim McGowan

# News from the Churches

## New Hope Church - Bridgeton

### A HISPANIC Need

This past spring the session of New Hope Church received a request for help by a former segment of a local Hispanic PCUSA church including their former pastor. While attending the PCUSA church they became Reformed in their doctrine and life necessitating their departure. After meeting in various private homes for bible studies over a period of several months and not locating a Spanish-speaking Reformed & Presbyterian church to worship, they reached out to New Hope Church. They have expressed a desire to join the New Hope congregation as a Spanish-speaking segment of the church ministry.



The session has made the use of their building available for weekly Lord's Day, mid-afternoon worship services that began in June and will continue at least through December.

The Home Missions Committee reassigned Rev. Ben Alvira to assist in this need. Mr. Alvira preaches at the worship services and leads a weekly inquirers/membership class centered on a Spanish translation of "Confessing Christ". The Bible studies and worship are entirely in Spanish.

The first service saw 58 people in attendance: a few from the New Hope congregation, the "regulars" from the former PCUSA and many "visitors" who were family, friends, neighbors from other denominational backgrounds. Since then the worship attendance has averaged between 25 & 35 people.

New Hope Church has invited the group to each of our monthly cookouts during June, July and August. The group's younger children attended our English VBS while the older young people from the group acted as helpers. The Hispanic children and young people are bilingual. The New Hope congregation was invited to a July & August worship service which were conducted bilingually. Pastor Taylor preached at one service while Mr. Alvira translated into Spanish. The New Hope congregation joined them with a meal after the service.

This wonderful ministry opportunity that God has placed at the door of the New Hope congregation will require many more plans and decisions to meet the need of this group and the growing population of the Hispanic community in and around Bridgeton.

### Calvary Church - Ringoes Outreach Ministries

A new banner of "TRUTH" sign was installed to welcome and invite folks seeking He who is the way, truth, and the life. See photo.

Also, we are setting up a table at the 4-H Fair. We continue reaching out to the community at the Border's Bookstore in Flemington. This month we are featuring Michael J. Fox's book "Always Looking Up". (see pictures on website: [www.calvary-amwell.org](http://www.calvary-amwell.org)).



### ART CAMP Ministry

by Joy Todd

The summer weather is hot, time seems to creep by, children run about enjoying the rays of sunshine. Children who are not being carefully watched in neighborhoods can fall victim to gangs and violent crimes. With the decline in economic stability, many people are having to work two or three jobs to keep their house and provide for their children. This leaves kids in a dangerous position with little to no supervision. So what can be done? As a summer deaconate/outreach ministry, New Hope Church in Bridgeton sponsored an art camp held every Wednesday from 1-5 at the beginning of July to the end of August. Volunteers from the church led classes including Reading Time to Cake Decorating to as many as 25 kids each week. The children were divided into four different age ranges and attended four classes throughout the afternoon. They traveled from each class station every hour. The moving groups provided the children with stimulation and a fun way to spend their summer afternoon. A snack was also provided during the afternoon as many children have infrequent meals due to most meals being provided by the school system (not present during the summer). The classes were based on the volunteers talents. People taught classes about things they enjoyed which provided a fun outlet for creativity. Some of the classes offered include sand castle pencil holders, art history, painting, rubber stamping, lego creations, play-dough design, pizza making, baking, nature exploration, architecture and many others.

This amazing opportunity to reach out with the love of Christ to a community in need was a fun, easy way to engage the surrounding children and their families while providing a much needed service. Hopefully, it will become a summer tradition and continue to strengthen the youth in our neighborhood.

### Faith Church - Pole Tavern

by Trish Duggan & Lora Romeo

New and exciting things are happening at Faith Church. In January, 2009 the Lord brought us a new Pastor, Rev. Richard N. Ellis. We are seeing the church take on some new concepts and functions, with fresh perspective.

Dick, along with his wife, Gayle, have given us a new approach for our women's ministries. We at Faith Church desire to be women devoted to the service for Christ, His kingdom and to the encouragement and building up of each other. We have begun to develop a team, made up of about five women designed to realize and recognize the needs of women and find those equipped and talented to meet those needs. The Bible tells us that we are gifted by God for a purpose and we are part of the whole body.

The ladies that make up what is known as the "facilitation team" will work to minister to the health of the church by encouraging women as servants of Christ to reach out to the community. Each of the women on the facilitation team will be assigned to a ministry of the church in order that they can help and encourage those involved. Some of these ministries include: Women's Studies, Meals, Showers, Kitchen, Library, Vacation Bible School, Hospitality and so on. Each women's ministry will fall under one of three categories: "Unity", "Serving" or "Encouraging".

We are excited about what God has in store for our church, specifically in the area of women's ministries. Please pray that we are able to help and encourage one another in love as we serve our Lord.

"And, let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Hebrews 10:25