



Harvest Call

September 9, 2018

OPC Ecumenicity

Christ is the head of the church. So ultimately there is the most concentrated unity of government in the church of Christ. He alone is King. Any infringement upon this sovereignty belonging to Christ is a violation of what is basic and central in the government of the church. It follows that all government in the church must adhere to the pattern of a cone which has its apex in Christ.

OPC Sister Church of the Week

The Presbyterian Church in Korea ("Kosin")

Dr. Horace N. Allen of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, with his wife Frances, was the first protestant missionary to enter Korea. Dr. Allen did not travel to the Korean peninsula as a missionary—a type of visitor prohibited by the Korean government of the time. Rather, he arrived in September 1884 to work as a physician to foreigners living in Seoul. He established the Presbyterian Missionary Council on May 15, 1901 and opened the Pyongyang Presbyterian Theological Seminary September 17, 1907.

The general secretary, Samuel Austin Moffett, arrived in Korea in 1890 was the first resident protestant missionary in Pyongyang. The vice-moderator, stated clerk, and assistant clerk were all native Koreans. The membership of the new presbytery was 38 missionaries and 40 Korean elders.

On September 10, 1938 the 27th General Assembly decided to go to the national Japanese Shinto shrine. A group of faithful servants of the Lord resisted the shrine visit. Pyongyang Presbyterian Theological Seminary closed its doors, and Kyu Chul, Han Sang-dong, and Soon-sun Son were arrested in Pyongyang prison, and many were martyred. Both before and after this tragic decision, ministers, elders, deacons, and ordinary believers, who merely wished to live according to the Bible and so refused shrine worship, were arrested in large numbers. Eventually

some fifty became martyrs of their faith under this terrible persecution.

On August 15, 1945, Japan was defeated, Korea was liberated, and on August 17, those who had been imprisoned for their opposition to Shinto shrine observance were released. Two among them, Rev. Joo Nam-Sun and Rev. Han Sang-Dong, founded Korea Theological Seminary a year later in Pusan on September 20, 1946, to train church leaders in order to reform the erring Korean church. This action began anew the training of church leaders in the historic Presbyterian tradition.

The Presbyterian Church in Korea ("Kosin") headquarters facility are located in Seoul, Korea. The Missionary Training Institute (MTI) is located on the 5th floor in the Bruce Hunt Memorial Hall. This Hall is named in memory of Missionary Bruce Hunt with gratefulness to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of America who donated the major funds for this facility through the sale of their former property here in Korea.

The Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea embraces the Bible as the principle scripture, but also employs Westminster Standards as the subordinate standards of the church. In 2017 the Presbyterian Church in Korea ("Kosin") reported statistics includes: 39 Presbyteries, 2,056 churches, 3,753 pastors, 4,145 elders, and nearly a half million members.

PRAYER:

- Strength to uphold God's Word against the tide of humanism
- That her members may share their faith in the Living Word generously across this perilously located country
- For laborers to bring in the bounty of fields ripe for harvest
- Give thanks to our Great God for the exceptional works He has performed in Korea
- Give thanks to the Lord for the labors of the pioneering missionaries and for those who supported their work to enable this witness to proceed

OPC Congregation of the Week

Chain-O-Lakes OPC, MI (COL-OPC) - began when a family with an OPC background relocated and sought a faithful church. This proved challenging even within local Presbyterian and Reformed congregations. Those congregations, in their own distinct ways, tended to see themselves as conservative relative to the culture, or even their own denominations. The OPC family, lacking the desired focus on Christ and the gospel and missing familiar nurture, while they continued to worship according to the opportunities available, began to pray for the possibility of an OPC church plant.



Chain-O-Lakes OPC

The Lord supplied other interested families seeking true worship and doctrine. A Bible study was begun, and the church-plant was soon recognized as a mission of the Presbytery of the Midwest. In late 1996 worship services were instituted under the guidance of organizing pastor Dale Collison. COL-OPC was able to call Rev. Collison as her first regular minister without taking any direct financial support from the presbytery or denominational home missions.

Pastor Collison served through 2004. A search for the next minister took two years, during which time Rev. Ivan DeMaster (from the Presbytery of the Midwest) often assisted the congregation; as well as pastor Mick Knierim, a ministerial member of the recently organized Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario, living in the Grand Rapids area. The congregation grew very close to these two faithful servants. Rev. Bruce Buchanan was called to minister at COL-OPC in 2007.

The church presently has a membership of 38, 21 communicant and 17 non-communicant, down from a high (in the past 11 years) of 49; and is currently served by two elders (and one elder-emeritus) and two deacons. Recently members have moved to other OPC congregations. COL-OPC seeks new members who will fill those gaps left in her numbers, not their hearts. They are encouraged by regular attendees and by recent local-resident visitors.

Pastor Buchanan was raised mainly in the OPC, the son of pastor and missionary Don Buchanan who also served the denomination as General Secretary for Foreign Missions (1984-1990). After graduating college, and service as an Army officer, Bruce attended Greenville Seminary for his M.Div.

While studying, he met and married his wife, Donna, and their family steadily increased in size for a time, settling (we suppose) at a total of eight children.

Bruce was called and ordained as an assistant pastor at a PCA congregation in Akron, OH. Bruce received his present call summoning him back to the OPC, which has been his church home for the great majority of his life.

PRAYER:

- That our God and Father will preserve his Word and Spirit at COL-OPC
- Ask that COL-OPC shall grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- That the congregation would not be led into temptation, and fall into sin; but resist the devil, and bring honor to the name of our triune God
- That God will swell the ranks, soothing the smart of recent losses (yet rejoicing for the gain of OPC sister congregations)
- May God grant COL-OPC joy, meekness, courage, and unity in the faith and in love.
- For our outreach, that we'd remember: *"what we win them with, we win them to"*
- For young-adults as they too look to the future, some already being called further afield to live and serve

- For the Lord's direction and preservation in occupation and education, as well as for godly spouses in many of the same cases
- The younger children, and one woman with child, for whom COL-OPC covets prayer
- For or typical needs of the elderly

OPC Mission Work of the Week

Arroyo, Puerto Rico

The Lopez family recently began an informal Bible study in their home every Tuesday and every other Thursday evening and it has been very fruitful. Many church members attend, and it is a great opportunity for them to invite friends and neighbors.

Pastor Bradney shares that these studies serve as a sort of bridge into the covenant community, so that when the unchurched come to worship they already know some people and terminology and feel more comfortable there.



Bradney and Eileen Lopez

A young woman will be coming to the Lopez home for dinner on August 12. Bradney and she connected through a shared interest in surfing. They don't yet know her spiritual state and are hoping to build a friendship with her.

PRAYER:

- For ministry opportunities taking place in their home
- The beginnings of a Titus 2 Women's Ministry in the church

- For a safe delivery for his wife, due with their sixth child on October 30

SouthWest Presbytery News

Mid-Cities Presbyterian Church, Bedford, TX - began as a work of the OPC in 2006. Gary Davenport, the Regional Home Missionary for the Presbytery of the Southwest, called as the organizing pastor. The first organizational meeting was held in December 2004.

The first worship service found place at the Bedford YMCA in January of 2005. Pastors Davenport and Bordow acted as the session until Mid Cities was organized with three ruling elders, with Todd Bordow serving as ministerial advisor. There were 15 families with weekly attendance averaging 35 people. The congregation met each Saturday night to convert the gym at the YMCA into a worship center. They had to vacate by 1:00 p.m. each Sunday.

On several occasions lateness to vacate led to competition with the guys shooting baskets. A wonderful relationship developed with the YMCA management that led to being given the keys to the building and the code to the security system. The rental agreement allowed Mid-Cities to rapidly develop a building fund.

In 2006 a pastoral search committee was organized. The search was a slow and arduous process. Eighteen months later the Lord sent a wonderful young man, Joe Troutman, who agreed to move with his family to Texas from Pennsylvania.

Joe was born in Statesville, North Carolina. He is the third of four children. His mother, Nancy, was a registered nurse, and his father, Jim, was a dairy farmer. In May of 1982, Joe's youngest brother, Jakey, was killed, and his mother badly injured in an automobile accident. Joe's family was devastated. This was the single-most formative event in Joe's life and in the rest of his family's lives as well. A few years later, at special services at the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church where his family were members, Joe became aware of his own sinfulness and felt the need for salvation that only Christ can provide. Joe

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made a public profession of faith in Christ, and to the best of his ability and understanding dedicated his life to Him. In the years between college and seminary, Joe worked at various occupations, from explosives truck driver, to infantry squad leader in the Marine Corps, to driver of a Red Cross Bloodmobile. During his time in the Marines, he served for a year in Bahrain and then was stationed at Camp Lejeune, NC, in an infantry battalion.

All this time he was learning what it meant to be a Christian while working and living with people from all walks of life. Joe's faith in Christ was certainly challenged during this time, but it was deepened and strengthened as well. After eight years in the workforce, Joe felt ready to begin seminary studies and enrolled at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in 2003. He graduated with his Master of Divinity in May 2007.



Joe and Jennifer Troutman

Jennifer (nee Graham) Troutman is the older of two children. She was born into a pastor's family, attended private Christian schools, and graduated from Covenant College in 1995. Joe and Jennifer first met in 1996 through the efforts of one of his best friends (and Jennifer's co-worker) who enjoyed playing matchmaker.

After Joe served four years in the Marine Corps, they were married in 2002, and moved to Texas in 2008. They now have three children: Elisabeth, Anna and Jacob.

In 2012 the congregation felt it was time to find a permanent place to call home. After several false starts we found a suitable building located near Bell High School in Bedford, Texas. After a good scrubbing and some painting, we held our first service in May 2013.

Over the years the congregation has grown to 120. The church is blessed with three elders and one deacon that minister to the flock. Joe has been consistent in preaching God's Word. Mid-Cities had several births over the years, a couple of weddings and unfortunately two deaths. Lorimer Arendse and Jay Schiller both passed away from cancer in late 2017. Mid-Cities have had an exciting 13 years as a body of Christ and look to the future with anticipation, knowing that God will continue to nurture and grow His church here on earth.

Though not a highly programmatic church, all of our programs outside of Lord's Day worship are intended to further increase the congregation's ability to worship God, while also fostering friendship within. Aside from weekly morning and evening worship services, a weekly meal after our evening service, and a weekly Ladies Prayer Group, most other events are held on a monthly basis: Men's Fellowship; Hospitality Groups; First Friday Family Fun and Fellowship; Bible study; and our monthly afternoon Fellowship Meal, which is held on the Sundays we observe the Lord's Supper. The church also participates in Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree ministry each Christmas.

PRAYER:

- Thanks to our Great Covenant-keeping Lord for all His mercies, to His children at Mid-Cities OPC
- For the wives of two elders, each of whom has had a major surgery in the past month
- That the Lord will provide two additional deacons in the coming year
- For wisdom in overseeing the church planting work of Trinity OPC, Waco, TX
- For growth in grace and in numbers at Mid-Cities and at Trinity (Waco)

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- That the Session may have the strength and wisdom to nurture the saints to build up his particular people

Listening In and Sounding Out

SW Houston (Good Shepherd) - numbers have been down through the summer. Getting ready to move to a really nice location. A new couple who live 1 hour 10 mins away are interested. They have concerns over the distance.

Pastor Sumpter has written letters to an independent Reformed baptist man and another letter to a PCA minister - asking "*do you have any families in the South Richmond area that might want a new church, closer to where they live [where Good Shepherd is]?"* Pastor Sumpter will seek contacts from another 3 or 4 churches/pastors. Pastor Sumpter is following up on new people, new contacts, etc. The new oversight team (Pastor Adam York and Elder Coleman Simpkins) are assisting the work under the oversight of the Cornerstone OPC session.

The Lord's generous provision is most graciously appreciated.

PRAYER:

- For a good encouraging spirit even though it has been tough, tough sledding
- For the new mid-week study will begin using Ken Sande's PEACEMAKER DVD series
- For the likely move to the new facility in late September or early October
- That the Lord will open up more neighborly ministry
- For Pastors Sumpter, Brack, David King, Bordow, York, Arendale, and Elder Carl Miller

Christopher B. Cashen, Evangelist, Redeemer OPC, Atlanta, GA - July and August brought a break from regular routines so we were able to knock on doors. With help we canvassed the community at Brentwood Apartments. Offering invitations to the children's programs, as well as our weekly bible study, we met people: many whom the Lord has brought from other countries. We were able to communicate with two families through a seminary student from Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, who speaks Hindi. To our wonder, these families are from Afghanistan, where Urdu is spoken. The families were familiar enough with Hindi (through watching movies from India), that they could understand. The Lord certainly moves in mysterious and encouraging ways. We also met others who professed to be Christian and were surprised to learn about the Saturday morning bible study going on at the leasing office.

PRAYER:

- Please pray that the Lord might bring some of these to the study and that they would hear the true gospel of life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Harvest Call is published by South Austin Presbyterian Church (OPC), Austin, TX

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