



# Harvest Call

November 18, 2018

## OPC Ecumenicity

### OPC Sister Church

#### The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) (FCSC)

The Free Church of Scotland adheres to the doctrines that were adopted by the Church of Scotland, and upholds its historic doctrine and practices of worship. Its divergence from the body known as the Church of Scotland dates from the Disruption of 1843 when, under the leadership of Dr Thomas Chalmers, the Evangelical Party in the Church of Scotland as by Law Established, withdrew from the Establishment to form the Church of Scotland, Free.

#### Disruption

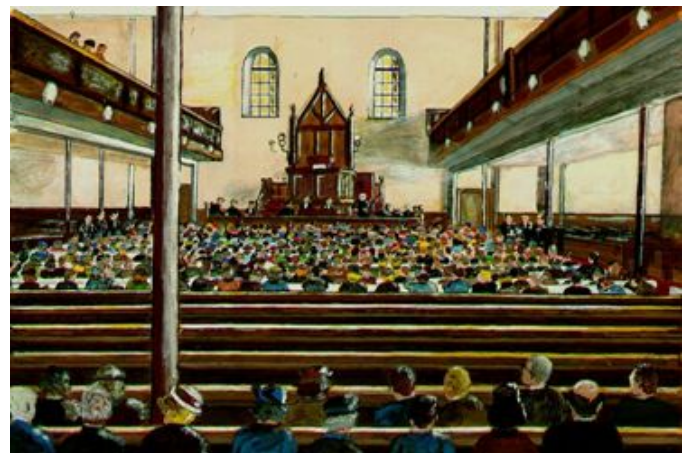
The immediate cause of the Disruption was the insistence by the civil courts that the Established Church had to ordain men to the parish ministry irrespective of their acceptability to the parishioners. The Evangelical Party regarded this as an intolerable interference in the spiritual liberties of the church and so they withdrew from the Established Church to form the Free Church.

The Disruption was not intended to divide the Church. Rather it severed the link that bound the Church to the State. Because the Church was divided concerning the proposed action, she underwent a split. The Established Church remained; and the Free Church, claiming to be the same church as that which it had left, a church adhering to the same Confession of Faith, loyal to the same principles and differing only in the discharge of its spiritual functions in which it was to be subservient to no other authority than the will of God as understood by the collective mind of the Church.

#### Declension

The Established Church and the Free Church were not the only Presbyterian Churches in nineteenth century

Scotland. In the eighteenth century there had been more than one secession from the Church of Scotland giving rise to the formation of several groups with distinctive confessional positions. In the late nineteenth century a movement to unite the splintered Presbyterian Churches in Scotland was begun. Not surprisingly, given the different and opposing nature of these confessional positions, of necessity union meant compromise – an agreement to adopt a confession of faith sufficiently vague and elastic as to allow those holding different views to subscribe it with good conscience.



The Free Church saw this dilemma, so a minority took the view that the doctrines which were being treated as open questions were so vital to the faith and the duty of Christian was to yield to fidelity to the truth. As a result when the great majority of the Free Church entered the Union of 1900 to form the United Free Church of Scotland (and, in 1929, to reunite with the Church of Scotland) a small minority elected to continue the Free Church of Scotland. The adherents of this '*constitutionalist party*', as it was termed, were to be found mainly, although not exclusively, in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Today the Free Church of Scotland although much reduced in size maintains in continuity with the Church of 1843 the system of doctrine and the form of worship adopted by the Church of Scotland at the Reformation. The singing of the Scottish Metrical Psalms unaccompanied by instrumental music is, perhaps, the most distinctive feature of its liturgy. The key

emphasis of its worship is the centrality of the pulpit for proclamation of free and sovereign salvation.

## Division

The Free Church continues to the present day. At the Commission of Assembly in January 2000 a division occurred because a majority was determined to act in a way that was against the book of church order, which all office-bearers must uphold. A number of ministers and elders signed a 'Declaration of Reconstitution' in which they pledged themselves to continue the Free Church in a constitutional manner. They are the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). Title is used to distinguish, solely for purposes of administration, the reconstituted Free Church of Scotland from any residual body claiming that title. They remain the Free Church of Scotland.

## Testimony

The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) is a reformed, presbyterian and evangelical church. She adheres to the reformed faith, and the system of doctrine as summarized in the Westminster Confession of Faith of the 1640s. The FCSC subscribes to the regulative principle of worship that God prescribes in His Word. Festival days are not observed, believing God requires His people to keep holy only the first day of the week, the Sabbath or Lord's day. Public prayer is led by men and the preaching of God's Word, the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper by ordained ministers only.

Following a reorganisation in 2008 the FPCC has five Presbyteries arranged into two Synods in Scotland and one active Presbytery in North America.

**Source:** Edited from <https://www.freechurchcontinuing.org/>

## PRAYERS:

- For a sense of urgency to proclaim the true faith in an increasingly hedonistic world.
- For faithfulness to stay the course.
- For growth and vitality to bring in the lost.
- For the peace of Zion to rest within her walls.

## OPC Sister Congregation

### Hope Congregation (URC), Toronto, Ontario

Hope Congregation is a church plant, mainly among the South Asian population in the Greater Toronto Area. More than half of Toronto's population are foreign born [51.4%]. One-third are South Asian, mainly Sikh, Hindu and Muslim. South Asians comprise about 17% of the entire population of the city [6 million].

Hope is a pioneering mission work among Sikhs and Hindus [though not exclusively], bringing the gospel to under-reached peoples. There is little gospel witness among them and the little that is there is mainly that of charismatic Pentecostals. The gospel is most effectively brought in the cups of hospitality, visiting households, developing relationships and praying for them. This is key to understanding their culture and winning their trust. Conversing in their language, even a little; in this case, Punjabi, is a big plus.

Hope's ministry began among the South Asians in 1996. Rev. Tony Zekveld is a graduate of Mid-America Reformed Seminary. After training in urban missions in New York City, he was called and sent by the Covenant Christian Church (URC), Wyoming, Ontario. His wife Arley-Ann, and children moved to Toronto as pilgrims for this work. The first few years were spent immersing themselves in the community and culture. His wife and five children were actively involved -- with no regrets! Most of their children are out of the home now. Three are married, the oldest is a church planter in Winnipeg.

In those first years, the Lord used an influential Sikh to open many doors. The Lord opened the way into households; events such as births, weddings, funerals and festivals including many opportunities to bring a word. Though this man never confessed Christ, he coined his own definition of reformed: "*simple and beautiful.*" When we opened up a small facility for the

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purpose of meetings and Bible studies, he also suggested the name “Hope Centre.”

Over time, a small fellowship was formed including some from Christian background as well as visitors from the community. In 2004, Hope ordained their first elders, one from a neighbouring Reformed church, and two from South Asian background. Then they began services on Sundays and missionary work on the field continued in earnest.



Rev. Zekveld writes a pastoral column for a monthly South Asian magazine called “Desi News”. The editor who is Hindu gives it the title “Faithlines.” Children’s Bible classes are offered during March Break and then again for 1 or 2 weeks in the summers. They have had upwards of 90 children, mainly Sikh and Hindu. This is one way to connect with households. Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter services have always been big occasions to invite many from the community.

A vision for a Christian mission school began to form as a means to follow-up on the children in the community. This was started in 2012, called **Hope Academy**. It is a very small Christian mission school with two teachers and fifteen children, it is Reformed and Christian but open for students from any background or religion.

Mission work is long term proposition that requires perseverance, patience and much prayer. Though there is a great openness to hearing the gospel, there

is a great fear of believing because many face rejection from their families and society when they believe.

Over the last few years Hope has witnessed baptisms and professions of faith, and praise God for this! They were blessed with a household baptism a little over one year ago: a mother and her two children who go to Hope Academy.

Hope church has about 30-35 people on a given Sunday; most of them are now members. They sing both English and Punjabi Psalms and hymns. A summary of the sermon is provided in Punjabi. Hope meets again following morning worship for instruction from the Heidelberg Catechism.

The Lord is good! Pastor Zekveld says: “We are thankful to Him for His many blessings over the years. We are thankful that our daughter and son-in-law with their three boys and fourth on the way recently joined us to become members. We begin to see people coming from other backgrounds as well. One lady recently came from Iran, who, as a Muslim, became a secret believer in Iran. She is studying the Bible but not yet baptized. We have another married couple with a child; he is from Guyana and she is from the Philippines. They are now confessing Christ, but not yet baptized.”

There are so many more people that need to be reached with the gospel, but resources and personnel are limited. The Greater Toronto Area is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the world. According to the 2016 census there are over 180 nations inside the city. There is an urgent need for more missionaries. The field is vast and wide open. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest (Matthew 9:38).

Hope’s website: [www.hope-centre.ca](http://www.hope-centre.ca)

## PRAYERS:

- Patience and wisdom in discipling our members in the Biblical faith.
- Continued growth in fellowship and unity among Hope URC as a congregation
- Growth and multiplication of leaders within the Hope congregation.

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- Standing firm in the face of attacks from people who are teaching false doctrine.
- Growth in the vision for Christian education at Hope Academy, and among Hope URC families and contacts.
- Ongoing expansion of Bible studies with inquirers also beyond the South Asian community.
- May the Lord send another man to help with the work at Hope URC!

## OPC Congregation

### Westminster OPC, Bartlesville, OK

Westminster OPC began as a Bible Study and as it grew, they appealed to Caney Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Caney, Kansas to oversee them and in 1971 they became a daughter church to the Caney OPC and took the name of Westminster Chapel.

In 1979 Ruling Elders were ordained and Westminster Chapel called its own Pastor fulltime, Rev. Dennis Prutow and Caney OPC called Rev. Edward Kok. Later Westminster Chapel changed its name to Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In 1982 Rev. Prutow resigned from Westminster and formed Westminster Evangelistic Ministries (WEM) and after that Westminster OPC called Rev. Chester Lanious until Rev. Lanious accepted a commission with the U. S. Army as a Chaplain.

Rev. Richard Shaw accepted the call to the vacant pulpit in 1985, the same year that Westminster bought a church facility that was only 5 years old and was able to sell its original facility. Rev. Joseph Auksela followed Rev. Shaw in 1999. Rev. Auksela retired January 1, 2014 and still resides in Bartlesville. Rev. Timothy Black provided pulpit supply until Westminster issued a call to Mr. Clarence Veld. Rev. Veld was ordained and installed as its minister in February 2016.

In 2011, a few people in Tulsa, Oklahoma reached out to Westminster OPC to oversee and shepherd them as they sought orthodox teaching for them and others.

The Bible Study grew and was allowed to use the name Providence Orthodox Church. In 2012 worship was started and in August Rev. Jim Stevenson was called to serve the work. The church was organized in May 2015.



Westminster OPC has been blessed with members who came from Caney OPC, many who were there when it was organized. Caney OPC closed its doors in June 2017. With the closing of Caney OPC and the moving of Overland Park OPC to the PCA, the Presbytery of the Central U. S. was left with only three churches in the Presbytery. It was determined and approved by the General Assembly in June 2018 that the Presbytery of the Central U. S. would be dissolved and that Westminster OPC, Bartlesville, Oklahoma and Providence OPC, Tulsa, Oklahoma would now reside in the bounds of the Presbytery of the Southwest.

Westminster OPC is now residing in the Presbytery of which it originally resided before the forming of the Presbytery of the Central U. S. As of November 1, 2018, we are now “back home”. Thanks for the warm welcome of the churches residing within the bounds of the Presbytery of the Southwest. The third church is Faith OPC, Lincoln, Nebraska and is now residing within the bounds of the Presbytery of the Midwest.

#### PRAYERS:

- For men qualified to serve as Ruling Elders.
- For the “*Truth Worth Believing*” radio message ministry.
- For the evangelistic newspaper articles.

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- For the Lord to add some younger families to our congregation.
- For faithfulness in hospitality and outreach.
- For incorporation of several visiting families.
- For elderly members facing cancer and health issues.
- For a desire to grow in sanctification and piety.

## SouthWest Presbytery News

### Grace OPC, San Antonio, TX

Grace OPC began its existence as an Orthodox Presbyterian church on June 15, 1978. Its history, however, looks back to June of 1963. Rev. Duane Edward Spencer was then a Methodist minister resigning from the Methodist Church because of its theological liberalism. Other members left with him and together they established Grace Bible Church of San Antonio. The first worship services were held in the ballroom of a Ramada Inn.

The church steadily grew and a seven-acre tract of land was purchased near the intersection of Interstate 10 and NW Loop 410. Military barracks buildings were moved onto the property and later remodeled into an attractive complex for church use. Eventually proceeds from the sale of this property would fund construction of the present church facilities at Interstate 10 and Utex Blvd.

Rev. Spencer was a popular figure on the Bible conference circuit and developed an international radio ministry. His method of preaching and teaching centered on what he called *"key words of Scripture."* This involved studying individual words of the Bible, in their original languages, as a means of interpreting Scripture. The result was a rediscovery of the truths of the Bible as taught by the Protestant Reformers.

Ultimately Rev. Spencer became convinced that the Reformation was a watershed in church history and that the faith of the Reformers (i.e., Reformed Theology) was solidly based on the word of God. In 1977 the congregation of Grace Bible, after investigating Reformed churches with which to unite,

applied for membership in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.



Rev. Spencer created controversy in the mid-1970's preaching from the Scriptures concerning election and predestination. In most churches these doctrines were either vilified or suppressed. The English reformer John Bradford once wrote, *"Let a man go to the grammar school of faith and repentance before he goes to the university of election and predestination."* For many, Rev. Duane Spencer opened the doors to that *"university."*

Grace OPC's beloved Pastor Duane Spencer went home to glory on December 28, 1981. He was succeeded in the ministry by Rev. Jack Peterson, who was Grace's pastor for more than 20 years before being succeeded by their current pastor, Rev. Nathan Hornfeld.

Rev. Jack J. Peterson recently celebrated his 88th birthday and entered a nursing home. Born in 1929 in Kenosha, Wisconsin, few figures have been as beloved in the history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as *"Texas Jack."*

Just as beloved in the church over the decades has been his dear wife, Betty, whom Pastor Jack married in 1952. Ordained in 1957, Pastor Jack would serve Bayview OPC, Chula Vista, CA (1957–1960), Stratford OPC, Stratford, NJ (1961–1966), Bethel OPC, Carson, North Dakota, and Lark OPC, Lark, North Dakota (1967–1979), and Grace OPC, San Antonio, Texas (1979–2001). He also served denominationally on the Committee for Revisions, the Committee on Christian

Education, the Committee on Foreign Missions and the Committee on Ecumenicity and InterChurch Relations.



**Pastor "Texas Jack" and Betty Peterson**

Rev. Jack Peterson and the Session of Grace OPC, San Antonio, TX, served the Lord with passion as they enabled and facilitated the development of Providence OPC, Pflugerville, TX. Grace OPC had a passion to plant a church in Austin. The session records of Grace OPC shows that the decision to proceed with a church plant was made on February 18, 1980, in the year before Pastor Duane went to be with the Lord.

Pastor Jack and the Session of Grace OPC not only started the difficult work of planting Providence OPC, Pflugerville, Texas, but did so through a time of significant change at Grace OPC - this speaks volumes about the love they have for the bride of the Lamb.

Grace OPC's Pastor Nathan Hornfeld serves a congregation of approximately 110 communicant members, with average weekly attendance of 120-130. Grace OPC is an established congregation with long-term members who need kind and gentle pastoral care. This is a challenge as the church today has one ruling elder who labors in the field with Pastor Hornfeld. Pastor Hornfeld also served on the PSW Committee on Leave of Absence and Sessional Records.

## PRAYERS:

- For Pastor Hornfeld and his family as they labor at Grace OPC.
- For Elder Vernon Jackson in his work on the Session.
- That the Lord will raise up additional elders and deacons to serve His people at Grace OPC
- For two families grieving recent loss of loved family members.
- For the peace and comfort of Pastor Jack and Betty Peterson - with great praise for many years of faithful service to the King of kings.
- For healing of members with health issues.
- That the Lord shall be gracious towards Covenant children of Grace OPC and keep them from harm's way.

## Listening In and Sounding Out

### San Antonio Reformed Church

The CRE Church in San Antonio closed its doors recently. Please pray for five (5) families searching - ask the Lord that they may find a welcoming new church home at San Antonio Reformed.

Pray also for a joint Thanksgiving service with Grace OPC and two PCA churches. Pray for joyful fellowship and a growing bond in Christ.

Pray for that San Antonio Reformed church may grow in zeal to share the gospel in the community.

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

Email: [clerk@southaustinpres.org](mailto:clerk@southaustinpres.org)

Phone: +1 (512) 900-1654