



Harvest Call

December 2, 2018

OPC Ecumenicity

A Call to Unity

Harvest Call newsletter seeks to promote the unity of the Reformed and Presbyterian churches in every area where the gospel is faithfully proclaimed and where the beloved saints of Jesus Christ are carefully nurtured and equipped for the upbuilding and enlargement of the kingdom of Christ.

OPC Sister Church

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as it is known today comes from a lengthy history of service in two lands, the British Isles and North America. Originating with the preaching of John Knox that resulted in the planting of the official church of Scotland in 1560 A.D. Controversy and bitter strife soon emerged over control - and this became a way of life for church and state alike.

Under King William III things improved considerably in 1688 A.D. as he reorganized the Church of Scotland into the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland. This was short-lived as a great number of problems remained, and in 1733 a pastor by the name of Ebenezer Erskine led a group of Christians in forming a separate Associate Presbytery (the progenitor of the ARPC today). Ten years later, another group organized themselves into the Reformed Presbytery.

Both churches spread to Northern Ireland as the Scots were forced to emigrate and both came to America with those "Scots-Irish" folks. The immigrants first settled in the Pennsylvania area, and there both the Associate and the Reformed Presbyteries of Pennsylvania were organized in the 1750-1770 time frame.

It was a heady time in the new world, and all the "old alliances" were being called into question. The new

America was emerging and at the same time our forefathers were seeking to create a new church as well. Formal union talks between the "Associates" and the "Reformed" began in 1777 and by 1782 the Associate Reformed Synod came to be in Philadelphia. This Synod, even though all "Associates" and "Reformed" did not join, included churches in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, North and South Carolina and Georgia.



Ebenezer Erskine

Eight years later, the Associate Reformed Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia was formed in Abbeville County, S.C., followed some twenty years later (1803) by the division of the entire church into four Synods and one General Synod. The Synods were those of the Carolinas, Pennsylvania, New York and Scioto with the headquarters of the church in Philadelphia. In 1822 the Synod of the Carolinas was granted separate status, and by the end of the century was the sole remaining body of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as several mergers over the years had absorbed the rest of the denomination into the old United Presbyterian Church. The remaining "A.R.P.s" in the Southeast continued on as the denomination that exists today.

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church today has approx. 29,000 communicant members, approx. 265 congregations, 9 presbyteries, and approx. 470 ministers. Her confessional standards consists in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. As tertiary standards she has a Form of Government, a Directory for Public Worship, and a Book of Discipline.

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church has mission works in Mexico, Pakistan, Spain, Germany, France, Turkey, England, Wales, Scotland, Lithuania, Poland, Colombia, Uganda, Rwanda, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, Persian outreach. She is an active member of NAPARC.

PRAYERS:

- For continued faithful witness and growth.
- For the future work of missionary Andrew Brunson (a graduate of Erskine Seminary and former missionary to Turkey).
- For the work of World Witness in her mission fields.

OPC Sister Congregation

Trinity Reformed Church (RPCNA) - Wichita, KS

A congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, Trinity began in the '90's. Total membership is in the mid-30's, they are a small congregation in South Central Kansas. They are blessed to have growing leadership: in addition to Pastor Joe Allyn, they have two Ruling Elders and two Deacons.

Trinity welcome visiting families and those seeking to grow in building one another up. Trinity have attempted a few neighborhood Bible Studies and have begun live-streaming our worship services on Facebook.

PRAYERS:

- For faithful walk and witness.
- For grace to sustain the work without weariness or burn-out.
- For Elder Rob Haynes as he takes a sabbatical.
- For members who are in poor health.
- For the Lord to use Trinity church for His glory in the city of Wichita and beyond.

OPC Congregation

Trinity Presbyterian Church, Newberg, OR

Newberg, Oregon, lies nestled on the Willamette River at the mouth of the Chehalem Valley. Apple, cherry, and filbert orchards as well as vineyards cling to the hillsides, and wheat and berries flourish in the rich bottom soil. Newberg has grown from a tiny farm community to a town with a college and light industry. Many of its residents are employed in Portland or its suburbs. The roots of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church here also reach into Portland.



Trinity OPC Core Members in 1962

In September 1961 a Bible study led by the Rev. Albert G. Edwards, III, pastor of First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Portland, was begun in the home of Marinus and Catherine Vanden Hoek in Newberg. The Vanden Hoeks, who farmed just outside the town, had spent several years looking for a Reformed church that was faithful to the Word of God. A radio ad for evangelistic services in the First OPC had drawn the Vanden Hoeks to the Portland congregation. On March 4, 1962, the Bible study expanded to Sunday worship services led by Mr. Edwards, and held in facilities rented from the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. The growing work soon attracted Mrs. Gay Buckley and the Marcus Beckett, Fenn Bourland, Laurence Bourland, and Richard Hill families, among others.

On March 12, 1964, the group was officially organized as Trinity Presbyterian Church of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and called the Rev. Herbert W.

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Butt as its first pastor. Membership at the end of 1964 stood at thirty-seven communicants and twenty covenant children.

1965 was a year of transition for the church. Because of a change in his theological position, Mr. Butt resigned from the pastorate and from OPC ministry. The congregation suffered a decline in membership. On November 7, 1965, the church held its first service in the building at 619 E. Sheridan Street. By the end of the year the church had called the Rev. Robert W. Newsom, who served as pastor from March 8, 1966 until December 31, 1972.

Arthur G. Ames served as pastor from May 1973 through October 1976. The present pastor, John W. Mahaffy, was installed on May 20, 1977. Through much of its first quarter century the session consisted of the pastor and ruling elders Laurence F. Bourland and Marinus Vanden Hoek.

Rev. John and Sylvia Mahaffy are both alumni of Dordt College (where they met). John graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary in 1970 and served an OPC congregation in Tulsa before moving to Newberg. They are the parents of six adult children and grandparents of 20 (living). John serves on the Committee on Foreign Missions of the OPC, and is in the habit of taking minutes at the OPC General Assembly. He is active on the board of the local crisis pregnancy center. Sylvia is a retired teacher, volunteering full time in a tiny Christian school.

When the building the church they had purchased in 1965 deteriorated to the point that it had to be demolished, the church again met in rented facilities, first the Seventh Day Adventist building, and then in a small building (originally built as a blacksmith shop) used as a senior citizens club. Eventually, over a three-year period the church was able to construct the building (built pay-as-you-go) on its present location. The first worship service in the building was held on December 24, 1995. In the late 1990's the church, which had been predominantly older members, saw the addition of a number of families with young children. The growth in numbers was accompanied by the ordination of additional ruling elders and deacons. After membership peaked about a decade later, the

church again suffered a decline. It appears to be growing again slowly.



The church holds a Bible study on alternate Friday evenings in Astoria, on the Oregon coast. Pastor Mahaffy does some chaplaincy work with patients and staff at Providence Newberg Medical Center. By God's grace, orchards and vineyards are not the only fruit seen in the Newberg area. The Trinity website is at: <http://trinitynewberg.org/>

PRAYERS:

- Ruling elder Don Campbell has been diagnosed with ALS. Please pray for the Lord to uphold him and his wife, Judy.
- Door to door calling tends to be unproductive in the Northwest. Several housing developments are being built near our building. In the next weeks and months the church plans to greet people as they move in with a loaf of home baked bread and a note about the bread of life. Pray for the Lord to be preparing hearts for the sowing of the Word.

SouthWest Presbytery News

Pastor Jack Jay Peterson - A Tribute

On November 24, 2018, in an act of eternal kindness the Lord God called His servant, Rev. Jack Jay Peterson home to glory. Born in Kenosha, Wisconsin October 10, 1929. He graduated from Wheaton College in 1951 with a BA degree. He was married to Betty Lubbers on June 20 1952, and graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary Philadelphia PA in 1954 with a B.D, and in 1955 with a ThM. Jack and Betty were blessed with three children: Sharon (Prendez), David, and Debbie (Bassett).

Jack's church membership was transferred a number of times during his remarkable lifetime, but at last he finally transferred to the church triumphant on Saturday November 24, 2018 at about 5 pm. He was preceded in death by his parents, Hjalmar and Beatrice Peterson and his daughter Sharon. He is survived by his loving and faithful wife of 67 years, Betty, by his son David and his wife Tami and their 2 children Jessica and Justin by his daughter Debbie Bassett and husband Jodie and their 4 children, Philip and his wife Christine, Joel, Rachel and Jonathan. He is also survived by their 4 great grandchildren, Naomi, Leif, Penelope, and Edmund, and is survived by his son-in-law Fernando Prendez and his wife Darlene.



Jack Peterson and John Galbraith (circa 1984)

Jack Peterson was ordained in the Presbytery of California of the OPC on May 21, 1957. From April 23, 1958 until 1960 he was the organizing pastor at Bayview OPC in Chula Vista, California. From 1961-1966 he was at the Stratford New Jersey Church. From 1966-67 he was a Home Missionary for the OPC in West Palm Beach, Florida. From 1968-1979 he was pastor at OPC churches in Carson and Lark and Leith North Dakota. From 1979-2001 he was pastor at Grace OPC San Antonio, Texas. Jack was an exemplary minister of the gospel and a fine churchman. The Lord used him to point many people to Christ and to lead them to the truths of the Bible. Known as "Texas Jack" to his friends, he has left an indelible imprint upon the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He retired in 2001.

The Consummate Churchman

During his pastorate at Grace OPC he worked tirelessly in the Presbytery of the Dakotas (1979-1986), and when the Presbytery of the Southwest was formed in 1986 he became one of its beacon servants.

In 1970 Jack Peterson, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the Dakotas, was instrumental in helping to lay the foundations for Covenant Presbyterian Church, Abilene, to be brought in as the first OPC church in Texas. In 1977 the Amarillo Chapel (later named Grace OPC, and then becoming Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church) came under the oversight of the Abilene church. On October 1, 1982, the Presbytery of the Dakotas granted a request and declared that Grace OPC be divided from Abilene and be constituted a particular church, and that officers be installed on October 20, 1982.

From 1979, as a pastor of Grace OPC, San Antonio, Jack laid the foundations for Providence OPC in Pflugerville, Texas. For six years he pastored Grace, travelled to Austin, Texas, to conduct bible studies and eventually worship services, until Rev. Gerry Taylor was appointed as the founding pastor for Providence OPC, Pflugerville (1984).

In November 1983, Jack Peterson, along with Elder Fred Klatt (San Antonio) and Rev. Gerry Taylor (Austin) travelled to Tyler, Texas, to interview families for reception into the OPC. They examined prospective elders in December 1983, and on January 4, 1984, Tyler OPC was particularized as an OPC congregation together with the installation of Rev. John H. Johnson and the elders of Tyler OPC.

In 1985 Jack Peterson was already one of the founding fathers of the Presbytery of the Southwest. Jack made it his priority to be always available to assist the work of Christ's church, but rumour has it that he failed to attend Youth Camp on one occasion before his retirement - that was so that he could honor his bride on occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary!

In addition to his ministry of pastoring churches, he was very active in serving the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in many capacities. He served on the GA Committee for Revisions (working to revise the Book of

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Church Order), the Committee on Christian Education, the Committee on Foreign Missions, and the Committee on Ecumenicity and InterChurch Relations. Through this work, Jack became a well known figure for the OPC across current NAPARC and ICRC churches.



Betty and Rev. Jack Peterson

The Tender-hearted Pastor

Mrs. JoAnn Vandenberg notes: *“We have so many precious memories playing games and lots of singing. It was my privilege to ride along to Presbytery meetings whenever there was room. Since Texas and North Dakota were in the same Presbytery we got to visit even after they left our churches. In March, 1984 our North Dakota group were invited to stay at the Petersons. I got sick and was unable to return with the others. Jack and Betty saw that I was well cared for and got me on the plane for Denver. (Snow storm) I stayed with my son Perry for about a month. We have kept in touch through the years. Jack was our pastor for many years. Taught us many things. We have wonderful memories of our years with the Petersons. Music was always an important part, a blessing we cherish!!”*

Mrs. Sandra TerHaar wrote: *“Jack was my pastor in North Dakota from 4th grade through college who profoundly nurtured my love for the church, my appreciation for music, and shaped my understanding of the Reformed faith. He was the pastor who married my husband Dean and me. I'm thankful for the gift he was to us. Prayers for Betty, Debbie Bassett, David*

Peterson and the extended family as you grieve. Jack J Peterson a dear friend and mentor. Can't say enough about him, an OPC treasure! Will see him in glory!”

Mrs. Chris Morgan says: *“... He travelled weekly to lead the Austin Bible study which would become Providence OPC in Austin, even though, ... there few of us in the group for quite a long while. He would say, **“Never despise the day of small things!”** ... He was dead serious about the Reformed faith. And yet also, he always had a certain impish twinkle in his eye, a great sense of humor.”*

Rev. Andrew Moody comments:

I was blessed to have Jack Peterson as my pastor for all my childhood into moving away in early adulthood. He was fond of telling the story of my baptism. I was about one year old when Jack helped convince my parents that the Bible teaches infant baptism, and I cried loudly as he administered the sacrament. *“Some come kicking and screaming into the kingdom”* was Jack’s humorous remark.

The Petersons are a musical family, and I grew up singing first under Betty’s direction in the children’s choir, and then before long with the older children and adult choir during the worship services. I started out as a soprano, and over time made my way around the choir loft until I ended up in the bass section where I often sat next to Jack as we praised God together, making quiet jokes in the back row during practice.

Although he was a serious churchman, Jack had a love for humor. Sometimes he would change the words of a piece we were practicing so that only I could hear. As a young boy, he would allow me to snap his suspenders, and he put up with a good bit of my silliness.

Jack had a secret language, that infected those close to him. He would swap the first letters of words, and say things like “gery vood”, “lee you sater”, “dow you hoin”, etc. I found great enjoyment learning to speak his language, and worked hard to be able to do it on the fly.

He was always giving of himself to others. He was quick to share his private stash of diet cokes, and his time. I recall with fondness the aroma of pipe tobacco

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that followed him everywhere. He spent a good bit of time traveling and serving beyond his work in San Antonio. He traveled weekly to Austin to help plant a new church, and endeavored to keep close ties with the new church. He traveled regularly for his work with the denomination, including committee meetings, regular attendance at General Assembly, and important trips overseas to represent the OPC to our sister denominations around the world. For many of our sister churches, he was the face of the OPC.

In 2001 I spent a semester in the Netherlands and visited the headquarters for the Reformatorisch Dagblad (the Reformed Daily newspaper). My class had lunch with the editor of the religion section, and when he heard I was from Texas, his first question was, "Do you know Jack Peterson?" It turns out he was fondly known as "Texas Jack" by friends the world round.

He served with a quiet steadiness and faithfulness that has inspired others to stay the course through the difficulties that come with pastoral ministry. No task that needed doing was beneath him. He served. He continued serving the church remaining active in retirement, until his health interfered.

He was a staple at our Presbytery youth camp for decades, going back into his service in the Presbytery of the Dakotas. He led the daily worship services and directed the camp choir. Even after he retired from the pastorate in 2001, he continued his faithful attendance and service at camp through 2009. Most years he also participated in the talent show singing a hymn in parts with others, and often with his grandchildren. He regularly encouraged campers and counselors to share their musical gifts with others by participating in the choir and talent show. He championed the ministry of the camp to the Presbytery, and was a vocal supporter of ministry to young people in the church.

His ministry has born much fruit in my life, and am reminded regularly of his example as a faithful pastor and churchman. I give thanks to God for the life, ministry, and friendship of Jack Peterson.

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For Jack Jay Peterson a new endless chapter has begun. May we take note that the labors of the saints are a durable testimony to the greatness of Christ the Redeemer and Covenant Lord. May we take comfort in the words of Revelation 14:13:

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

Let us praise God for His infinite mercies and for the faithful labors of His servants. May there be more like him!

Listening In & Sounding Out

Rev. Nick Lammé arrived on the Houston Harvey mission field on November 12th. The Houston churches are looking forward to this wonderful development. Rev. Lammé is on a 2-year assignment, called of the Presbytery of the Southwest (OPC), to initiate outreach, evangelism, and follow-up. The Lammés most recently served in Costa Rica (as missionaries w/ the URC and later w/ the Costa Rican Bible Society). Rosie, his wife, and their four children will not be able to arrive until after January 1st. This January arrival is due to the children's school schedules in Costa Rica.

PRAYERS:

- For the Lammé family adjustment to Houston.
- For the Lord's direction in Pastor Nick's steps in outreach and discipleship to the families affected by Hurricane Harvey!
- For discipleship in the Word, conversions, for effective means of inviting and welcoming people into the worship of the Lord.

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