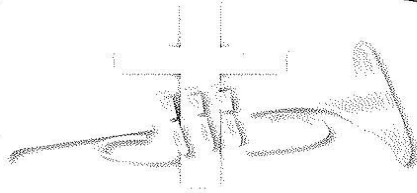


# THE TRUMPET



*"The great trumpet will be blown, they will come, who are about to perish" Isaiab 27:13 (NKJ)*

## **Christ Reformed Church Washington, DC**

Christ Reformed Church in Washington, DC, ([www.ChristReformedDC.org](http://www.ChristReformedDC.org)) has been richly blessed during its short existence in the heart of our nation's capitol, and all of us affiliated with it are deeply grateful for the Lord's provision. Barely over a year ago, in April of 2007, a small group gathered to study the Heidelberg Catechism and explore the possibilities of planting a church. Seven months later, November 4, 2007, we held our first service in the Dupont Circle neighborhood of Washington, DC.

Planting a confessional Reformed church from scratch means gathering people from a wide range of backgrounds who are united primarily not by worship style or geography or ethnicity, but by the truth of the gospel, and a deep desire to see the church faithfully proclaim Christ crucified to a dying world. It has been remarkable to see a small body of believers being knit together in such a short time through their common confession of Christ. Most of us were strangers to one another a year ago, and

now we linger long after our weekly service sharing our joys and burdens as the body of Christ.

Compared to the people, a building is far from the most important thing needful when planting a church, yet in the urban core of Washington, securing a suitable space in which to worship seemed like it might be a nearly insurmountable obstacle. It was a happy providence indeed when we learned that a historic stone church was available for rent on reasonable terms. Thrilled to have a foothold in the city and a roof over our head, the elevated stone pulpit and prominent baptismal font were an unexpected bonus that instantly convey to visitors the focal point of our worship: Word and Sacrament.

We sit on 16th Street NW, one mile due north of the White House on a major north-south corridor, and a number of our congregants are able to reach us by public transportation. While many of our members drive in to the city from the neighboring suburbs in Virginia and Maryland, it is our prayer that we would continue to be a faithful witness to the many

city-dwellers who live a short walk from our facility. One benefit of this central location has been a regular stream of out-of-town visitors who come to Washington for business or on vacation. We have been joined by believers of all stripes, many seeking Reformed worship, and they have come from all across America, Canada, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Our growth has been gradual but steady. We have been encouraged by URC families moving in to the area, and we have already been blessed by a marriage and a few births — all to different members, mind you. One highlight of our brief existence was my ordination service, during which Rev. Steve Arrick and many members from Covenant URC in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, joined us. We have been privileged to have this young church, some three hours by car north of us, extend itself in kindness and goodwill. Their prayers and direction have been a constant source of encouragement and wisdom.

Please visit us online at [www.ChristReformedDC.org](http://www.ChristReformedDC.org), where we seek to keep a semi-frequent update of our news and needs, as well as a few pictures of our lovely church home. We also have sermons available for download or pod cast — I am happy to see a small picture of Christ Reformed Church pop up among many other URC ministers when one searches for "Reformed sermons" on iTunes.

Thank you for your continued prayers.

Dr. Brian Lee

## **Philippine Mission**

**By Rev. Nollie Malabuyo  
Associate Pastor**

**Trinity United Reformed Church  
Walnut Creek, California**

### **Calling to the Ministry**

I grew up in a Christian home, as my father was the pastor of our church in Manila. I received my Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of the Philippines in 1973, immigrated to the United States in 1976, and married the former Evelyn Roxas in 1977. The Lord has blessed our home with three boys and a girl.

After a 19-year career as an engineer in the United States, I returned to my former homeland as a missionary of Wycliffe Bible Translators in 1995. While serving in Davao City in the southern Philippines as a computer specialist, I started a Bible study in our home that formed the core group of Davao Covenant Reformed Church. This church came under the supervision of Trinity United Reformed Church (Trinity URC) in Walnut Creek, California, from 1999-2005. Mr. Vic Bernales served as lay minister there, and later on was given opportunity to study at Mid-America Reformed Seminary from where he received his Master of Divinity degree in May 2008.

In 2001, I went on a study leave to attend Westminster Seminary in California. After receiving my Master of Divinity degree in 2005, I sustained my candidacy examination in 2006, and subsequently, Escondido URC announced my eligibility for a call. In May 2008, I was called and ordained as an Associate Pastor by Trinity URC.

I believe that there is a great need for a truly Reformed ministry in the Philippines. Although evangelical churches are established all over the country, faithful Reformed churches are very rare. Most evangelical churches are a combination of Baptist and Pentecostal characteristics. Even those churches whose labels are Reformed and Presbyterian hardly manifest their distinctives. The goal of my work then is to be faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ's Great Commission in three distinctly Reformed ministries: (1) church planting, (2) evangelism, and (3) ministerial education.

## Religious Mixture

The Philippines has a population of nearly 90 million people spread over 7,000 islands. According to Wycliffe Bible Translators, there are over 170 different languages spoken, with only about 50 language groups with a complete Bible or New Testament. Because the country was a Spanish colony for three centuries, 85 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. Only 3 percent are Protestants, and the rest are Muslims, Buddhists, and other religions. Many of the Protestants belong to Arminian-Dispensational Pentecostal, Baptist, and independent evangelical, as well as liberal mainline denominations. Cults abound all over the country, the biggest one being the *Iglesia ni Cristo* (Church of Christ), a misnomer because it holds to an Arian Christology. Most of the Filipino people are very superstitious, and their religions are usually syncretistically blended with superstition and paganism.

The proposed target area of a church plant is a suburban area about 20 miles east of the city center of Manila. As with many other suburban areas outside of Manila, these cities are densely populated, with small middle to upper class communities, but largely made up of

poor families. The estimated population of this area is about two to three million, with an annual population increase of 2.5 - 3 percent.

## Reformed Church Planting

As mentioned above, the need in the Philippines for Reformed churches faithful to Reformed doctrine and worship is great. In filling this need, my goals are:

- 1. To start Bible studies for believers who are interested in learning Reformed doctrine and worship.** Although the Reformed faith has met stiff resistance in a country where Arminianism and Pentecostalism prevail, patient and persevering discipleship of those who are interested has produced some fruits, one of them Davao Covenant Reformed Church. My goal is to start a Reformed Bible study group near our home east of Manila that will later become a mission church affiliated with a Reformed denomination.
- 2. To mentor pastors of existing churches who are interested in teaching the Reformed faith to their congregations.** Over the last three years, I have mentored three ministers who have since embraced Reformed theology and reestablished Reformed worship in the churches where they serve. I plan to continue mentoring other pastors who also seek to be taught Reformed doctrine and worship.
- 3. To start Bible studies for unbelievers who are interested in learning about the Christian religion, especially those who have Roman Catholic background.** As I network with others in the Filipino community, I am praying that God would be gracious to open offices, schools, and other avenues for these Bible studies.

## Reformed Study Center

Lord willing, I am planning to open a Reformed Study Center in our area. My target would be pastors and lay leaders who do not

have access to study resources for their Bible studies, sermon preparation, and Sunday schools because of financial constraints. College students will also be welcomed.

The study center will serve the Christian community in several ways: (1) as a place of worship, when the need eventually arises; (2) as a study center for pastors/elders, providing them with a library of Reformed books and multimedia resources, as well as training such as lectures, seminars and conferences; and (3) as a place for group Bible study.

## Reformed Education

There are many Bible schools and seminaries in the Philippines, particularly in the Metro Manila area. However, these Bible schools and seminaries are mostly non-denominational, mainstream evangelical institutions. As far as I know, there is no truly Reformed paedo-baptistic Bible school or seminary in the whole country.

I praise God that a couple of Bible schools have opened their doors for me to teach men and women training for church ministries. Being a graduate of a United States institution, I am considered to be a highly educated man in the Philippines. As such, my offer to serve as a lecturer was quickly and gratefully taken up by these two schools.

## Conclusion

I thank the Lord for calling me to this wonderful work of proclaiming the gospel, planting Reformed churches, and training pastors in the Philippines, and for opening the door to this mission work. I humbly pray that our Lord Jesus Christ will prosper the Lord's kingdom in the Philippines and throughout all nations of the earth.

## Mars Hill Study Center

Lord willing, Mars Hill Study Center, located in suburban eastern Metro Manila, Philippines, will open its doors to the public on July 15, 2008. Since our target communities are in Antipolo, Taytay, Cainta, Pasig and Mandaluyong, it will be centrally located in Ortigas Avenue Extension in the heart of Pasig City.

## Our Name

Upon his arrival in Athens (Acts 17:16-34) on his second missionary journey, one of Paul's first destinations was the Areopagus, the "*Hill of Ares*," the Greek god of war, known by Romans as *Mars*. Proud of their great artists, writers and thinkers, Athens was also the cradle of democracy and the center of learning. It was in the Areopagus where the best philosophers of the civilized world - Stoics and Epicureans - discussed their "latest and greatest" ideas. Sensing that Paul was bringing some new "philosophy" and "a preacher of foreign divinities," the Athenians asked him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." And day by day, as in the synagogue and in the marketplace, Paul reasoned with them, using their own poets and philosophers to preach the gospel of the risen Christ against their many idols.

## Our Purpose

Mars Hill Study Center is a Christian study and teaching center seeking to glorify God through pastoral education and training. Its primary task is to provide free resources to pastors in nearby communities, including:

- Printed and electronic media such as books, commentaries, journals, magazines and periodicals;
- Audiovisual electronic media such as DVDs, CDs, and tapes;
- Seminars and workshops on various topics necessary to be effective in church ministry; and
- Internet resources.

These resources will cover biblical, theological, and ministerial disciplines to help pastors to develop intellectually and spiritually as leaders. While the focus of the study center is to educate and prepare men for office-bearing ordained ministries of instruction and leadership as pastors, it will also make its resources available for other men and women who desire to serve the church so that the whole body of Christ may be enriched through the diverse gifts bestowed by God's Spirit.

The mission of Mars Hill Study Center is to assist churches in preparing and training their pastors for leadership and ministry by providing substantive resources and curriculum. It seeks to develop in its students a balanced combination of knowledge (scholarship) and zeal (Christ-like piety) by expanding their Biblical knowledge, stimulate analytical and critical thinking, and challenge them to cultivate godly and righteous lives in order to present a credible testimony to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You are warmly invited to visit Mars Hill Study Center: to glorify Christ, to teach his Gospel, to serve his Church. Tell your friends! Download an [announcement](#) or a [needs](#) flyer.

## HISPANIC CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

**A Ministry of Covenant Reformed Church of Toronto in Partnership with Faith United Reformed Church of West Olive, Michigan**

### TRIP REPORT - NICARAGUA AND HONDURAS - JULY 2 TO 21, 2008

This ministry trip has been the longest and one of the most complicated because of flight problems, delayed luggage, etc. But in spite of losing several days of planned ministry activities, and the burdensome stress of having the hard disk on my laptop crash mid-trip, the Lord blessed the trip beyond what I could have imagined. The challenges experienced phased into insignificance in comparison with the fruits reaped.

#### NICARAGUA PORTION OF THE TRIP

**León** - I had the privilege of starting a new Center in León. The 45 students here represent my largest Study Center to date. They eagerly received a course on Hermeneutics and one of the students has already made plans to start a group in his home town, Jinotepe, about two hours from this Center.

**Managua** - I have been in touch with a Reformed Church here over the last several years. During this trip I met with 12 students who received an orientation to MINTS and have committed themselves to starting a Center and receiving their first course during my next ministry trip to Nicaragua.

**Estelí** - I have been helping students from this Centre with a prison ministry in their community administered by Crossroads Bible Institute. They experienced a temporary setback due to a change in prison directors, but I just received an email saying that this week their ministry was reviewed and approved once again.

**Puerto Cabezas** - I taught "Doctrines of Grace" during this visit. This group has now received ten MINTS courses and they are experiencing more consistent student attendance. They are showing tremendous maturity in their course work and in the leadership in their churches and in the community.

**Hurricane Felix Project** - I visited the village (two hour boat ride) where four MINTS Students are working with the rebuilding of homes and related community re-establishment projects under the administration of Word & Deed Ministries. In spite of obstacles, they are making progress in the project.

**Managua Prison Ministry Centre** - Due to security issues in the prison the planned conference was cancelled. The students here are eagerly studying, but have unique circumstances that make their study progress and coordination with them rather difficult. I am linking them with Crossroads Bible Institute.

## **HONDURAS PORTION OF THE TRIP**

My visit to Honduras was cut short because of flight problems. I was able to make a brief visit to leaders of three of the centers to coordinate plans for the next visit. One new Center was established in San Pedro Sula. The Center in Puerto Lempira (indigenous Miskito population) has been experiencing some growing pains. During the visit I was able to provide

encouragement, and they are currently studying their third course with 17 students. I have scheduled a 10-day visit in September to attend all five Honduras Study Centers.

**Financial Update:** The HCM committee treasurer reports that the funding for the ministry is critical at this point. We continue to trust the Lord for His financial blessing through your generous donations.

Rev. Eric Pennings,

Miami International Seminary (MINTS)  
Central America Regional Coordinator

**Canadian Donations:** Hispanic Christian Ministry, c/o Covenant Reformed Church, 265 Albion Road, Toronto, Ontario M9W 3P1

**US Donations:** Hispanic Christian Ministry, c/o Faith United Reformed Church, 8270 120<sup>th</sup> Ave., West Olive, Michigan 49460

## **Classis Michigan Missions Committee Website**

To keep up to date on URC mission activities, go on line and check out MissionsURC.org. Churches and URC Mission Committees are invited to send information on their mission projects at home and abroad to CMMC secretary Don Van Dyke at donvandyke@tm.net.

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