

# Covenant Protestant Reformed Church Ballymena, NI

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15 November, 2010

Dear saints in the  
Protestant Reformed Churches,

## **New Church Building**

Being in our own church building has brought many benefits. No more setting up of chairs for Sunday services or people driving on the country roads to the manse for Bible studies! Now we have somewhere to call our own, somewhere to hold additional Bible studies, somewhere with good parking, somewhere suitable for those with small children, somewhere with easy access for the elderly. Comfortable pews, lots of room for storage, a beautiful cabinet to display books and pamphlets, and good facilities for tea after our various meetings and classes! It has even helped with free advertising. Besides the papers I mentioned in my last bi-monthly letter, the *English Churchman* and *Evangelicals Now* both carried reports on the opening of our church building, along with a photo. There was also a notice in the *Belfast News Letter*.

If you ever make it to Ballymena, you would recognise not only the same literature in the narthex/foyer and the Protestant Reformed doctrine taught from the pulpit, but even exiting the sanctuary on the Lord's day would be familiar. Now the minister shakes hands with the saints as they leave the sanctuary after the service and then we fellowship in the narthex. This was not really possible in the hall we used to rent.

Tommy Hamill, our former building project manager, is our caretaker, with Philip Hall as the assistant caretaker. David Crossett is our chief greeter. Alison Graham is responsible for catering, ably helped by the ladies. Many of the saints gladly assist

with cleaning, etc. Settling into our new church building also seemed like a good time to produce a new list of CPRC addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail numbers.

Thank you for your continued help with the CPRC (NI) Building Fund. Any day now a bill should arrive from our contractor in the order of \$180,000 (in your currency). Also we plan to purchase a new photocopier (the old one has been on its last legs for a long time!), whiteboards, curtains, etc. Sometime after that, we hope to install equipment for the live webcasting of our services (DV).

## **New Church Season**

This year we have 9 catechumens in 3 classes meeting in the upstairs catechism room, instead of in various houses: Joseph Kennedy; Jacob, Nathan, and Alex Buchanan; Zoe, Amy, and Lea Campbell; Lydia and Campbell Napier.

On Tuesday morning, we have a Bible study on II Thessalonians (a crèche or nursery is provided), which especially suits mothers with young children and retired saints. Our *Belgic Confession* Class meets on Wednesday evenings. The audios of these classes are recorded and put on-line along with the various handouts ([www.cprf.co.uk/audio/belgicconfessionclass.htm](http://www.cprf.co.uk/audio/belgicconfessionclass.htm)).

Matt Kortus, of Loveland PRC, was with us from 18-23 September, so he was able to attend the first meetings of both classes (II Thessalonians and the *Belgic Confession*) in our new church building. We have also had some local visitors attend these meetings. The *Ballymena Times* and the *Ballymena Guardian* carried the article I sent them

about the new church season at the CPRC, and both included a colour photo of the church building.

The ladies also take it in turn to lead a fortnightly (bi-weekly) discussion group. Susan Hall organises the group.

Recently, we concluded a series of eight sermons on “Jerusalem and Antioch” (Acts 11:19-16:5), dealing with fellowship between churches, missionary principles and broader church assemblies—issues particularly relevant to the CPRC in its relationship to its mission work, the Limerick Reformed Fellowship (LRF), and the PRC. Currently, the preaching is on the Lord's Prayer, from the *Heidelberg Catechism*, and “Christian Discipleship,” from Luke 14:25-35.

Hank and Barb De Vries were with us on the last two Sundays of October when in Northern Ireland staying with their daughter, Beth, and her family. We have had a good number of local visitors to our services since we put up our church building, some of whom have been attending fairly regularly. Several have availed themselves of the fine Reformed literature on display in the narthex.

### **Pallet 2**

The second pallet for the CPRC Bookstore containing almost 800 RFPA books, about 300 other PR books or booklets, almost 1,000 copies of *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, and about 3,000 pamphlets was



picked up in Belfast on 28 October. Julian Kennedy (here pictured at Belfast Harbour with more than half the pallet already packed in his own car) helped me transport

the materials to the CPRC manse. There, Mary, Anganeta Dyck, and I unpacked many of the boxes and put about 4,000 stickers on books and pamphlets (giving the postal and e-mail addresses and phone number of the CPRC Bookstore). The photo of our



living room was taken when about half the 65 boxes were opened. Later I stored most of *The Work of the Holy Spirit* book, plus some other boxes, at our church building.

With the arrival of the second pallet, along with the boxes of literature which came on the first pallet (5 August), the CPRC Bookstore is now a lot better stocked than ever before. Now we need to keep selling and distributing it! To this end, we recently produced a new catalogue of books, CD and DVD box sets of sermons, and free pamphlets, which was sent with the last *Covenant Reformed News* ([www.cprf.co.uk/bookstore/CPRCbookcatalogue2010.pdf](http://www.cprf.co.uk/bookstore/CPRCbookcatalogue2010.pdf)). The books are selling well (especially *The Work of the Holy Spirit*), as are the box sets of CDs and DVDs, especially those of the 2010 British Reformed Fellowship Conference (“The Word of God for Our Generation”) and “Ezekiel's Vision of the Future” (Ezek. 37-39). Also a review of a book the CPRC published many years ago critiquing the 1859 Revival in Ulster was included in *The Journal of the Church of England (Continuing)* in September, resulting in several sales.

Tim Pipe and Paula Kamps of the RFPA

did a great job in packing the two pallets. Not a book was damaged in the long journey by road and sea from Jenison across the Atlantic to Ballymena. Active in Missions (AIM) took care of most of the costs of haulage—thank you! We are also grateful to various PR evangelism committees who sent us pamphlets and books free.

### **Limerick and South Wales**

Mary and I transported some books and pamphlets to Rev. McGeown when we drove to Limerick to attend the wedding of two LRF members, Manuel Kuhs and Emily-Kate (Friday, 8 October). It was a wonderful day, and Missionary McGeown preached an excellent sermon at the marriage ceremony in Bunratty Castle Hotel. But Rev. McGeown told you more about that in his last letter.

That Lord's Day (10 October), Rev. McGeown and I did our first pulpit exchange. It worked very well. We next plan to swap pulpits on 26 December, so that Rev. McGeown can spend time with his family.

Mary and I flew to Bristol in England and drove to Porthcawl for a lecture on “Charismaticism” (15 October). It was our first time in South Wales since the British Reformed Fellowship (BRF) Conference in August and it was good to see the saints there again. The speech went well, and sales of books, CDs, and DVDs were excellent. Rev. McGeown is to give the next South Wales lecture (his first) on “God is Love” (3 December).

### **Websites**

Manuel Kuhs of the LRF, the new website manager for the British Reformed Fellowship (BRF), has given the BRF website an attractive new look and added more materials, including audios, videos, photos, and reports of the last conference ([www.britishreformedfellowship.org.uk/](http://www.britishreformedfellowship.org.uk/)).

Stephen Murray has now uploaded 1,125 videos of 193 sermons, lectures, and debates ([www.youtube.com/cprcni](http://www.youtube.com/cprcni)). We get very good feedback from this witness.

To our main website ([www.cprc.co.uk](http://www.cprc.co.uk)) we added a couple more special resources pages, which list various materials (written, audio, and video) on “Church Government” and “Missions.” Also on-line is the letter I had published in the News Letter exposing the treachery of the moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who attended a meeting at which the Pope spoke in Westminster Abbey, London, the building in which the *Westminster Standards*, the creeds he swore to uphold, were framed (<http://www.cprf.co.uk/articles/moderatorbetraysconfession.htm>). This past couple of months have been relatively quiet as regards translations: 7 German, 4 Portuguese, 1 Latvian, and 1 Greek were added. Our main Italian translator, Francesco De Lucia, is, of course, attending seminary, and so has other good work to do!

May the Lord bless and keep you,

By His grace,  
*Rev. & Mary Stewart*