

RBNet Monthly

A monthly publication of the Reformed Baptist Network
April 2021

Praying for each other more specifically,
encouraging one another
with what the LORD is doing,
"Rejoicing with those who rejoice,
weeping with those who weep."

FROM THE COORDINATOR An RBNet Church Plant Story

I just returned from a visit to Conway, South Carolina, where a group of daring mighty men and women are seeking to plant a 1689 Reformed Baptist church about a dozen miles from Myrtle Beach. For years, the Lord has been conceiving and mobilizing this noble vision by creating a hunger and thirst for truth in the hearts of these would-be founders. Each testimony story is unique, but also common, as spiritual growth and exposure to ministries like Grace to You, Ligonier, Desiring God, 9 Marks, etc., along with the Scriptures, grew them independently into a holy dissatisfaction with churches that more conform to the world than to the Word.



The leaders of the hungry band contacted Grace Baptist Church in Taylors (Greenville, SC), and shared their mind to plant. Pastors Mark Hatfield and Jamie Howell responded with open arms by inviting the band to a late November 2020 weekend at Grace where literature and counsel and spirit-filled worship was on tap. They returned back to Conway with a holy vision before them, and an established church behind them.

Having met in homes, they now began the hunt for a building to rent, and the Lord provided a handsome facility that can seat almost 100. Rivertown Grace Fellowship <https://rivertowngrace.org/> meets Sundays at 10:30 a.m. for worship. They're working their way through the 1689 Confession, pouring concrete and steel into the foundation. Let's pray that the Carpenter from Nazareth would wisely constitute them soon, and that this kind of RBNet church-planting would be replicated all around the country, where hunger is reaching epidemic levels. 🙏

– Mark Chanski, RBNet Coordinator

MISSION THOUGHTS

Line Item Missionaries

Is your missionary more than a line item? I surmise that many churches would give a hearty "YES"!

What does a "line item" missionary look like? There may be several answers to this question.

A missionary like this may be one of many missionaries supported by a particular church. The church supports so many missionaries for such small amounts that the congregation is not able to keep up with each missionary. The saints, if asked, might say something like this, "Well I know the name and I think he ministers in Africa." But if asked further the member would not be able to give any more details. The problem is that the church has spread herself so thin in missionary support that it is not possible to be closely involved with any one of her gospel laborers.

A missionary like this may be one who is supported by a missions-minded church and even gives a lot of money for support but the missionary is not brought up regularly for prayer. So once again there is ignorance among the saints and a lack of real connection with the missionary.

A missionary like this may be one who fails to communicate regularly with the supporting churches. The saints are unaware of the prayer needed because there is a lack of communication. There are not very many missionaries in this category, but occasionally it does happen.

How can a church avoid having missionaries that are merely line items? Just a couple of suggestions:

First the church needs to be able to communicate to the entire congregation regularly the needs of all the missionaries she supports.

Secondly, the church needs to have the missionary reporting regularly. With today's technology this can happen not only by personal visits but also via the internet or even regular missionary conferences. 🙏

– Gordon Taylor, RBNet Support

CHURCH UPDATES

**Santa Teresa Baptist Church,
Santa Teresa, NM** Dave Hendrickx, Pastor

Greetings from Santa Teresa Baptist Church, With everyone else, we look forward to the return of some normalcy in April 2021 We have been conducting hybrid Zoom services since August. Most of the younger people in the church have been attending in-person. A few of us 'old people' have been abundantly cautious and have remained self-isolated. It has been with a heavy heart that I have had to preach from home (altogether now for 12 months.) But we see light at the end of the tunnel. I have had my first dose of Pfizer vaccine and anticipate the second by the end of the month. I look forward to preaching in-person at the church on Resurrection Sunday, April 4. My wife will follow several weeks later. I expect by the end of April everyone at STBC that is planning on being vaccinated will have begun the process. With or without the vaccine we rest the Lord's hands. We are his and are dependent on him for all things.

Our brother, Frank Gonzales will soon start his first year, fourth term as a full time, distant-learning student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. We are pleased with his progress at school. Frank has recently begun a new level of ministry at STBC as a pastoral intern. We both (and the church) agree that this is the wisest next step for Frank on the road to the eldership. He will be helping with the teaching ministry of the church by taking responsibility for the adult Sunday school, when it begins again, and preaching once a month.

Prayer request – We ask for prayer as we seek divine wisdom regarding the re-launching of our Sunday school and our monthly fellowship pot-luck meals. Further wisdom is sought in helping decide when to no longer require face-coverings. We are not rushing into anything with our eyes closed. But we seek to consider all prudent guidelines, the wishes of the members, and the blessing of our Lord. 🙏

Church Updates continued on next page

CHURCH UPDATES

Heritage Reformed Baptist Church, Fayetteville, GA

Hank Rast, Pastor

We count it a great privilege to be among you and join with you in our prayers and efforts for the greatest cause. The Lord has blessed us here in our being able to meet regularly with little hindrance since the second week in May. Our governor has been supportive of churches in not subjecting us to the strictures that others have faced. As far as we can tell, the church has not been a “spreader” of the virus, even though several of our folks have contracted Covid 19 in other ways. Most have done well, though we have had a couple of prolonged cases. We lost one of our dear elderly saints on the last day of the year, not to the virus, but to a stroke and heart failure. Some of our elderly folks have had to meet with us through our streaming efforts (a new thing for us!)

The Lord has brought some souls to us who are in the process of membership. One young man from a troubled family desires to pursue biblical counseling and be of help to others who might experience similar trials. Others have come desiring to be fed from God’s word. We long for more conversions among our young people, though many are going on with the Lord and producing fruit. Our evangelism efforts in our neighborhood have been hindered due to the pandemic. The Bible club at the elementary school had to be suspended, but we hope to start that up again in the fall. Our planned initiative in a nearby trailer-home neighborhood has also been put on hold. Please pray that we will be able to get out with the gospel of grace soon. Our ladies are eager to invite friends and family to their Friday morning Bible study. We pray that the Lord might move among them. Our men meet two mornings in different parts of the south metro area. We are praying together for revival in our churches.

Our pastoral intern, Don Rhymer, continues to be a great help to us, preaching and teaching regularly, while working to complete a degree from RBS. We are so thankful for him, and for the opportunity that RBS affords him to learn “on the job.”

The Lord has seen fit to give us a unity as God’s people that we are thankful for. As always the devil is on the prowl, but it is not as though we are unaware of his schemes. The Lord is faithful. ☺

CHURCH UPDATES

Grace Reformed Baptist Church, Camp Hill, PA

Craig Riggall, Pastor

Greetings from Grace Reformed Baptist Church. We rejoice in the Lord’s faithfulness and goodness to so many of our sister churches! Please know that we pray for all of you regularly.

And thank you for your prayers for us! We have had many reasons in these past few months to give praise to God for his work in our congregation. Our Sunday gatherings continue to be a delight: we walk away encouraged and challenged by God’s Word and refreshed by the fellowship with God’s people. We have a constant influx of visitors, many of whom have discovered in the midst of this pandemic that they value a church that reverences God and holds his scriptures highly. Many are considering membership, and we especially rejoice in the salvation of one brother whose life has been absolutely turned-around by the Lord! It is so good to see the joy of salvation! We hope to soon see him baptized.

The beginning of April marks our return to Sunday School classes and thereby a full return to our pre-COVID operations. Through this, the Lord continues to give us health (which we acknowledge to be a mercy of God). Despite varying perspectives on the issues of our day, the Lord continues to give us a great degree of peace and unity as we fix our hearts on the greater goal which is the glory of our God and the expansion of his kingdom!

Please continue to pray for us:

- For continued love, unity, and humility.
- For our ability to reach our community with the good news of Jesus.
- For the provision of a church building that would serve our congregation well. We currently lease space in a business complex, but we are nearing capacity.
- For our ministry to a nearby homeless shelter. Also, that we would be granted permission to continue our ministry in a nearby prison.
- For God’s blessing on the ministry of the Word.

Thank you for your prayers! ☺

CHURCH UPDATES

Grace Reformed Baptist Church, Long Island, NY

Marc Grimaldi, Pastor

Dear RBNet brethren,

We have been encouraged here in several ways. We thank God for all of you and hope that you are all prospering in grace, for the glory of God!

After serving Christ here at Grace Reformed Baptist Church of Long Island, NY, for twenty-five years, and almost sixteen years as a full time pastor, through much prayer, counsel and consideration, I (Marc Grimaldi) have accepted a call from Sovereign Grace Church in Greenbriar, TN (not affiliated with “Sovereign Grace Churches”) to minister to the small but hungry body there. This change was, by far, not the result of any quick decision, and has found its root in a strong desire and burden to be involved with a young, church plant.

The Lord has graciously stabilized our church, after having gone through a significant time of schism and division about seventeen years ago. I am leaving on the best of terms and the decision is definitely bitter sweet.

We are looking for someone among our Reformed Baptist churches, who might consider replacing me, serving the brethren here in NY as a full-time pastor, alongside of Doug Totter (our other full-time pastor), with the help and assistance of seven faithful deacons. All of the regular shepherding duties (preaching, teaching, counseling, administration...etc) would be expected of the one called to minister here.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in filling this position, please call Doug Totter at (516) 375-6756. The position includes a parsonage, as well.

Please pray for us as we seek the right man to shepherd this precious flock and to serve as an agent of growth and edification. We have about one hundred and ten members, with others interested in joining the church. There are also many new visitors attending, as well. ☺

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