

RBN Net Monthly

A monthly publication of the Reformed Baptist Network
June/July 2023

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."

SUBSTANTIAL SUBSCRIPTION EXPLAINED

What does RBN Net regard as "Substantial Subscription" regarding the 1689 Confession, Chapter 22 and the Lord's Day? Here's a digested summary of the Membership Committee's Special Report: "Confessional Clarification on the Sabbath," received by the 2021 GA in Jackson, MS:

It requires confessing the perpetuity of the moral aspect of the Fourth Commandment as expressed in the New Covenant Lord's Day as a day of rest, worship, and ministry. Aspects of 22.8 are not essential to subscription to the doctrine and may be understood and applied differently among our churches.

1. There may be differences concerning what constitutes proper rest on the Lord's Day. To enjoy a measure of physical rest, relaxation, and refreshment is one of the purposes of the Sabbath. "What are acceptable forms of rest on the Lord's Day?" We do not expect everyone in RBN Net to land on the same place when it comes to this question.

2. There may be differences concerning what constitutes a work of necessity. We do not expect everyone to land on the same place here. However, this is not the same as denying the category of works of necessity and the necessity of making distinctions between those that are and those that are not. We all must reckon with this before God. However, we acknowledge that we may not all land in exactly the same place.

3. There may be differences with regard to the question of unnecessary commerce on the Lord's Day. For example, this involves questions about eating out on the Lord's Day, buying or selling, traveling, and so on. Nehemiah 13:15ff is informative here concerning the avoidance of unnecessary commerce. However, we recognize that this can sometimes be a tricky matter in a secular culture. We do not live in a theocracy as did Old Covenant Israel and, even if we did, it would be proper and likely that some businesses, such as a select number of gas stations, eating establishments and hotels etc. would be kept open for emergencies or for situations of mercy or necessity. Therefore, those seriously devoted to the perpetuity of the fourth commandment may land at different places on certain details related to this question as well.

*Check out the full statement on our website at <https://reformedbaptistnetwork.com/documents/>.

– Mark Chanski, RBN Net Coordinator

MISSION THOUGHTS

MISSIONARY PERSONALITY

What personality traits should be found in a missionary/church planter? These seven traits are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather suggestive.

1. Converted man. Of course, you say, but there must never be an "of course." There are wolves in sheep's clothing. Time needs to be spent to determine if the man is really convinced that he is like the thief on the cross and says with Toplady, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

2. Godly man. Obedience is the evidence of conversion. He will love the law of God, love his wife, children, and the people to whom he ministers. He will confess his sins and seek constant cleansing.

3. Blameless man. The outside world may hate him but the world will find nothing of substance to accuse him of.

4. Working man. In a biography of Hudson Taylor by Marshall Broomhall (London 1930, p. 212), "Though he will ever be remembered as a man of faith, he was not less a man of works. Trust in God was never for him an excuse for neglect of wise precautions. It was rather a partnership with God which called for the most strenuous effort."

5. Courageous man. He faces hardships instead of ease. He is often opposed by well-meaning Christians, even family members, the challenge of ministering in a strange new culture, and the battle against the devil who does all he can to hinder the work. His courage must enable him to be loyal to his convictions and to work unceasingly in the face of all opposition.

6. Humble man. He will not put himself above the people to whom he ministers. He will fellowship and socialize as an equal and will apologize when he offends.

7. Loving man. A genuine heart of compassion for all men is essential. He needs to be like Jesus who looked on the multitudes and was moved with compassion.

O, Lord give us laborers like this to go into the whitened harvest fields. 🌾

– Gordon Taylor, RBN Net Support

CHURCH UPDATES

Bible Fellowship Church,
Greentown, PA

Dave Johnston, Pastor

Greetings Brothers,

We want to thank so many of you for your kind and gracious prayers for us here in northeast Pennsylvania. The fellowship of the network has always been a sanctifying influence for which we grateful to our good God.

Our most prominent prayer request coincides with our most recent praise. Numbers of you have prayed for us while we have tried to find another elder to come here and minister to our people. While we have met some very qualified men, none of them have been called here. In that process, Providence led a young man from Arizona across our path. He serves as an elder in a 1689 church, but has never had the opportunity he desires to further his preparation. We became attracted to his character and spirit. After a difficult decision making process, we have offered to bring him here as a gifted brother and see him through the seminary education that would further his training. We have many reasons to believe he will become an excellent pastor for our people. We have never undertaken this kind of mission before and feel profoundly the need for Holy Spirit wisdom and strength. His name is Andrew Boozer. He will be uprooting his wife and three small children shortly to move here. Please pray for this whole endeavor.

Also there are a couple unsaved souls that stand in need of the Spirit's awakening. One young lady named Chelsie has been visiting church for a couple years. One of our faithful women has been meeting with her regularly. Chelsie remains unconvinced of her need. The same can be said for a neighbor of mine named Joe. He is a long story. He has been interested, and through 2 months of personal Bible study with me. Despite everything he agrees to intellectually, and the reformations of life he has made, he feels nothing of the danger he is in. Please pray for the illumination of the Spirit for these two. 🌱

Many thanks,
Dave Johnston



CHURCH UPDATES

Heritage Reformed Baptist Church,
Fayetteville, GA Hank Rast, Pastor

Greetings from Heritage Reformed Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Georgia. We love and appreciate the fellowship the Lord has granted us in RBNNet and look forward to seeing all of you in September. Please join us in thanksgiving and prayer for the following items:

We are thankful to the Lord that He has been pleased to be among us. We count it no small thing that He blesses the folks with converting and sanctifying grace.

We look forward in June to some baptisms of new creatures in Christ. Some are young and some are “not so young,” and we praise Him for his grace.

We are also thankful for the return of a repentant serial adulterer that we had to excommunicate back in November. The Lord has graciously intervened in his life and he has brought forth very promising evidences of true repentance. He and his wife are working at reconciliation. Please pray for this couple as you think of them.

We rejoice in the graduation from RBS of Don Rhymer and the completion of his internship at the end of this month. Please pray that the Lord would guide his steps in the months ahead as he determines the next step. Please pray for us as well that the Lord would bring just the right man to serve alongside our pastor Hank Rast.

We also look forward to David Vaughn’s visit in August as he comes for a furlough. Thank you for the prayers on his behalf. David’s health has greatly improved and the work in the south of France has moved forward. As you no doubt have learned from his own updates, please continue to pray for the Lord’s reviving grace among the gypsy population in France, and David’s involvement and usefulness among them.

Again, thank you for your prayers for us here. The elders and deacons send their own greetings as well. ☺

*In His care,
Pastor Hank Rast
(for the elders and deacons)*

CHURCH UPDATES

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

Greetings in the name of our Lord from Santa Teresa Baptist Church.

This update is a tale of two pastors. First, Dave Hendrickx. As a result of treatment I received for head and neck cancer a decade ago I am faced with degenerative nerve damage in my throat and down my right arm. I have developed an inability to swallow solid foods which has led me to depend on a feeding tube to provide my nutrition, fluids and meds. As bad as that sounds, I am most grateful for this remedy and have even been able to gain a few pounds! Unfortunately, there are no solutions to the loss of function in my right arm. Nonetheless, I don’t think of these as all consuming trials, but am very content with the grace God has given me to endure and rejoice in Christ who saved and called me.

Second, my co-elder, Frank Gonzales. Frank joined STBC in 2014 and was licensed to preach in 2017. With the unanimous support of our church, he was ordained in November. Frank is pursuing an MDiv at Southern Baptist Seminary (online), and excels in all aspects of pastoral ministry. By the providence of God, on the same Sunday I was hospitalized with COVID (which sidelined me for over four months), Frank was ordained. We now both enjoy the many blessings of belonging to a plurality of elders. He and his wife, Iveth, are expecting their first child in early August.

STBC has always been a small church. But we have been blessed to receive three new members in December and have another five to be received in June, including one by baptism. This brings our membership to its largest in almost 20 years.

Please pray especially for Frank: that his gifts and graces continue to be honed, that his studies would continue in earnest, and that his wife’s pregnancy would proceed without complication. ☺

CHURCH UPDATES

Iglesia Evangélica de la Gracia,
Barcelona, Spain David Barceló, Pastor

Dear brothers and sisters! We are very thankful to the Lord for the fellowship and communion we have among churches at RBNNet. Thank you, dear brothers, for your prayers and for your brotherly love that we can feel even in the distance.

A recent reason for gratitude is the 18th anniversary of our church. Founded in 2005, IEG began as a small Bible study group in the homes, and by God’s Grace it is now a constituted church and an instrument in the hands of the Lord to bless other churches. In these 18 years we have been able to help establish churches in other cities and ordain pastors in other congregations that now walk firm in the faith. We ask for your prayers for the next pastoral ordination in the city of Tarrasa. May the Lord also bless the work there and greatly strengthen the church.

In these years the attendance has been growing progressively. We are happy to celebrate baptisms often but also to receive families who are looking for a congregation in Barcelona. We are grateful to the Lord for the growth but once more it is becoming a challenge for us given the lack of space. Please, pray for the Lord to give us wisdom to know what to do next. There are not many more walls to tear down, and both services are already well attended. We thank the Lord for the souls that every Sunday listen to the preached Word and for the communion of the saints.

Likewise, we ask for your prayers so the Lord may provide more elders and deacons. We know that growth needs to be accompanied by a solid leadership, and we pray that the Lord will raise faithful men who love the church and have the character that is required for a leader according to Scripture.

Thanks again for your prayers and fellowship! ☺

