

RBNet Monthly

A monthly publication of the Reformed Baptist Network
May, 2025

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."

BLESSED UNITY

If we want RBNet to continue to enjoy spiritual potency and kingdom efficacy, it's essential that we continue to labor for Network-wide unity. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the bead. . . It is like the dew of Hermon. . .
For there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forever.*
— Psalm 133

Where there's brotherly unity, we can hope to enjoy the blessing of spiritual potency and kingdom efficacy!

Unity is like a fine piece of crystal—easily shattered, not easily restored.
— Samuel Rutherford

We are to endeavor the preservation of unity, not by a forced uniformity in things doubtful or unnecessary, but by love, forbearance, and a joint submission to Christ alone as our head. . . The unity of the church is a thing of the highest concern unto Jesus Christ. He prays for it, he commands it, he blesses it, and he will judge those who unnecessarily divide it.
— John Owen

Discord among Christians is the devil's music.
— Thomas Brooks

Unity is most precious among those that are most spiritual. . . Satan labors most to divide those whom God intends most to use.
— Jeremiah Burroughs

It is a sweet thing to see those that differ in lesser things, yet holding forth love and unity in the greater things of the gospel.
— Jeremiah Burroughs

Satan kindles the fire of division among brethren, and stands back to warm himself at the flames.
— William Gurnall

The devil has his devices to rend and divide the godly, when he cannot prevail by persecution. He sets fire to the stubble of lesser things to divide those that are one in Christ.
— Samuel Rutherford

— Mark Chanski, RBNet Coordinator

MISSION THOUGHTS

NOAH & MISSIONS

Missionaries face overwhelming difficulties. In France—agnosticism and atheism. In closed countries—Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. In Africa—shallow Christianity, Spiritism, and many cults. In South America—Catholicism and the prosperity gospel. In North America—greed, materialism, and indifference. Plus persecution in many places.

What do missionaries do? They simply obey Jesus Christ who gave the commanding orders, "Go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

Noah is a stellar example of a faithful missionary who preached righteousness for 120 years while building the ark (2 Peter 2:5).

Think of the impossible difficulties he had to overcome. John Calvin is eloquent in describing Noah's extraordinary faith in the midst of trouble.

"For we ought to consider the assaults of temptation to which his breast was continually exposed. First, the prodigious size of the ark might have overwhelmed all his senses, so as to prevent him from raising a finger to begin the work. Let the reader reflect on the multitude of trees to be felled, on the great labor of conveying them, and the difficulty of joining them together. . . . The holy man was required to be engaged more than a hundred years in most troublesome labor."

Calvin notes that wicked men of the day would daily provoke Noah: "But here was a plausible occasion for insult; since Noah, by felling trees on all sides, was making the earth bare, and defrauding them of various advantages."

Calvin concludes: "A remarkable example, therefore, of obedience is here described to us; because, Noah, committing himself entirely to God, rendered Him due honor. . . . Wherefore, let us also learn to break through every kind of impediment, and not to give place to evil thoughts, which oppose themselves to the word of God, and with which Satan attempts to entangle our minds, And this is the true proof of faith, that we, being content with one of his commands, gird ourselves to the work, so that we do not swerve in our course, whatever obstacle Satan may place in our way, but are borne on the wings of faith above the world." 🌍

— Gordon Taylor, RBNet Support

CHURCH UPDATES

Grace Reformed Baptist Church,
Camp Hill, PA

Craig Riggall, Pastor

We at Grace Reformed Baptist Church in Camp Hill, PA, are thankful for our partnership in the gospel with each of you and are thankful for your many prayers.

Since our last update we have continued to see much of the Lord's goodness. We have moved to a new location and are thankful for a beautiful space that accommodates us well. We continue to see a stream of visitors and rejoice in those who are added to our membership, some through baptism! We delight in the number of faithful saints who serve the Lord through teaching, preaching, and gospel outreach, not to mention the many ways in which our folk serve behind the scenes. It is a blessing to minister to such an eager congregation!

The Lord continues to bless the preaching of his Word. I am currently preaching through Luke in the mornings and 2 Samuel in the evenings. Our Sunday School class is exploring a biblical view of death.

Please pray for us as our congregation seriously considers adding a second vocational pastor. As our church has grown, we have thought it beneficial to have a second man in full-time ministry so that the elders can better shepherd, disciple, and counsel their sheep. We have proposed that one of our current elders, Jake Martin, be hired as an Associate Pastor. Pray that the Lord would give us much wisdom and that we would continue in love and unity.

Please also pray for us as we labor to send missionaries to the lost. We have a young lady who is preparing to be sent through Global Serve International later this year. We also have a family with eyes set on Peru and a couple who are seeking to do full-time local ministry. Pray that we would be a church that *sends well* and *supports faithfully*.

Thank you for your prayers. Please know that we pray for you all regularly. 🌍

—For the King,
Craig Riggall



CHURCH UPDATES

Emmanuel Baptist Church,
Coconut Creek, FL

Jeff Smith, Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Firstly, we are excited to announce we are moving forward with building a new sanctuary. The project was approved by the church, and we are in the beginning stages, aiming for completion by next summer. Please pray for unity, provision, and sufficient resources to fully fund this significant undertaking.

Secondly, we rejoice that Jose Fernandez has been nominated and elected as our fifth elder. He has served faithfully as a pastoral intern and is a graduate of Reformed Baptist Seminary here in Coconut Creek. Our eldership, now includes Jeffery Smith, Nick Kennicott, Paul Farese, Robert Diekema, and Jose Fernandez.

Thirdly, please pray for the work of Reformed Baptist Seminary, headquartered at EBC. We are presently in the process of moving from affiliate status to full accreditation with the Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries. We currently have 141 students from across the county and world, including 10 in the residential MDiv program here.

Fourthly Emmanuel Baptist Church will be hosting the Reformed Baptist Network General Assembly this year, September 15-17. We are expecting somewhere in the area of 325 pastors, missionaries, and their wives to be attending. Pray for us as preparations are well under way.

Finally, on a more solemn note, we ask your prayers for one of our pastors, Robert Diekema. Recently he was diagnosed with cancer in his vocal cords. Please pray for recovery from his surgery in late April and remission of his cancer.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for us. ☺

—With You in Christ,
Jeffery Smith, On Behalf of the Officers and
Members of Emmanuel Baptist Church
Coconut Creek, FL

CHURCH UPDATES

Grace Baptist Church
Taylors, SC

Jamie Howell, Pastor

These are very rich and busy days at GBC Taylors! Here are a few samples and matters for prayer. Pastor Mark Hatfield recently returned to Asia to serve as pastor of an ex-pat church in a major metropolitan city. Please pray for us as we seek an additional vocational pastor.

We have been blessed with three faithful brothers in their second year studying at Greenville Presbyterian Seminary: Eric Abwao, from Trinity Baptist Church in Nairobi, Kenya, Satheesh Kyadasi, from Telangana Province in India, and Daniel Singleton, recently retired from the Army. Beginning in August, Eric will scale back to part-time for the next academic year in order to serve GBC as a pastoral intern. Satheesh will serve as intern for one month this summer. All three men are excelling in their studies; Eric and Satheesh are committed to return to their home countries once they graduate to serve the Lord and build the Kingdom.

In February I traveled to Sircilla, India, to conduct a pastoral training conference for RBNet Associate Member Yohan Mamidi. I plan to return in July for another week of lectures, with Satheesh Kyadasi also providing lectures. We praise the Lord for Pastor Yohan and his diligent labors in training young Indian men for the gospel ministry! Please pray for him as he applies for a student visa next month to move to the US and attend seminary, to further equip him to train the next generation of Indian pastors.

Also in February, we hosted a Missions Focus Weekend with speakers Luke Peterson (Missionary Candidate from Emmanuel Baptist Church, Verona, VA) and Ben Layer (church planter in Poland for 20 years). GBC is in the process of recommending Ben for endorsed missionary status. Two of our officers, elder Dave Cruver and deacon Josh Thompson plan to visit Ben in August to see his ministry first-hand.

We rejoice that the Lord is regularly adding new members to our congregation. We are so grateful for your prayers and the blessing of our faithful God! ☺

—Jamie Howell, for the GBC Elders

CHURCH UPDATES

Covenant Baptist Church
Toronto, ON

Chris Powell, Pastor

The past year brought reflection, challenge, and change. After the passing of our founding pastor (my father) in Sept. 2023, and my mother in Feb. 2024, we gathered last June to celebrate 50 years of God's faithfulness at CBC Toronto, joined by the Chanskis, Selphs, and Jonathan Alleyne from CRBC Barbados. We concluded with a joyful joint evening service of worship and celebration with churches across the city.

Though we said goodbye to some dear members, we welcomed one of our largest membership cohorts in years. A special highlight this January was baptizing my daughter, Abigail, alongside another young man who responded to the gospel. Our expository sermon series continues in James (morning) and Matthew (evening). Two men are currently being trained for the diaconate, and several are assisting in preaching. Kristoffer Rodas, our deacon and pastoral assistant, is now serving half-time. We've begun a new church-wide Bible reading plan with self-produced video summaries and a lively WhatsApp discussion, supplementing our weekly community group.

It was also a year of transition in Barbados, as Jon Ryttersgaard stepped down from pastoral ministry. I visited CRBC in July and this April to assist. By God's grace, Jonathan Alleyne, a longtime deacon, was unanimously confirmed as a bivocational elder in December. We hope to add a new deacon by year-end and pursue RBNet membership. Jon and Mel remain active members in the church.

Please pray:

- For the raising up of elders and deacons in both churches.
- For a June meeting of Ontario pastors to build fellowship and momentum for collaboration.
- For conversions and our Good Friday outreach.
- For unity at CRBC and a full-time pastor. ☺

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