



Outreach Newsletter

A Publication of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church
Board of Outreach North America

Fall 2009

Mission to the City

By Rev. Fred Carr

Church of the Atonement is an ARP church located just north of the capital beltway around Washington, D.C. While the name of our community, Silver Spring, sounds like a quaint, rural village, we share the features of America's metropolitan areas. Life is fast paced. Space is congested. Prices are high. Crime is of concern. Like most American cities, we have a large immigrant population.

This past summer, Church of the Atonement began an initiative to be a full member of our neighborhood. Our vision is to identify ourselves to the community, to build friendship-relationships, and to assist the community in finding answers to our local problems. More than 85 members of the church were involved in our outreach. Two of our efforts were directed toward children and families; two were service oriented.

Atonement sponsored a Vacation Bible School to serve unchurched families living near our buildings as well as our own children. A related effort grew out of applying locally our previous experience from short term mission trips to Wales. We sponsored sports camps including soccer, football and basketball. Participation peaked at 42 young people.

Our second thrust was in service to the community. We called one effort our "Water Works Campaign." At local grocery stores and at metro stations, we gave away bottles of water with an invitation to visit Atonement. Our second service opportunity was in partnership with the Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition. Our work focused on improving the yard and facilities of multifamily homes



in the community. Not only did we improve the local quality of life, but we let other concerned citizens know of our interest in wholesome living conditions in the city. Our efforts ended with a church-sponsored BBQ for all the people and families we had gotten acquainted with during the week.

This overall initiative is a missions outreach directed locally. We reached local commuters and shoppers, neighborhood youth and children, and served disadvantaged persons/families. The congregation as a whole benefited as we caught the common vision, and worked side by side to reach out as evangelical Christians to our neighbors. One measure of success was the large number of people from the congregation mobilized to use their varying gifts, abilities, and interests in local missions outreach.



From the Director

Alan J. Avera, D.Min.

Is it really helpful to make too much of a distinction between local ministry and missions? Does the Bible treat missions as something that just happens somewhere else, while ministry is what happens here?

A foundational passage for missions is Acts 1:8. Just before He ascended into heaven, Jesus said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." There is no distinction here between local and foreign. The disciples are to be witnesses wherever the Lord sends them.

In this issue of *Outreach*, we feature an article about how one church in the Washington, D.C. area applied locally some of what they had learned during a mission trip to Wales. In Wales, our mission trips use a multi-faceted approach to reaching youth. They use kids club (like VBS), sports outreach, and a coffee house to have maximum impact during the one week they are there.

Church of the Atonement in Silver Spring, MD, applied a similar multi-faceted approach to reaching their community in Washington, D.C. As you read this article, ask yourself, "what could my church do as a mission outreach to our community?"

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Invitation to Christ Church



By Rev. Morrie Lawing

The following is written by a man who had not entered a church in nearly forty years and had no interest in God. Not too long ago, he came to Christ Church and his life has profoundly changed. He often testifies to the work of grace in his life. Truly the words of the hymn "Amazing Grace" could be his own. For him, Christ Church is not just a church, it is home. He wrote the following article for

the folks in Denver, NC to invite them to come to his church.

Christ Church is a sanctuary with a Christian message that welcomes all individuals and families. Members and guests with backgrounds and lives as diverse as our surrounding communities join together each Sunday morning for worship. They create a wonderful Christian family with common interests and purpose under one roof.

Christ Church is also a place of unity in spiritual growth and understanding of God and those who trust in Him. Unity offers an opportunity to join with others in celebrating and exploring the assurance of God's grace and the promise of eternal salvation.

Under the guidance and leadership of Rev. Morrie Lawing, members and guests experience the Word of God and the promise of God's infinite love for us. After our Sunday worship, adults and children are invited to participate in Bible studies that provide a sound foundation of faith. These classes are led by congregational lay-leaders who help guide participants in understanding and becoming more familiar with the Bible's application for everyday living. During the week we also have separate men's and women's Bible studies that focus on knowing God.

Christ Church is much more than simply a Sunday center of spiritual worship! It is a place and a people encouraging a personal growth in confidence for living in the comfort of God's love and His Word. This means that Christ Church is providing a community service every day of the week and for people of all ages. Please join us at Christ Church Sunday for worship at 9:30 am.

Parenting Church Community

By Rev. Kyle E. Sims

Three ARP churches in Rock Hill established a Parenting Church Community at the end of October. This is part of ONA's strategy of helping build communities to support church planters and is designed specifically to help established churches plant new churches. The idea of churches planting daughter churches is not a new one. Many ARP churches were started by a mother church. The Parenting Church Community is a return to our roots and to a holistic approach to church planting. It seeks to develop nurturing relationships between several established churches and their daughter churches. Ebenezer, First Rock Hill, and Tirzah have formed a community for mutual encouragement, training, support, and prayer. Rev. Andrew Stager and I have been asked to help with this community. We are very excited about the potential for the Kingdom in Rock Hill and beyond!

Church Planting in Scotland

By Rev. Athole Rennie



I have been commissioned by First Presbyterian to plant a church in the Leith area of Edinburgh, Scotland. My wife Rosalynd and I (pictured left at my ordination) will officially begin the work on December 1. We have been married for four years and God willing, we are expecting the arrival of our first child in January.

We are both native Scots, Rosalynd is from a small village north of Glasgow, and I grew up the son of a Church of Scotland minister in central Scotland. We have been living in Edinburgh for the past three years, where Rosalynd has been training as an attorney and working as a Human Resources consultant while I have undergone training for ordination into the ministry of the Church of Scotland. As my training has progressed I have increasingly felt God's call away from the Church of Scotland to the work of church

planting. I am delighted that the ARP has afforded me the opportunity to answer this call.

Edinburgh is Scotland's capital city and has a population of around 400,000 people. Leith is situated in the north of the city on the shores of the River Forth about a mile from the city centre. Traditionally, Leith has been an industrial area based around shipping. The docks are still operational but not on the same scale as in former years as industrial buildings are being replaced by bars and restaurants. The social mix in the area can be described as deprived residential areas only a stone's throw from brand new luxury apartments. In recent years there has been increased migration to the city and there is a fairly prominent Polish community in the area.

Leith has been earmarked for considerable further development with plans to build 16,000 homes over the next 20 years. Those plans do not seem to include provision for the development of new churches to reach out to the grow-

What is Reformission Scotland?



By *Ivor MacDonald*
Chairman, Reformission Scotland

Scotland, the spiritual home of the ARP Church, might seem an unlikely mission field. However, the church is only one generation away from extinction, and for some time the Church of Scotland has been blighted by liberalism of ancient and modern varieties. Today there are many places in the country where the people are two or three generations removed from any real acquaintance with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Notable ministries from the 1950s onwards led to a rebirth of interest in expository preaching. However, despite the fact that today there are now more evangelical ministries than before in Scotland, there are very few evangelical congregations. In addition, a willingness to embrace the notion of a "broad church" and make the necessary adjustments has greatly weakened evangelicalism.

Some of us began to realize that instead of evangelicalism quietly infiltrating the national church (as had been hoped),

ing population. However, there is some talk of having an interfaith centre in the area where all religions can come and worship together. Sadly, this is not surprising in 21st Century Scotland where the overwhelming worldview is secular pluralism. Scotland is now very much a post-Christian society where most people under 40 have rarely been anywhere near a church and most have never heard the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This situation presents a tremendous challenge but it also gives a wonderful opportunity as we seek to plant a church in the area. In the next month, Rosalyn and I will move into the heart of Leith and begin making contact with the people. We will start to gather a core group of believers together to pray and plan for the launch of the mission. We would greatly appreciate your prayers that the Lord would lead us to the right people to form the core group as well as giving us an open door into the lives of those He has called us to reach. We long to see lives changed through this ministry and have been so blessed by the support and care shown by our American brothers and sisters as we begin this work.

evangelicalism has been infiltrated by theological liberals. We concluded that a new, more radical approach was needed. In England, we could see that the Reformed Church was growing through the planting of new, missional churches committed to the doctrines of grace. We longed to see that happen in Scotland, but we knew that it could not happen through our own denomination.

We started to think of a partner church to work with us. Working alongside another Reformed Church would provide a number of advantages including the doctrinal anchor and accountability needed.

Dr. Sinclair Ferguson recommended that we consider the ARP Church. In 2007, Rev. David Court and I met with Dr. John Carson in St. Andrews, Scotland to share our vision for a new presbytery of churches committed to Reformed doctrine, cultural engagement, and radical church planting. This first step was humbly taken in a town steeped in associations with reformers such as John Knox, Patrick Hamilton, and George Wishart.

We found the ARP Church to be like a family; a body of believers who have a Scottish heritage and yet remain true to the Westminster standards. It has been a privilege to feel welcomed and to know the warmth and concern of new found friends. The strong but gentle hand of Providence has brought us together with a partner denomination that has a com-

mitment to the Great Commission and evangelism through church planting.

In Scotland, ten men with the same vision from three denominations formed an advisory committee called Reformission Scotland. We asked First Presbytery to help with this mission, and on September 24, 2009 our first church planter, Athole Rennie, was licensed to preach the Gospel. He was ordained in Scotland by a commission of First Presbytery on November 3. Athole will be working in the Leith area in the northern part of Edinburgh.

It is our prayer that this would be the first of five church plants in the next five years. Reformission Scotland will be responsible for seeking prospective church planters within Scotland, raising finance, strategic planning, and on the ground supervision. The new church plants will be part of First Presbytery until such time as a Scottish Presbytery can be formed. Pray that God will bless us as we work together for better days for the Gospel in Scotland.

Free brochures about Church Planting in Scotland are available from ONA.

Send financial contributions to:
First Presbytery
Mr. Terry Wallace, Treasurer
65 Drayton Circle
Flat Rock, NC 28731
(Tag checks for Scotland Church Plant)



Open House with Marcus Hamilton

Good Shepherd Community Church, a mission of First Presbyterian near Charlotte, NC, had a special service on August 30 to give thanks to God followed by a fellowship luncheon. Marcus Hamilton, artist and illustrator of the "Dennis the Menace" cartoon strips, shared his personal testimony through his art and the spoken word. They also had several musical groups including the Spring Creek Travelers and contemporary Gospel singer Steve Jett.

Rev. Walt DeHart and Marcus Hamilton



News and Notes from the Field

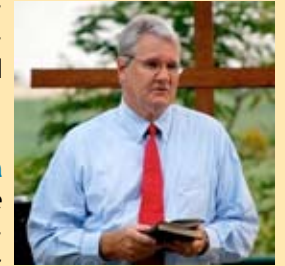
Riverside Presbyterian in Prattville, Alabama had its first "Taste of Riverside." (right)



Mission Developers Retreat is scheduled for January 12-15 at Bonclarken.

Outreach Newsletter Online is now available. Contact the ONA office to be added to our email list.

Christ Coastal ARP Church in Southport, NC has been approved as a mission of the ARP Church. Walt Shepard (right) is the Mission Developer.



First Presbyterian Church Columbia has had a committee studying the possibility of planting a daughter congregation. Based on the committee's recommendation, the session recently voted unanimously to pursue planting a daughter church in the area.

Tapestry ARP Church held its public launch on November 8. Tapestry is a multi-ethnic church plant in the North Davidson Street (NoDa) area of Charlotte.

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