

CPRC Newsletter

The Church with Open Doors

Oct 2015
Volume 21 Issue 10

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**(Refreshed) Web page:
Go to:
Cape Town Reformed
Church**

Cape Peninsula Reformed Church

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Not a one man's show

Christianity is not a one-person show – it never was, and never will be. It is crucial for believers to remember that. Too often the concept of “church” in the minds of many Christians is a place where the pastor or the priest is the person who runs the church. If he or she is a successful pastor/priest, the congregation is a success, if the pastor fails, the congregation is a failure. Everything depends on the pastor/priest.

The Bible has another picture. It tells the story of Jesus – and his twelve apostles, who followed him everywhere, and helped people to come to Jesus. “He called his twelve disciples to Him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and the heal every disease” (Mt 10:1).

Jesus empowered his twelve apostles to help people. The same happened with Paul – he functioned within a network of helpers. For example, Aquila and Priscilla.

Aquila and Priscilla

They were a Jewish couple Paul first met in Corinth. What brought them together was their common faith in Jesus – and their trade. They were tentmakers, like Paul. That is why Paul stayed with them in Corinth. They were Jews like Paul, and came to Corinth because the emperor “Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome” (Acts 18:3). According to the Roman historian Suetonius, this happened in 49 AD.

When Paul met Aquila and Priscilla, they were already Jewish followers of “The Way”, as the Christian movement was initially called. The couple accompanied Paul when he left Corinth for Ephesus, where they stayed behind. When the synagogue in

Ephesus received a brilliant visiting teacher from the university in Alexandria, it turned out that this young star, Apollos, was also a follower of Jesus. He caused an upset by speaking boldly in the synagogue about Jesus. Acts 18: 26 tells us that when Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos speak, “they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately”.

Later the couple moved back Rome. In his Letter to the Romans 16:4, Paul sends his greetings: “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ. They risked their lives for me.”

What is interesting about this couple, is that they are always mentioned as a couple and never individually. Of the seven times they are mentioned in the NT, Priscilla's name is mentioned first, which was conspicuously unusual for such a male-dominant society. This suggests that she was not only Aquila's wife. She was a teacher in her own right and Aquila's partner in the ministry.

As a couple they reminded us about the importance of the many helpers Paul had in the early church – people whose names are mentioned only briefly in a greeting, but without whom the Good

Christos anéthe! Christos aléthos anéthe! Christ has risen! Christ has risen indeed!

News would not have been communicated so quickly to so many communities in the first century. Listen again to the many names mentioned in Paul's second letter to his young helper Timothy, chapter 4:9-22:

"Do your best to come to me quickly, for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me... Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. I sent Tychicus to Ephesus... Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm... You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message... Greet Pricilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus... Eubulus greets you, and so Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers..."

Quite clearly, ministry in the early church was not a one man's show. It was a ministry by the congregation of the body as a unit. As Paul put it in 1 Corinthians 12:12:

"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts: and though all its parts are many, they form one body."

Why would it be different today?

News

As you know, **Istvan Berko** has left CPRC and South Africa to work in California, USA. Naldine, Alexa and Kiara will follow later. His arrival and first two weeks were quite difficult, having to find a place to stay, transport, opening a bank account etc, and at the same time starting a new job in a complete new environment – that was certainly, not easy. But thank to God, Istvan now has a place to stay and is settling in. Pray that the Lord will guide him, provide for him and strengthen him. (I have an extra private prayer: Lord, we know we have lost a



Thanksgiving Sunday 6 September

*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.
Let the redeemed of the Lord say this – give thanks to the Lord! (Ps107)*

From the Church Council Meeting on 8 Sept

The council decided to invite Niel Steyn, to be a Youth Worker on a part-time basis at CPRC, for one year, starting 1 Nov 2015.

Niel has finished his theological studies at Stellenbosch University in 2013. Since 2014 he had been working on a part time basis for Echo Youth, a Christian organization which reaches out to people who have lost their way in life. Niel has been ordained as a pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church and is at present a member of the Table View DRC.

If Niel accepts CPRC's invitation, he will probably start with is work in November. His first goal will be to establish a Sunday evening service, focussing on people of a younger age group, but open to everyone, on Sunday evenings. This service will be at the same time slot 55KLF held their weekly service, and the idea is to establish a similar (but not exactly the same) type of service. One specific difference from our previous relationship with 55 KLF will be that the envisaged evening service will be an integral part of CPRC's ministry. For that reason, Niel Steyn will (if he accepts CPRC's offer) lead one morning service per month, and Francois Wessels will bring the message at that evening service, once per month.

Should Niel Steyn accept our offer, our hope is to start the evening service in middle January, after the schools started. Niel will use November and December 2015 to prepare for his ministry. He has been asked to give CPRC his answer at the end of September/beginning of October. Please remember him in your prayers. Please pray that the Lord will bring the right person to CPRC.

SIMCHAT TORAH

Beit Ariel Messianic Jewish Congregation invites you to join them in the celebration of

SIMCHAT TORAH (The Joy of the Law)

Place: Groote Kerk hall next door

Time: Sun 4 October 18:15

You are most welcome to attend any of these events.

good man – let them realize the quality they received. FW). Pray for the Lord’s hand of protection over Naldine, Alex and Kiara.

Please remember in your prayers **Stephen Keys-Transfeldt**. He received an offer from a new business to help with the designs and patterns. A year ago his machine was stolen, and contributions from CPRC helped him to buy a second hand sewing machine in perfect condition – which he can now use for private work. Pray that the Lord will guide him and give him peace.

Rudu Chifamba has started a new work and is doing well in the work itself – but she now has to travel every day much further, spending much more time away from her family. Pray that the Lord will keep his hand of protection and love over her. Pray that **Robert Chifamba** would soon have clarity about a new work after March 2016.

Pray for **Johan Berko**, who had been unemployed for a while. He had a good first interview for a new work. Pray that his second interview will also be good and that he will be appointed.

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple (Ps 19:7)

Is there any Joy in keeping the Law?

Christians know the law is an important part of their faith.

They also know where to find it in the Bible. It is in the Ten Commandments – “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, not give false testimony, not covet your neighbour’s wife” etc.

It is in the words of Jesus spoken from the mountain – requiring even more: “Do not murder, and anyone who murders, will be subject to judgment... but I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment... Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments, will be least in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven!”

The law is important: It reminds us that law and order should be upheld in society. It reminds us that even the best of us are sinners before the holy God – there is no excuse.

The law should be there. Christians agree with that.

But can the Biblical law in any way bring joy? Remorse, yes – but joy? Unlikely, is our first reaction.

However the Bible says the opposite: Yes. There is indeed a connection between the law and... joy. The Reformed tradition emphasizes that the law has three functions: 1) to remind us that law and order should be respected, 2) to remind us about our sinfulness.

The third function of the law

But then is there a “third function of the law” – often forgotten. 3) The law is “the rule of thanksgiving”.

Are you thankful for God’s love and his mercy? For his protection when you were in danger? For his presence when your friends dropped you? For his comfort when you lost a loved one to death?

Have you ever wanted to say thank you to the Father – but didn’t know exactly how to do that?

This is we should do: keep the laws of God, live by the guidelines given by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount

Remember the third function of the law: Keep the law, as best as you can. Not because you will be lost if you don’t, or because the Lord will punish you. No – the Lord’s grace is far greater than that. No – try keep the law of the Bible, as best as you can... simply to say “Thank you” to the Lord, and you will discover the joy... that comes from keeping God’s law.

Simchat Torah, the Joy in the Law – Moscow, 1970

In Israel, the celebration of the Simchat Torah feast, is often taken into the street in front of the synagogue. The Torah scroll is carried into the street by dancing Jews. Anyone recognized as a Jew is likely to be pulled into the dancing, finally sharing the happiness of the worshippers whether she had intended to or not.

A strange and touching Simchat Torah custom should be noted here. In Moscow, in the 1970s, thousands of Jewish youths gathered every year on the eve of Simchat Torah in the streets surrounding the last large synagogue left in the Russian capital. They defied the police and the government in so doing and risked arrest and persecution, but on the eve of Simchat Torah, there they were. They danced and sang the pitifully few Hebrew songs they might know. All efforts of the then Communist government to prevent them from gathering on the night have failed. These young people may never have been near a synagogue otherwise; most of them knew not a word of Hebrew nor a single prayer, but they knew they were Jews and that in Moscow they had to “keep the faith” by rejoicing on Simchat Torah. Why Simchat Torah alone of all the holidays?

Perhaps it is the most joyful of all the feasts? Perhaps thanking God for his law?

From *Living Jewish* by Michael Asheri

FINANCE REPORT : AUGUST 2015

The previous report (a few months ago), reflected a slightly under-budget income position. The August figures reflect a fairly stable result, with most of the regular income items being close to budget – plus a welcome “bonus” in respect of Donations of R11350! Contributions to the Benevolent Fund, which CPRC utilises to provide assistance in respect of needy causes, achieved budget. The key results for the month of August 2015 are –

- Thank Offerings, at R17300, although slightly under budget, are back on track after lagging somewhat for a few months. However, we still need to aim for at least R20 000 per month, to enable CPRC to meet its commitments from its non-investment income;
- From a high of R9153 in March, Pew Collections have showed a declining trend, with the August figure of R5919 being R571 below budget;
- Contributions to the Benevolent Fund, at R700, were only R13 below budget;
- Donations of R11350 exceeded budget by R10684! Unfortunately, this type of income cannot be relied on to occur regularly. Thanks for an anonymous gift of R10 000!

<i>August 2015</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Over/(Under)</i>	<i>% variance</i>
Thank Offerings	17 300	18 333	(1 033)	(6%)
Pew Collections	5 919	6 490	(571)	(9%)
Sub Total	23 219	24 823	(1 604)	(6%)
Benevolent Fund	700	713	(13)	(2%)
Donations	11 350	666	10 684	1504%
Total	R35 269	R26 202	R9 067	35%

The cumulative results show a fairly similar position -

<i>Cumulative (6 months)</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Over/(Under)</i>	<i>% variance</i>
Thank Offerings	108 760	110 000	(1 240)	(1%)
Pew Collections	39 288	38 940	348	1%
Sub Total	148 048	148 940	(892)	(1%)
Benevolent Fund	5 520	4 280	1 240	29%
Donations	15 850	4 000	11 850	196%
Total	R169 418	R157 220	R12 198	8%

If the present results remain consistent, it is possible to meet, or even exceed the 2015/16 income targets. CPRC’s expenses are closely managed on a budgeted annual break-even basis (but by utilising its investment income, which ultimately depletes the value of the investments).

If you wish to deposit or transfer your Thank Offering, Donation, etc. directly to CPRC’s bank account, the details are: NG GEMEENTE CPRC

A/c no: 50061426729 FNB Long Street, Cape Town

Branch code: 201-709

Thank you for your ongoing commitment.

CPRC FINANCE COMMITTEE