

RBNet Monthly

A monthly publication of the Reformed Baptist Network
February 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."

FIVE PIONEER MISSIONARIES...

From S. M. Houghton's Introduction (penned in 1965) to Banner of Truth's *Five Pioneer Missionaries*—*David Brainerd, William C. Burns, John Eliot, Henry Martyn, John G. Paton* (p 11–12):

"They supply portraits of men who walked with God, and who threw themselves, body and soul, into the work to which God had called them. They shame much of our easy-going present-day Christianity. Whereas, in this soft modern age, we regard luxuries as necessities, they, in their harder times and sterner habits, esteemed necessities as non-essentials, if only they could preach the Word where Christ had not previously been named or known.

Their meat and their drink was to do the will of Him who had sent them, and to finish His work. In them, therefore, within the limits set by human frailty and human incompleteness, we have portraits of Christ Himself.

As Christians we have long grown accustomed to the thought that we are to be conformed to the image of God's Son. From the angle supplied by the missionary cause, let the question present its challenge to us in reverse. Said an African chief to a missionary, 'Is Jesus Christ like you?' The reply to the question is not recorded.

Let us make the question personal, and as we read of the exploits of the Lord's own missionary 'men of renown', and contrast our own littleness with their greatness, let us seek grace to humble ourselves in the dust for our innate selfishness and love of ease in the divine service; and let this be accompanied by the strong conviction that, in the strength of the Lord and by His mighty power, we too shall become followers of the Lord's servants in the holy war, even as they themselves were followers of Christ."

Such missionaries are burning bushes, lit up by God's power, who should make us turn aside, and see this great sight. ☺

— Mark Chanski, RBNet Coordinator

MISSION THOUGHTS

MINISTRY & FAMILY

Missionaries have the responsibility of standing for the truth against all the forces darkness and caring for their family, while at the same time protecting and shepherding the saints to whom they minister.

Dr. Rowland Taylor (1515–1555) is a good example of a pastor who exemplifies this balance. Taylor graduated from Cambridge at age 24 and was installed in a church in Hadleigh Suffolk, England when he with many other puritans attempted to reform the church under the the reigns of King Henry VIII and King Edward VI. However, after Edward died Queen Mary I (Bloody Mary) assumed the throne. Just six days later Taylor was arrested (25 July 1553). After he was imprisoned for 2 years he was brought out to be burned at the stake (9 Feb. 1555). He was the third victim of hundreds during Mary's reign.

However, before being burned he addressed both his older son, Thomas, and his wife Margaret and his family.

To Thomas he said, "Almighty God bless thee, and give His Holy Spirit, to be a true servant of Christ to learn his Word and constantly to stand by his truth all the life long . . . And when thy mother is waxed old, forsake her not, but provide for her to thy power, and see that she lacks nothing . . ."

Dr Taylor also addressed his family just before being tied to the stake: "I say to my wife and children, the Lord gave you to me and the Lord hath taken you from me . . . God careth for sparrows . . . I have ever found him more faithful and favorable, then is any father or husband . . ."

Dr Rowland Taylor, even when facing death for the cause of the gospel, set a good example for all missionaries, pastors, indeed for every Christian husband.

You may find, what little information there is on Taylor in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* and on Wikipedia. My personal interest in Dr Rowland Taylor stems from my very recent discovery that I am a direct descendant (14th generation) of Dr. Taylor. ☺

— Gordon Taylor, RBNet Support

CHURCH UPDATES

Reformed Baptist Church,
Auburn, IN

Stephen Hyde, Pastor

I sincerely apologize to all my brothers and sisters in the RBNet community for the delay in introducing the Reformed Baptist Church of Auburn in Indiana (RBCA). We were accepted into membership at the General Assembly in September 2022. Still, due to the challenges we faced from a couple of individuals who threatened the unity of our church, I found it hard to focus on anything more. By the grace of God, we have successfully worked through these issues and are now on a much better path.

RBCA was established in 2017 after a church split due to the original church's embrace of charismatic influences and other theological changes. Starting with around 40 members committed to forming a confessional church, we adopted the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. Nathan became the preaching Elder, joined by Stephen and Rick. With guidance from Grace Immanuel Reformed Baptist Church, we adapted their constitution to fit our needs and initiated the formal membership process in July 2019.

We now have the original three elders, along with Mike and Dane. Nathan continues as the preaching elder. Rick, despite his Parkinson's, attends meetings when possible and shares valuable insights through texts and emails. Stephen leads a men's Bible study for retirees and is in phase three of his counseling certification with the ACBC. Dane offers premarital counseling and has officiated several weddings. Mike manages educational materials for our library and organizes fellowship activities like camping and bowling.

We support various missionaries through RBNet, a crisis pregnancy center in Auburn, and The Lighthouse in Fort Wayne. This year's Christmas caroling included a gospel tract and an invitation to our worship services.

This summer, we're planning a block party organized by Elder Mike to invite our neighbors for a meal, games, and connections. We hope this event will kickstart our Helping Hands Men's Ministry for elderly residents and single parents in the community.

We ask you to pray for our church family and our continued growth. ☺

CHURCH UPDATES

Grace Reformed Baptist Church,
Ramey, PA Daniel Arter, Pastor

Hello from Grace Reformed Baptist Church of Ramey, PA. We're thankful for your partnership in ministry and we're excited to share what all the Lord is doing in Central Pennsylvania.

The past year brought upon significant changes in our local church as we've moved locations into what we hope will be our permanent home and as we've sought to make intentional connections with likeminded churches throughout our region and RBNet. We're thankful that God has called us together as a local church in a rural community and we're thankful that our expression of the universal church has found a home in RBNet.

Ongoing Needs and Prayer Requests

As a small church plant in a rural community, we find ourselves desperately needy. We ask you to join us in prayer concerning:

- Building Projects—including the purchase of additional seating, some renovation, and the eventual purchase of the property. Pray that God works these details out according to His own plan.
- Financial Support—pray for financial partners both within our community and elsewhere to partner with us and to support us as we see to make disciples in a community with little gospel presence.
- Leadership Development and Member Discipleship—we're looking to raise up at least one more lay elder from within our congregation and two additional deacons. At the moment, we don't have any additional qualified men who can serve in these capacities.

Additional News:

One of our goals as a local church is to provide additional training for average Christians in our communities regardless of church affiliation. Part of how we accomplish this is through weekly biblical worldview classes and monthly community breakfast and prayer meals. This upcoming fall, we're introducing single-day conferences concerning apologetics and theology. We're hoping to provide resources that haven't really been provided in our region before—so, please pray as we seek to equip believers in our communities.

We're thankful for you, your prayers, and the partnership we have with all the sister churches of the Reformed Baptist Network. 🌍

CHURCH UPDATES

New Covenant Church
Auburn Hills, MI Hardy Smith, Pastor

Greetings, fellow servants of our Lord,
As pastor and lead elder of New Covenant Church in Auburn Hills, Michigan, I have the privilege of shepherding about 60–70 people who are seeking a closer walk with Jesus. Located on the north side of Detroit, we find ourselves in a sea of people claiming to be Roman Catholic/unreligious, most of whom consider themselves to be just fine without an authentic relationship with our Savior.

The Lord has blessed us with some wonderful followers of Christ here at New Covenant. In particular, we have an excellent worship team and a truly gifted group who work with our kids, teaching them the Word of God. At present, I am teaching our adult Bible study class, going through the book of Hebrews. Please pray that we will teach the Word of God clearly and without compromise, and that our people would approach that Word seeking to know the Lord better, and learning “to observe all that (Jesus) commanded” us.

I am nearly half-way through preaching an exposition of the gospel of John. Please pray that God would use it to reach the unbelievers in our congregation, and that believers would find application of the Word in their lives each week.

We have two major projects before us this year, and I covet your prayers for these. The first is outreach and evangelism. My fellow elder and I are working to emphasize personal witnessing and cultivating an atmosphere of prayer for the lost among our people. We will teach a class on sharing our faith, so please pray that our people would respond and attend the class, and overcome their fear of speaking about our Lord with their friends and relatives.

The second project is financial. We need to replace our roof and heating units, and fix our parking lot. We have a strategy for this, but we need the Lord's blessing.

Thank you, saints! 🌍



CHURCH UPDATES

Grace Immanuel Reformed Baptist Church
Grand Rapids, MI Jeff Johnson, Pastor

Greetings from Grace Immanuel Reformed Baptist Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Please join us in prayer regarding the following:

1. We need more deacons in our church. The continued blessing of more families in the membership and an aging diaconate has brought a need for more qualified men.
2. There is a possibility of planting a congregation 40 minutes south of us in Martin, MI. We are currently having a Bible study there every other week to see if God will bless it.
3. Continued unity in the church. We are experiencing a great measure of peace and unity. We pray it will continue for his glory.
4. We have several young men at various stages of interest in the gospel ministry. We are excited about how God may use these men. Pastor Jeff Johnson is currently taking them through Call and Cultivation.
5. God is continuing to add members. We have had several people join, most of which are younger.

Thank you for your prayers. May God bless and keep you as you serve him for his glory. 🌍

The vision of Reformed Baptist Network
is to glorify God through fellowship
and cooperation
in fulfilling the Great Commission
to the ends of the earth.
