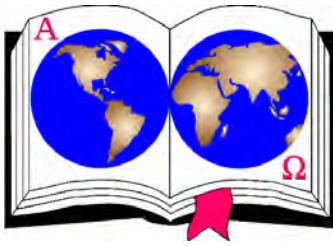


December 2012
News and Prayer Letter

**Meeting One of our
International Students**





Reformation Christian Ministries

News & Prayer Letter

December 2012

The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. ... The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.
(Psalm 34:17-19, 22)

God's Grace Remains Sufficient and Enables Us to Adjust

God's work of Reformation has continued at RCM despite many challenges and consequential adjustments and the gap in newsletters. God often delivers through change on our part in spite of our tendency to resist. God's word consoles us in the necessary adjusting. In this case, our adjustments have come from those of others we have been informed by many individuals and churches have had to make their own adjustments and can no longer continue their financial support. We find our comfort is God's nearness throughout this process. Our redemption is not solely a one-time event, but also a process through which God brings us in all the circumstances of life. While He does not remove us from every temporal unpleasantness, He does promise not to leave us desolate in them. At RCM, He has provided for what He wants us to do and given us the grace to otherwise adjust.

Rev. & Mrs. Poettcker have faced a challenging few years due to reducing financial support. Part of this has come from the death or retirement of some faithful donors. Others have lessened or stopped on the idea that living in the U.S. means they are no longer involved in mission work. The fact is that Rev. Poettcker's mission responsibilities have increased since returning to the U.S. While his wife Sharilyn has secured good employment as a hospital nurse, the shift work is very difficult and only supplements their financial needs.

God's grace to adjust has caused them to reduce their living expenses by renting instead of owning a home. Consequently,

they have now moved a few blocks away and are going through the lengthy process of settling in. They yet hope to buy a lower priced home in the future. While these adjustments have been very challenging, they view this with the utmost confidence in the Lord's superintendency and goodness in it all.

Rev. & Mrs. Donnan, have been blessed with God's grace to adjust in response to matters of health in the midst of increased workload due to insufficient funds for office help. Thankfully, my health has improved considerably over the past year with the help of my cardiologist but not without considerable adjustment. During three weeks at my cardiologist's clinic in New Mexico earlier this year, it was discovered that I had sleep apnea resulting in oxygen deprivation at night leading to many of my long-standing heart problems. Various sleep studies were taken and machines and masks tried until we found the right combination. Now I must wear a mask over my nose and mouth at night along with two machines to regulate night time breathing and oxygen intake. My wife gives her perspective on all this business by jokingly saying, *I have to sleep with Hannibal Hector* (my breathing mask) *with Darth Vader in the bathroom* (oxygen concentrator). Also, every day for 3-4 hours I must go through home therapy all the while avoiding stress and over fatigue. This process is now bearing fruit by way of increasing energy and less incidents of heart problems. The needed equipment has limited me to car travel, but my doctor has now cleared the way for air travel if things continue to improve. I plan several overseas trips in 2013 D.V.

Simultaneous to all this, our son Jason was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer earlier in the year, but after many tests in was cleared of it in favor of chronic pancreatitis. Thankfully, this death sentence is off the table. He remains unemployed, but goes full-time to college and is on the Dean's list much of the time. At age 40 he is trying to refocus/adjust his life.

We open with these personal notes to explain what has kept us occupied in addition to the work of ministry. The balance of this newsletter will now focus on ministry matters.

Thank you for your part in prayer and support of RCM as God has enabled you. It is most appreciated and encouraging during this time when our communication has been sparse. Our ministry responsibilities have been maintained throughout, but we now hope to return to more frequent newsletters and email updates.

May God grant you a great Christmas with family and friends and a spiritually prosperous New Year.

 Geoffrey Donnan

Rev. Rudy Poettcker is in Suriname at the time of writing this newsletter. Remember him in prayer as there are many challenges there.

Please designate donations for the RCM ministry of Rev. Poettcker to S.A.L.T.

(Scriptural Advanced Leadership Training)

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The Board of Directors for RCM in Canada is responsible for the affairs of RCM in Canada. RCM in the U.S.A. and Canada cooperate on like-minded projects. RCM cooperates by agreement with like-minded churches and denominations by assisting with mission work in specific fields and/or projects. Ecclesiastical authority for missionary ministers comes from their respective churches, not from RCM. Fields: Albania, Italy, Russia, U.K., Europe and Suriname. Director of Missions: G. W. Donnan, Minister

**New Canadian
Address**

Good News Bible Study Updates

Basic Course News: For many years, the five parts of our Good News Bible Study Basic Course (GNBS) were printed in two parts (Parts 1 and Parts 2-5). We've now been through the very tedious process of breaking them into five actual mailable parts. Since we have no office help, Rev. Donnan has had to learn the software and do all that work. This has been accomplished over the past six months. We used to get good responses to Part 1 under the old system but when we sent out Parts 2-5 in one 125 page booklet, the responses fell off considerably. After dividing them into individual printed parts, the responses now seem to come much quicker with less fall off. After more testing, we plan to make these parts available for purchase on our website and available to our Bible Course Grading Centers. Your church can also be involved (p.3).

Programmer: Justin Wishart is our GNBS website programmer. He lives near Brisbane Australia. He has redesigned our website to enable it to have its current functionality in many different languages. He is working now to make it user friendly for the record keeping of the printed course students. It is already functional for on-line students. He volunteers his time. Pray for him as he switches over to a new computer and continues this important work for RCM.

Chinese GNBS: Over the past year, we were able to get the GNBS Basic Course translated into Chinese. During the month of November we brought Peter and Jenny Yuan to Florida to meet with the Donnans and also enable them to visit during the meeting of our



Peter and Jenny Yuan
Translators & Grading Center Administrators
of the Chinese Good News Bible Study

presbytery. As soon as Justin Wishart is completed installing the Chinese language course on-line and also establishing the needed functionality for Grading Centers, the Chinese language on-line course will open up for students.

Peter is from mainland China and Jenny was born in Taiwan, but has lived in the U.S. since she was eleven and is a naturalized U.S. citizen. Peter was a house church leader in China and met Jenny while she was serving as a school teacher there. Peter came to the U.S. to study at a Chinese seminary, but left and went to Westminster Seminary California from which he received his M.Div. He is applying for his ordination with the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church and intends to be involved in missions to China and wants to plant a Reformed/Presbyterian church in the U.S.

French GNBS: During our visit with Rev. Jacques Teguel, our student from Senegal (see next article), we introduced him to the French translation of our Good News Bible Study course. We had this course translated in 1981-85 in Suriname by a Frenchman who attended our church for several years who had a wife from Quebec. It was then later edited by professor of French from Holland from the Gereformeerde Kerk. Rev. Teguel has reviewed the course stating that it is an excellent translation. He plans on using it in Senegal, West Africa initially as an on-line course. Pray with us for this process. This would be ideal also for any French-speaking church to use for an outreach to their community.

Update on a Seminary Student



In late October, Rev. Jacques Teguel and his wife Cloris from Dakar, Senegal, West Africa, were invited by some churches in western Virginia to visit them. He has been a student in our seminary program for several years. We had hoped we might get them to Florida, but there was not enough time. So Rev. & Mrs. Donnan drove up to Virginia (on the same day that Hurricane Sandy came ashore) and were able to spend three full days with them staying at the same house of the family that was hosting them. We were able to get very well acquainted with them.

We arranged to bring him the books for the next six courses of study and discuss his plans for eventually starting a seminary program in Dakar and perhaps even his home country of Cameroon.

We discovered that Dakar, Senegal was the regional capitol of French Africa for centuries and as such, it became the educational center for the French colonies in Africa. This has remained the case even after the independence of all of French-speaking African countries. Pastor Teguel obtained a law degree, intending to be an attorney, but after a discussion with his grandfather, decided to enter the ministry. He received theological training and belongs to the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon and works in Dakar as a missionary of his home denomination. He was doing some additional studies when we came in contact. After discovering how different the training he had received was from what we offered, he decided that he needed the biblical approach we used in contrast to the more liberal exposure so common among most present day Presbyterians in Africa.

During our meeting, Rev. Donnan was invited to visit Dakar to introduce the Great Commission from the standpoint of its gospel-centered world-life view virtually unknown in Christian circles in this 90% Muslim country. Since Dakar is a very prominent city and a magnet for the future leaders of French Africa because of its educational status, many of the attendees of his church-plant are students from other countries. His desire is to reach them, train them and then have them return to their countries as Christian leaders. Both the seminary and the perspective that the Bible presents a gospel-centered world view quite capable of standing up to the Muslim world-view are critically important in this part of the world. Students in his church from Cameroon, Senegal, Gabon, Guinea Konakri, Ivory Coast, Guinea Bissau and Congo., but many more are in Senegal from as far away as Mororcco, Mauritius, and Madagascar.

Other Students

We have now received seminary applications from students in the Philippines, Cambodia, and Indonesia. We also have students currently in Italy and Liberia.

Pray especially for Pastor Joshua in Liberia. He reports that while preaching on Dec. 9, his house was broken into and everything taken including all his furniture and bedding. The thieves then crossed the national border so nothing can be done.

Update on Suriname Students

Rev. Rudy Poettcker continues to serve as the Headmaster for the school in Suriname and spends about 33% of his time on Suriname matters each year which includes four different trips in addition to time spent on the college and seminary programs. On the next page is a breakdown of the countries from which the students originate and their various religious backgrounds.

Evangelism & Mission Outreach from your Local Church

The Good News Bible Study program has now begun taking on North American students as well as those from overseas both through on-line and printed courses. Our small local church has piloted a program of handling U.S. students and a small church in Toronto has been handling the Canadian students. As the number of students is growing, and some students have been requesting assistance finding churches that teach consistent with our Bible courses, we are now seeking a few more churches to get involved with us in this outreach of evangelism and missions. We would especially like to find churches strategically located in different parts of the U.S. as increasing numbers of church referrals are anticipated. We would ideally like churches that are willing to be involved with both the printed and on-line courses.

For local evangelism outreach, it will be a simple matter of doing some handbills or other forms of local advertising letting people know about the Free Bible Course. Please contact your church pastor or elder and we will be glad to explain the process to them. Have them contact Rev. Geoff Donnan.

**May the joy of Christ be in your Christmas.
May the coming New Year be a great blessing.
Please remember RCM in your year-end giving.**

Nations Represented in our school in Suriname

Country		Religion/Denomination	
Suriname	83	Undeclared	82
China	85	"Catholic"	5
Guyana	62	Roman Catholic	51
Brazil	36	"Christian"	60
Holland	24	Hindu	31
United States	13	Pentecostal	23
Haiti	7	Assembly of God	19
India	11	Buddhist	11
Indonesia	5	Reform/Presb.	21
Argentina	4	Baptist	14
Canada	2	Morav'n/Brethren	10
Sri Lanka	3	Muslim	7
Nigeria	1	ChrMissyAllianc	5
Venezuela	3	7th Day Adv.	3
U.K.	1	Nazarene	2
Peru	1	Jehov.Witness	4
Trinidad	2	Lutheran	2
Colombia	1	Taoism	1
French Guiana	1		
Cuba	1		
St. Lucia	1		
		Total Students	347

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December 2012

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TAX RECEIPT

Donation Deadline

for 2012

Checks dated & posted by
Credit/debit cards transacted by

Midnight

December 31, 2012

- I would like to teach at C.L.A. in Suriname.
 I would like to assist with the college and/or seminary program. I am sending a resume.
 Please add this/these person(s) on your newsletter/e-mail list:

God's Government of the "Valley of the shadow of death" is never an accident

Rev. Rudy Poettcker reported **from Suriname** on Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 10-11 that their church family there had a terrible tragedy. Terry Seeram and his family left from church and on the same road almost to the spot where another church member was killed in an "accident" some years earlier, Terry lost control of the car in slippery/wet conditions and ran into an oncoming truck at high speed. Airbags saved Terry and son Scot (6 yrs old) who were taken to the hospital, but his wife Shantie died on the spot, if not from bodily injuries, certainly from a great loss of blood. Both the boy and his father are recovering from surgery, though the father's knee and ankle were badly damaged. (See picture below.)

Terry's mom, Basantie, is a teacher at our school. She was understandably very shaken as was his sister Sherry. Pray for them... especially for Terry and Scot...and for the church...and for Pastor



Hamid as he ministers in this sad situation.

Pastor Hamid requests special prayer for Terry as he deals with probable feelings of guilt. Terry said to him the next day that it is very hard to lose a loved one, but he is thankful for the Lord's comfort through this time.

Pastor Poettcker sat with the young boy in the hospital and reports, *"Twice he looked up at me and said, 'my mommy is dead' and we shared some tears and I encouraged him that he has a daddy that loves him dearly and also a gramma and auntie. He had said to someone else, 'I am only 6 years old and I already lost my mommy.' I know from personal experience (in the illness and death of my own son) that the Lord does minister to the heart of a child; His Spirit speaks to their spirit and gives what is not normal to a child. I encouraged his father in this truth as well."*

This tragedy, as seen from man's perspective, is a reminder to us all of the fragility of life and the importance of the Gospel. That Gospel cannot be merely a message of salvation and going to heaven, but must be preached in its fullness and its application to every area of and event in life. God's glory is always to be supreme and this is best seen as true Christians, demonstrate from their new hearts that God-glorifying obedience to His word by the Spirit-led adjustments and reactions to such tragedies as this these. God always allows into our lives those things that will show forth His glory through us and sometimes He chooses such very unpleasant events because they most starkly contrast His light in believers to the darkness that surrounds them.

Thank God for the work of RCM in Suriname over the last 35 years and the sound preaching and teaching of the Gospel both in the church and the school that brings such hope. Thank God that the Seeram family are beneficiaries of this Gospel and will find it even more relevant to cope. May they have that true joy that only comes from God alone and is not restricted to one season a year.

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