



JANUARY 2024 | ISSUE 5

SEA TO SEA

Canadian RP News

Toronto RPC



The Person and Work
of the Lord Jesus

p. 4

Interview:
Rev. Matt Dyck

p. 6

Profile:
Toronto RPC

p. 11

Great Lakes Gulf
Presbytery (RPCNA)

p. 14

EDITORIAL

The chronically cynical among us will be quick to say, “it’s just another day,” but every January 1st does mark a New Year. And with this new year of our Lord, 2024, a new edition of Sea to Sea! The Christian life is wonderfully and graciously a life of many ‘new’ things. In Jesus Christ, by the work of the Holy Spirit, there is the new birth (John 3:3), a new covenant (Hebrews 9:15), a new man (Ephesians 4:24), newness of life (Romans 6:4), a new song (Psalm 98:1), and the promise of a new heavens and earth (Revelation 21:1). The apostle Paul captured the grace and glory of gospel newness in his words in 2 Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” This principle of new life in a Christian gives us tremendous hope as we face a new year. We need hope as we all still deal with ‘old’ things in our lives; sins, and circumstances which are not avoided or erased simply by the turning of a page on a calendar. And not everything ‘new’ is easy or good. Politicians and marketers superficially sell people things on the assumed, and often unthinking, premise that if it is ‘new’ it must be good or at least better. In this new year you may face a ‘new’ diagnosis, a ‘new’ heartache or heartbreak, a ‘new’ season of unemployment, or a ‘new’ hardship of some kind. Our hope is that we can face whatever God’s providence may bring us as believers, saying, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ...” (1 Peter 1:3). And every day, as the dearly loved children of God, we may approach the throne of grace through the new and living way Jesus has opened for us (Hebrews 4:16, 10:20). As we live day by day Christian lives this year, we have the promise of mercies that are new every morning (Lamentations 3:23). May this new edition of Sea to Sea help you to step into a new year reminded of God’s promises and assured of His faithfulness, as we say with the psalmist, “My times are in your hands” (Psalm 31:15a).



BY REV. MATT KINGSWOOD
Minister of the Russell RPC

CONTENTS

- 3 NEWS: New Members in 2023
- 4 Person and Work of The Lord Jesus by Rev. Allan McLeod
- 5 Book Review: ‘The New has Come’ by C. Farenhorst
- 6 An Interview with Rev. Matt Dyck
- 8 NEWS: Fall Presbytery Report
- 9 NEWS: New Elder in Toronto
- 10 Discover your True Identity
- 11 Profile of Toronto RP Church
- 12 Biblical Anthropolgy by Mr. Jim Hughes
- 14 Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery of the RPCNA
- 15 Upcoming Events

General Editor: Rev. Matt Kingswood
Features Editor: Mr. Jim Hughes
News Editor: Mrs. Karin Foster

magazine@rpccanada.org

All Bible quotations are from the ESV





GOD IS GROWING HIS CHURCH

New Members in the RPCC in the Year 2023

by Communicant Members:

Amparo Ayala (Ottawa)
 Renato Ayala (Ottawa)
 Cole Braden (Ottawa)
 Maria Castro (Ottawa)
 Cam Curran (Hillside)
 Karen Leclair (Hillside)
 Joshua Fapo (Toronto)
 Brenna Farenhorst (Russell)
 Eleanor Farenhorst (Russell)
 Elyssa Foster (Ottawa)
 Lily-Rose Grondin (Russell)
 David Hamilton (Ottawa)
 Paul Hrkach (Russell)
 Lydia Hrkach (Russell)
 Minwhan Kim (Ottawa)
 Seoyoung Kim (Ottawa)
 Kate Kingswood (Russell)
 Wilma Kling (Toronto)
 Elisa Lam (Ottawa)
 Amy Landry (Hillside)
 Josh Landry (Hillside)
 Catherine Macdonald (Toronto)
 Katrina Marshall (Ottawa)
 Don Millar (Ottawa)
 Jaycee Ortega (Ottawa)
 Rebecca Petch (Toronto)
 Gord & Karin Polk (Hillside)
 Evelyn Sinclair (Ottawa)
 David Sinclair (Ottawa)
 Jack Scott (Ottawa)
 Rochani Simanjuntak (Toronto)

Bethany Smid (New Creation)
 Grace Smid (New Creation)
 Hannah Somers (New Creation)
 Joe Qiaao (Nissi)
 Nancy Qiaao (Nissi)
 Henry van der Meer (Ottawa)
 Ethan VanHoffen (New Creation)
 Tia VanHoffen (New Creation)
 Curtis Vedder (Russell)
 Nicole Wang (Nissi)
 Steven Wang (Nissi)
 Zakari Ward (Ottawa)
 Amina Ward (Ottawa)
 Jena Welter (Russell)
 Mike White (ottawa)
 Vanessa White (Ottawa)
 Ezra Wilkinson (New Creation)
 Natalie Wilkinson (New Creation)
 Lily (West Vancouver)

by Adult Baptisms & Communicatant Members:

Alisa Chaput (Hillside)
 Ryan Chaput (Hillside)
 Luke Mo (Ottawa)
 Megan Proud (Ottawa)

by Covenant Members:

(children previously baptized)
 Helena Ayala (Ottawa)
 Renata Ayala (Ottawa)
 Nageyoung Kim (Ottawa)
 Najeong Kim (Ottawa)

Naseon Kim (Ottawa)
 Emma Wang (Nissi)
 Oscar Wang (Nissi)
 Caleb White (Ottawa)
 Issac White (Ottawa)
 Maggie White (Ottawa)
 Lukas (West Vancouver)

by Covenant Baptisms:

Clark Alexander (Ottawa)
 Boaz Bayne (Coram Deo)
 Sybil Ayer (Russell)
 Abby Chaput (Hillside)
 Noah Chaput (Hillside)
 Sophie Enns (Hillside)
 Beth Harper (Ottawa)
 Grace Liu (Toronto)
 Jacob Landry (Hillside)
 Pax Marshall (Ottawa)
 Boulder McNeely (Coram Deo)
 Elias Ortega (Ottawa)
 Simon Smit (Ottawa)
 Abigail Sutherland (New Creation)
 Aaron White (Ottawa)
 Michael White (Ottawa)
 Silas White (Ottawa)
 Adah Wilkinson (New Creation)
 Remmington Wilkinson (New Creation)
 Ryan Young (Russell)
 Grant Young (Russell)
 Sarah Zebadua (Coram Deo)



THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE LORD JESUS

Words used to describe the work of Jesus: Propitiation

In our initial considerations on the glorious person and work of Jesus Christ, we reflected on, The Uniqueness of His Person; The Uniqueness of His Life; The Uniqueness of His Death; The Uniqueness of His Resurrection.

Now we examine another way in which his uniqueness is highlighted in Scripture; that is by the different words the Holy Spirit uses to describe the work of Christ upon the cross.

While the words are significant in themselves, what is as significant, is the environment in which these words were initially used. What we mean is that the words had already been coined in the warp and woof of everyday life, and what they spoke of, and how and when they were used, were readily understandable to the people of Jesus' day and for centuries before. This meant several things.

Firstly, the Holy Spirit chose words that were not abstract and speculative, or fine tuned for propounding theories (philosophical or theological) and thereby only of significance and understanding to an educated and elite class.

Secondly, the work of Christ upon the cross and what it achieved is presented in Scripture in very concrete, relatable terms which help to answer one paradox of the work of Jesus: The One who receives the wages of sin is the Son of God!

Thirdly, moved by the Holy Spirit, the authors of the New Testament in seeing everyday scenarios, and the words which were used to describe them, saw how fittingly these words could be used for describing what Christ was doing as he hung upon the cross. They took these words and 'baptised them into Christ' and they became vessels fit for the Master's use.

The first word we consider is the word *propitiation*.

The word *propitiation* is a translation of a Greek word group that almost always referred in the ancient world (when applied to God) to appeasing or averting divine anger. It would bring to the mind of those who heard it of being involved in a ritual at a shrine.

We find this word used in various places in the New Testament:

*1John 2:2 He is the **propitiation** for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

*1John 4:10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins.*

*Hebrews 2:17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people.*

*Romans 3:25 whom God put forward as a **propitiation** by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*

There are those who oppose the use of this word for describing an aspect of Christ's work on the cross. They reason that notions of God's anger are inappropriate with reference to a God of love. For them propitiation makes God rather like some cruel, blood-thirsty pagan deity who must be bought off with a bribe.

But they forget, as we must not, that God's wrath is not

arbitrary and capricious; it is part of his immutable justice and holiness. One writer summarized this as:

The cross propitiates God. The reality of God's anger was dealt with by the curse-bearing of his Son. What covers sin removes the ground of the wrath and effects appeasement.

And another has said:

In propitiation God is made pro-us.

In these, we are reminded that propitiation has a relational component to it. That is, Christ's death not only removed the moral stain of sin, it also removed the personal offense of sin.

John Stott in his book, *The Cross of Christ*, reminds us of something we should never forget as we consider the propitiation Christ's work accomplished:

The gospel begins with the outspoken assertion that nothing we can do, say, offer or even contribute can compensate for our sins or turn away God's anger. There is no possibility of persuading, cajoling or bribing God to forgive us, for we deserve nothing at his hands but judgment. Nor ... has Christ by his sacrifice prevailed upon God to pardon us. No, the initiative has been taken by God himself in his sheer mercy and grace.

When we are tempted to forget this, pray that God would bring to mind, what he said through John:

*1John 4:10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins.*



BY REV. ALLAN MACLEOD
Minister of the RP
Congregation in Toronto, ON



REVIEWED

By Mrs. Laura Smid
Member of the
New Creation RPC

The New Has Come by Christine Farenhorst, North Star Ministry Press LLC, 2022, softcover, 259 pages.

Have you ever dreamed about being a character in a book, or imagined what it would be like to meet that character in person? I had this experience with Linnet, a little girl in the novel, *The New Has Come*, by Christine Farenhorst. Linnet's honesty, inquisitive nature, and constant questioning captivated me and reminded me so much of children I know. Christine uses Linnet's character, her relationships with other people in her life, as well as events in the Second World War, to set the stage in this historical fiction-- that stage being to demonstrate God's providence in the lives of His children.

Linnet's story is not just well-written historical fiction but is a piece of writing that makes you stop and ponder the Lord's work in your own life. It makes you contemplate his faithfulness, forgiveness and love given to us through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ. It is a story which demonstrates God's desire for His children to come to a deeper and ever-growing understanding of his grace for us through Christ.

The New Has Come is highly recommended for old and young alike. It would, however, be an advantage for the reader to have a historical understanding of the Second World War. Therefore, older children, teens and adults would benefit most. This is the first book that I've ever read by Christine Farenhorst, and I was delighted to find out that she has written a number of others as well! I'm looking forward to discovering more of her stories—to being encouraged by her faithful rendering of God's love for us.

THE INTERVIEW

Rev. Matt Dyck
Pastor of Hillside RPC in
Almonte, Ontario



Give us a brief life history.

I was born Matthew Henry Dyck, in St. Catherines, Ontario in 1970, to Anne and Henry Dyck. I am one of four children, and we grew up across the street from my godly grandmother and aunt near Port Weller. I grew up in various Anabaptist churches, and in the back seat of a 1947 PA-11 Piper Cub in flying club hangers and grass-runways cut out of Niagara vineyards.

We moved to Nepean (Ottawa) in 1980 when my father (a first-generation Mennonite) who was an aircraft mechanic, eventually became Chief Superintendent of Air Worthiness, Air Carrier Div. Transport Canada.

A love of sports (especially football) soon pushed out my affinity for aviation and time in a cockpit was exchanged for hours in gyms and fields.

In my last year of High School my heart was captured by a talented artist named Jennifer Peters. Our relationship deepened as our faith grew and I headed off to Tyndale University to pursue an undergrad degree in Religious Studies while she pursued a degree in Interior Design in Ottawa. After graduation she did me the honour of marrying me and we moved together to Ottawa to begin further

training at Ottawa Theological Hall (OTH). We have been blessed with four amazing sons, Calvin (27), Josiah (25), Samuel (23) and Benjamin (19).

What is your current situation?

I am the pastor of Hillside church in Almonte Ontario (30 min. west of Ottawa) a mill-town settled by Scottish and Irish immigrants among whom some Covenanters families established numerous churches in the region. The Hillside congregation is the remnant of those churches and will celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2030. I was ordained and installed into this ministry in the Spring of 1996 and have been privileged to watch Christ's faithfulness as he builds his church. By his grace, we maintain public worship twice on Sabbath and have various small group ministries. We also sow the gospel into our community through various events and programs.

What has been the greatest influence in your life for Christ?

The single most influential and central figure in my life is Jesus Christ. His patient pursuit of my rebellious heart has given me reason to serve and praise him for eternity. I have most felt his loving influence through the investments of many godly individuals in my life. None so powerful as that of three women in my life, my mother, aunt Margaret, and wife Jennifer.

My mother was the spiritual leader in our home, bringing us to church and teaching us to pray and follow Jesus. She remains a great source of encouragement for my life and faith.

My aunt Margaret (my father's older sister) lived across the road from us as I was growing up. She served as a nurse and missionary in the Middle East until she moved home to care for her ailing mother. She was a

steadfast source of the grace of Christ in my life until the Lord called her home in 2017.

My wife Jennifer has been a faithful co-labourer in this gospel ministry for 25 years, a devoted wife for 29, and best friend for 31. She incarnates the goodness and steadfast love of Jesus for me daily. My perseverance in this ministry has been by God's grace channeled through her.

I am certain that my faith is also a result of praying grandparents and gospel-preaching churches that I was brought to as a child and teenager. One of the most powerful places that the Lord helped me to work out my salvation' was at Bonnechere Baptist Camp on Round Lake, near Kilaloe, Ont.

When my father was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2003, I was honoured to be used by the Lord to help my father commit his life to Jesus before his death a year later. While I mourn his loss every day, I am spurred on by the reminder of the resurrection power of Jesus and His Gospel to save anyone.

My time at OTH and the mentoring of Dr. Richard Ganz and Rev. Ken Smith (former RP pastor in Syracuse and OTH professor) left a profound impact on me and my preaching and leadership philosophy. Through the years the Lord has profoundly shaped me and my pastoral ministry and my understanding of the mission of the church through the writings and teaching ministry of Dr. Timothy Keller. I still find

great joy and inspiration, in the creative writings of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis.

What has been the biggest challenge in getting where you are today?

Me. My sin has resisted the new creation Christ is growing in me with my struggle to believe the beauty of the gospel and my control-freak pharisee attitude that has not quite died in me yet.

As I grow older, my desire to press on in my upward calling (Philippians 3) is threatened by the temptations of pride of achievements and despair with physical weaknesses.

I am striving to learn deeper and say with more conviction that his grace is sufficient for me, that his power is being made perfect in my weakness.- 2 Corinthians 12:9 To remain steadfast in prayer and the gospel ministry is all his grace.

What advice would you give to someone 10 years younger than you?

Be grateful, submit, and pray. Ephesians 5:20: "... giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ." Growing up I can trace all of my stepping out of line with Jesus and his gospel (Galatians 2:14) to my failure to give thanks, submit, and pray. Never underestimate the power of these three graces to guard you from yourself and the world. Stay committed to private and public worship and private moments of gratitude to Jesus. Even when your pride

is telling you to run, remain submissive to the body of Christ and your leaders. In this pride filled world of consumeristic individualism it will go against every voice (even from Christians) that tell you that the church and its fellowship and care of you is not that important. Resist that and submit to Jesus by submitting to His church. Finally pray! Do not underestimate the world-shaping power of prayer (Revelation 8:1-5).

If the Lord continues to bless, what would you like to see happen in the RP Church in Canada?

That the Lord Jesus would make us a vibrant Kingdom Lampstand, a faithful gospel witness that transforms the communities that our churches reside in. That through our humble witness our nation would begin to return to Christ and our people flourish. May the Lord grant His servants to speak His Word with all boldness (Acts 4:29). That He may have dominion from Sea to Sea (Psalm 72:8).



BY REV. MATT DYCK
Minister of the Hillside RPC
in Almonte, ON

NEWS: FALL PRESBYTERY

The Fall meeting of the new RPCC Presbytery was held on Tuesday 24th and Wednesday 25th October 2023. Rev Matt Dyck opened the meeting on Tuesday morning when he preached from John 15:1-11 and encouraged the Presbytery to look to Christ as the vine from whom the branches source their life.

Rev Patrick McNeely's resignation

It was with regret that the Presbytery accepted the resignation of Rev. Patrick McNeely as Minister of the Coram Deo RPC (Squamish). There were several contributing factors, not least the burden placed upon Rev. McNeely as the only elder on the ground since the congregation's formation and the congregation's financial situation. The Presbytery is pleased that Patrick, Jacyn and their three boys will continue to live in Squamish and be members of the congregation while Patrick works with the fire department in Vancouver.

Two Sessions appointed to oversee the four congregations in BC

The decision was made to separate the oversight sessions for the four congregations in BC. So, a BC English Session was appointed to oversee the Vancouver RP and Squamish RP congregations, and a BC Chinese Session to be responsible for the two Chinese mission congregations in West Vancouver and Surrey.

Possible future Minister

It was agreed that the Presbytery will interview Mr. Ezra Wilkinson (New Creation - Kitchener RPC) during its May 2024 meeting to establish Ezra's desire to be a minister and see if he fulfils the Presbytery requirements to be trained for the gospel ministry.

Congregational and Committee Reports

A verbal report was received from each congregation, and prayer was offered.

The Presbytery had agreed in its preformation discussions to appoint Committee members until 2025, but this decision was reviewed, and it was agreed to make new Committee appointments that will be reviewed annually.

Training of Men for Ministry Committee

This committee brought twelve recommendations regarding the formation of an RP Seminary in Canada for training men for the gospel ministry. Following discussion, the following are some of the decisions agreed upon:

- That the Presbytery would form the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary of Canada (RPSC) which would be situated in Ottawa.
- This Seminary would be administered by a Faculty Board accountable for its decisions to the Presbytery.
- A pre-seminary program would be offered, which all students would be required to take before being



NEW ELDER IN TORONTO



David Finlayson grew up in the Toronto congregation. He has a BFA in photography from Ryerson University and has worked as a professional photographer for 15 years. He has had his art displayed in the Max Ex art exhibition. His passion for photography was kindled by taking landscape photos. David enjoys capturing with his camera the beauty, artistry, and awe-inspiring power of God in creation. David married his excellent wife (Proverbs 31:10) Jacky in 2020, in the middle of the COVID 'lockdown'. They were able to have only a few people attend their wedding. The rest of us watched it being streamed. He teaches the teenagers' Sunday School class and leads younger adult meetings. David was ordained as an elder on September 24th, 2023. We are thankful that, as a young man, he is willing to serve in this role and to carry forward the work of our congregation into its second century.



permitted to enroll in the three-year RPSC program. While the pre-seminary program would be taken online, for the Seminary program, students would be required to participate either in-person classes onsite or live online by special permission of the Presbytery (in the case of an RPCC student) or of the RPSC Faculty Board (in the case of a private student).

- As well as their in-class courses, the RPSC students will undertake three summer internships - one at the end of each academic year.

Communications Committee

This committee reported on its work in producing the RPCC quarterly magazine 'Sea to Sea' and the work it does to inform the church of the body life activities going on within the church in Canada through Facebook and other social media platforms.

Finance Committee

The Presbytery agreed to the committee's recommendation of congregational presbytery dues at 3%.

Camps and Conferences Committee

This committee was pleased to report that the registration for the 2023 Family Camp was the highest it has been and that while there were some teething issues with the move to the new site at Wesley Acres, the feedback has been very positive.

Mission Committee

The Presbytery agreed to form a Mission Committee, the first task of which is to devise and bring a recommendation regarding its remit/role to the May Presbytery meeting.

Other Matters

RPCC Constitution

While the RPCC Constitutional document has been agreed and the life of the RPCC is being operated based on it, some revisions are still to be made. The expectation is that these revisions should be finalized within a year.

Fraternal Relationship with RPC of North America, RP Global Alliance Membership, Membership of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council

We are thankful that fraternal relations have been granted to us by our former denomination, the RPCNA. It is hoped that the RPCC will be received as a member Church of the RP Global Alliance in 2025, and NAPARC has granted the denomination observer status. While these things may seem to have little bearing on life in the pew, they are important because they demonstrate the seriousness with which the wider church in North America and the RPC globally has taken the development of the RPCC.

*Report written by Rev. Dr. Andrew Quigley
RPCC Presbytery Clerk*

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Discovering Your True Identity: A Christian Perspective

Every fall, the organization I work for hosts a speaking tour, focussing on a current issue of concern to Christians. This fall, the focus was 'The Gender Controversy in Light of the Image of God.' I want to share a few thoughts taken from that presentation.

In a world obsessed with the question, "Who am I?" and the constant pursuit of self-discovery, it's easy to get lost in the cultural confusion. Our modern society is infatuated with the notion that identity is something we must achieve on our own. The prevailing creed seems to be, "I am my own and I belong to myself." The idea of autonomy, of being one's own god, prevails, elevating human choices to supreme importance.

The concept of gender identity is a fruit of this thinking. Gender theorists argue that gender is entirely socially constructed, and even our biological sex is a mere assignment. It suggests that we can choose our gender, or even invent our own. Social and medical transitions are often initiated to bolster these new identities.

The medical path of so-called 'gender-affirming' care, with its stages of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and

surgery, is extremely risky and carries a long list of extreme potential side effects. There are practical reasons to oppose these medical changes: gender dysphoria in children most often naturally resolves itself; gender changes are often initiated and accelerated by social contagion leading to hasty and irreversible decisions. Children and teens, embracing this ideology, are making life-altering decisions at increasingly younger ages. In Canada, you need to be 18 to adopt a pet, yet there is no age limit on 'gender-affirming' changes.

Despite the ever-evolving definitions of gender and identity in our culture, we hold fast to the belief that our identity is rooted in our Creator. We are made in the image of God, and this truth is at the core of our identity. Genesis 1:27 states it clearly:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Our identity is not something we choose for ourselves but rather is a gift from God. Even after the fall into sin, the Bible reinforces that human beings retain the image of God (Genesis 9:6).

Genesis 1:27 further emphasizes that male and female were designed by God. Every single one of the 100 trillion cells in our bodies bears the genetic marker of our sex. We cannot divorce gender from biological sex, as the two are intrinsically linked in God's natural order.

As we navigate the complexities of identity in the modern world, we should remember the words of Psalm 139:13-14,

"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."



BY MR. COLIN POSTMA
Ruling Elder
in Ottawa RPC



History: The former Free Church of Scotland congregation in Toronto organized by Rev. Duncan Macdougall of Vancouver in 1928 joined the RP Church of North America in 2015 and along with all the other Canadian congregations became a part of the RPCC when it was formed in May 2023.

Leadership: Pastor Allan MacLeod has been our pastor since 1997. He is the fifth pastor to serve the congregation since it was founded. Rod Finlayson and Jim Hughes have been elders in the congregation since before Allan's pastorate began in Toronto. David Finlayson was ordained as an elder in September, 2023. We are thankful that, as a young man, he is willing to serve in this role. At present we do not have any deacons.

Worship Participation: At the morning worship, we can have 65 people present. At the evening worship service, we average about 20 folks.

Local Community: In 1976 the congregation opened its second building, after a move from the downtown to a 'distant' suburban community. However, there has been significant population growth in Toronto since 1976. A subway was constructed along the street in front of our church building, and high-rise condo buildings were being built along the route of the subway. We worked with a developer, and they built us a new building into a condo complex. We held our first worship service in the new building in, October 1st, 2017. We are surrounded by condo buildings. About ten of the folks in our congregation live in buildings nearby. People in our immediate neighbourhood are materially well off and ethnically diverse.

Typical Lord's Day: Sunday School classes are held at 10:00am. We also have a class for about ten young children during the morning service. The morning service is at 11:00am. The evening service is at 6:00pm. Allan usually preaches through a series (e.g., a Bible book or a topic such as the miracles or parables of Jesus). We observe the Lord's Supper once per month, except in July and August; and have fellowship lunches usually on the second Sunday of the month.

Congregational Activities: During the COVID situation, we moved to conducting our Wednesday evening prayer meetings on-line. We have continued to use an electronic sharing media for these meetings. A woman's Bible Study is held in the church building twice a month (except during the summer months).

Challenges: Our biggest challenge has been retention. Many of the folks who have attended our services over the past 10-15 years have been unable to continue living in Toronto due to the high cost of housing, particularly if they are starting families. They end up moving out of the city. We would be thrilled to have additional families join our congregation with men who are qualified to serve as deacons or elders.

ANTH NUMBER 5 IN THE SERIES ROPO MALE AND FEMALE LOGY



Biblical Anthropology – Mankind’s Two Sexes

The creation account challenges the popular myths of our culture such as the ‘big bang’ cosmology and the development of life by evolutionary processes. In the same way, it challenges our culture’s cherished beliefs in the realm of anthropology, including about the nature of the human sexes.

Genesis 1:26-27 teaches us that man is a single entity that consists of two sexes. While many animal kinds are also made up of male and female sexes, this is not mentioned in the creation account (the first reference is at the flood; Genesis 6:19). Since the first notice of sexual differences relates to mankind, this indicates that God wants us to pay attention to the fact that man was created with two sexes. Both sexes were created in the image of God (Genesis 5:1)—each sex alone is an image-bearer of God (Genesis 5:3)—and both sexes (‘them’) were given dominion over the rest of creation. Only Christianity, among all religions, has a foundation on which to declare the full natural equality of the sexes.

Even though the two sexes were created equally as image-bearers of God, this does not mean that the sexes have identical roles. The three persons in the Trinity are all equally God, yet they have different roles in creation, providence, and redemption. Thus, having different roles does not diminish a person’s essence. The existence of different roles is indicated by the use of the terms ‘male’ and ‘female’. The two sexes are intended to complement and complete each other (Gen 2:20). The inherent distinction within mankind through the different sexual roles implies that other distinctions are present—which are enunciated more fully in Genesis 2 and 3.

The explicit declaration that man consists of two sexes, as part of the original sinless created order, requires that we resist the attempts of our age to blur the distinctions between the sexes. We must not allow ourselves to be bullied by those who demand that we use ‘gender neutral’ terms. The proper term to use when referring to the two sexes collectively is ‘man’, and thus we should use the terms ‘he’ and ‘him’ (as God does; Genesis 1:27) rather than the grammatically incorrect ‘they’—as in, for example, “each person should have their own notebook.” Similarly, we must resist attempts to blur the sexes in other ways such as through cross dressing (Deuteronomy 22:5), hairstyles (1 Corinthians 11:14-15), or washrooms in public buildings; or demands that women be allowed to participate on male sports teams or must have equal access to military combat roles (Numbers 1:22; Deuteronomy 24:5). Males and females were uniquely created by God. They are not two instances of one type of human, but two separate types. Blurring the distinction between males and females is an idea that comes from the same materialistic naturalists who claim that man and animals are part of an evolutionary continuum and that living entities are nothing more than molecules with legs. The fact that man was created as two sexes also means that there are not three (or more) genders. There are many examples of how modern men, thinking themselves to be wise, are acting foolishly. One

example is government decisions to allow a third gender option (of X, for 'indeterminate') on their passports. Another is the wild fad to undergo sex changes that titillates our culture is another indication of how unwilling we are to take God's word seriously. Also, we see utter absurdity when politicians and judges are asked to define what a woman is.

The use of the term 'man' as representative of both sexes also has profound theological significance. The word for 'man' in the Hebrew is 'adam', which means 'ground' (from which man's body was formed; Genesis 2:7). It is the personal name of the first man and can refer to a generic individual person but is also used to include all of mankind. In the latter sense, the term has within it the concept of covenantal representation and accountability. We see Paul expressing this idea when he refers to Jesus as the Last Adam—as the representative of all mankind (1 Corinthians 15:45-49).

The creation of man with two sexes, and not as an androgynous creature, indicates that he is a sexual being. Human sexuality was blessed (Genesis 1:28) at creation, is an essential part of carrying out the mandate to multiply (Genesis 1:28), and is deemed to be a very good thing (Genesis 1:31). Angels, in contrast, are not sexual beings (Luke 20:34-36), indicating that God endowed mankind with special privileges—such as an ability to create life (Genesis 5:3), emulating his Creator. While animals reproduce sexually, it is not mentioned in the creation account. This implies that human sexuality is of a different sort than animal reproduction—human

sexuality is intended as more than a mechanism for procreation. The union of a man and his wife in an inclusive oneness is part of experiencing covenant blessing. The fact that God created only one first man and woman indicates that sexual union is intended to be permanently confined to a single human couple (Genesis 2:24)—not to be shared with multiple marriage partners or to be dissolved by divorce (Matthew 19:4-6). Of course, it is obvious that homosexual relations are excluded—they are not part of the created order and therefore unnatural (Romans 1:26-27).

When considering the sexual nature of man, it is relevant to note that evolutionists cannot provide an explanation for how the sexes could have evolved (other than through their wild speculations about how changes in the chromosomes might have arisen) and for how mankind's sexual organs could have become so intricately compatible. We have the answer in these verses; God created mankind in two sexes—"male and female he created them."



BY MR. JIM HUGHES
Ruling Elder in the RP
Congregation in Toronto, ON

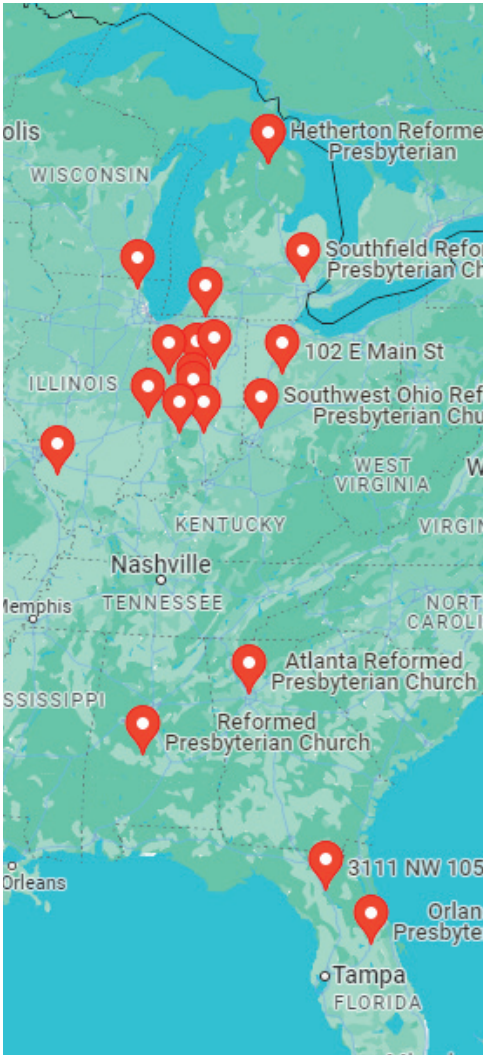


RP CHURCH OF CANADA www.rpccanada.org

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A collection of news items from the RP Congregations across Canada

Subscribe to the Newsletter: rpccanada.org/contact



PRESBYTERY OF THE GREAT LAKES/GULF

The RP Church in the United States is divided into six presbyteries based on geography; in the previous issues we have looked at the presbyteries of the Alleghenies & Atlantic and now we come to the *Presbytery of the Great Lakes/Gulf*, which covers the regions around the Great Lakes west of Pennsylvania and also the churches around the Gulf of Mexico.

The Presbytery is made up of 18 churches, 2 church plants and 1 fellowship.

While the June 2023 Presbytery Report does speak of some discouragements, overall the congregations in the presbytery are, by the grace of God, experiencing growth.

There is an active ministry within the Presbytery for the youth called the *Covenanters Young People's Union* which organizes 4 events annually:

- Fall Ministry Project
- Winter Conference
- Theological Foundations Weekend
- Spring Bash



The COVFAMIKOI Family Conference has been running since 1946. This 5-day annual family conference is a highlight of the summer for many in the presbytery and is held on various college campuses in a central location.

The oldest congregations are found in Bloomington, Ohio and Sparta, Illinois and were both organized in 1821. The newest Fellowship was begun in Gainesville, Florida in the year 2021.

UPCOMING EVENTS 2024



RP CHURCH OF CANADA'S YOUTH EVENT

WINTERLUDE

9-11 February 2024



13-18
YEAR
OLDS

- Rev. Scott Wilkinson
- Ottawa RPC
- Fellowship, Fun &
- Outdoor Winter Activities!

Details & Registration
www.rpccanada.org/winterlude



rpfamilycamp.org



Family Camp, Wesley Acres, Price Edward Country

September 6-9, 2024



Rev. Allan Macleod
Minister of Toronto RPC

**REGISTRATION
OPENS
March 1**



RPIC 2024

Reformed Presbyterian International Conference

Tuesday June 25th - Monday July 1st
Indiana Wesleyan University Marion, Indiana
Rev. Warren Peel (Covenant Christian Fellowship in Galway Ireland)
'Glorifying God in Babylon!'

for more information - rpiconference.org

Register Today!