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SEA TO SEA

Magazine of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada



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EDITORIAL

The news in Canada this past summer was once again filled with reports of wildfires. Even in Ottawa, smoke and haze bore witness to fires burning thousands of kilometers away. Images and video captures of those infernos look like the work of CGI. But for those affected, these fires were often devastatingly real. I read several accounts of people whose homes and businesses were reduced to dust and ashes. As I tried to sympathize with loss of homes, livelihoods and in some cases life, I didn't want such difficult providence in the lives of others to leave me unaffected or unchanged. The Puritan John Flavel, in his book, *The Mystery of Providence*, citing Scripture, called his readers to the necessity of such reflection. "This is our duty...and God has called His people to make the most serious reflections upon His works, whether of mercy or judgment." Short of assigning responsibility and punishments for particular or personal sins, seeing vast areas of our country ablaze should bring us all to confession and repentance of our own and our national sins. Watching flames consume possessions and lives should compel us to remember that "... the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire..." and so to think along the lines of 2 Peter 3:11, "Since all these things are thus to be dis-

solved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness...". Seeing the loss of treasures on earth should turn our attention to treasures in heaven, where "neither moth nor rust" nor fire destroys. As Samuel Rutherford penned, "Set not your heart upon the flowers of this world; they will fade and die. But let your heart's delight be in Christ, who fadeth not." Wildfires always, surprisingly perhaps to some, remind me of the Gospel. The best way to combat wildfires, pre-emptively, is by what are called "controlled burns." Wildfires do not rage where fire has previously burned. Reflect again on Christ, who suffered the white-hot wrath of God on the cross as the great substitute Saviour for all those He came to save. Those who by faith are united to Christ are safe--"there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus", Romans 8:1. (see also 1 Corinthians 3:10-15). I hope Sea to Sea, as well, will be used by God to help us all "make the most serious reflections upon His works ..."

Rev. Matt Kingswood
Minister, Russell RP Church



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Front Cover: Port Mann Bridge in Surrey BC



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All Bible quotations are from the ESV

MEMORIAL

Rosemary Loughridge: The Beauty of God Upon Her Life

(reprint with permission from RP Witness, July/August 2026)

"While Sea to Sea is a publication of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada, and focuses on our national context, the following is a memorial of a member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. In including an extract from an article (first appeared in RPCNA's *Witness* magazine) we hope you will be encouraged by God's faithfulness to His children and His Church as you read about Rosemary Loughridge. We are also hereby reminded of our denominational roots in the United Kingdom. Rosemary was an exemplary "mother in Israel" for the Church in every nation, and also for a young Canadian intern in the Trinity RP Church in Ireland 30 years ago." ~ MK

Rosemary was the sixth child of James and Agnes Kerr. She had three older brothers, two older sisters, and three younger sisters. The six girls in the family fell into natural pairs, and Rosemary and I were the middle pair.

We grew up in a farming family in Northern Ireland. The farm where we spent our early years was in North Antrim close to Dervock RPC. It was a location that served us well as a large family, as we only had to walk down the lane to attend church and Sabbath school. Our parents had been members of Kilraughts RPC, but on acquiring this farm became lifelong members of the Dervock congregation, where my father served as an elder for many years, and where he and my mother taught Sabbath school.

Rosemary felt that teachers in elementary school compared her unfavorably with our older sisters, Eileen and Sadie. Being of a stubborn nature, she determined that she would not follow them for her secondary education, where this comparison could continue. Instead, she did a three-year secretarial course, and then, despite being offered a secretarial position with a well-known local business, chose to enroll in a one-year pre-nursing course. This was followed by gaining her State Registered Nurse (SRN) qualification at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, and her State Certified Midwife (SCM) at Simpson Memorial Hospital, Edinburgh, Scotland.



By this time (1966), her former friend and future husband, Ronnie had gone overseas to Ethiopia on short-term mission service with the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Rosemary, with the thought that perhaps she and Ronnie would be led to commit to long-term service in Ethiopia, did a three-month course (1967) in Tropical Medicine in Liverpool, England. Ronnie's short-term stint in Ethiopia lengthened to two-and-a-half years and, when he returned in Nov. 1968, he and Rosemary became engaged and were married on July 3, 1969. There followed a marriage of 51 years and the raising of three sons, Mark, Peter, and Joel.

Rosemary and Ronnie were, for many years, members of Trinity RPC, Newtownabbey, and then became one of the core families in the Carrickfergus RP daughter congregation, where Ronnie continued to serve as an elder.

As the pastor who conducted Rosemary's funeral service aptly said, Rosemary and Ronnie were willing to serve in mission in Ethiopia, but the Lord had another mission for them, raising and training three sons in the ways of the Lord—three sons who are now fulfilling mission in the gospel ministry in the RP Church—Mark in Donegal (Ireland), Peter in Edinburgh (Scotland), and Joel in Cloughmills (Northern Ireland)

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KINGDOM LIFE: PROMISE OF THE KINGDOM

Matthew 5:10-11

My father was an aircraft mechanic and he had a lot of tools that looked very strange to me. They were specifically designed for uses that I was not familiar with and as such, after inheriting most of them, I still haven't used many of them. By the end of Jesus' "Beatitudes" that open his Sermon on the Mount, he gives his Church a very crucial "why" of His death and resurrection, namely His people becoming 'salt and light'. These closing verses are actually a promise given that reveals to us our purpose as Christians. If we miss this, it will leave us frustrated. Or worse, like specifically designed tools sitting on a shelf, unused.

These "Beatitudes" of Jesus are often called a blueprint of the new world order, a counterculture (as John Stott called it) that Christ is ushering in through His people.

So far, he has shown us the pathway to the Kingdom namely, poverty of spirit that mourns for its sin and confesses meekly. The door itself is the person of Christ who is to be received by a faith that hungers and thirsts for righteousness. The grace of this kingdom begins to remake us into new people of mercy and purity

that become the peacemakers of the earth. But what follows is often overlooked and when misunderstood can leave us gathering dust on a shelf. Jesus closes these beatitudes with a promise of persecution that gives purpose to making us His salt and light.

The Kingdom Promise

Jesus declared that the people of His Kingdom are peacemakers but the next declaration of blessing reveals this ministry will bring persecution. The shalom (Hebrew for "peace") offered by the King will not be welcome in this world. As Paul says, "If anyone desires to live a godly life in Christ Jesus, he will be persecuted." (2 Timothy 3:12). But why is this a promise of blessedness? It is how His Kingdom advances- by those who conquered by "the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." (Revelation 12:11).

It is the path of union with Christ that transforms us, so "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him



in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” (Philippians 3:10).

Christ says our sufferings as witnesses for Him should be mingled with joy (vs.12), because these “light and momentary afflictions preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,” (2 Corinthians 4:17).

This is the Kingdom promise for the persecuted witness. Affliction “prepares” or “brings about” an eternal weight of glory. As Charles Hodge says, “Afflictions are the cause of eternal glory. Not the meritorious cause, but still the procuring cause. God has seen fit to reveal his purpose not only to reward with exceeding joy the afflictions of his people, but to make those afflictions the means of working out that joy.” (Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians)

The Kingdom's Purpose

This witness for the King and His coming Kingdom has more than a promise of persecution that can bless us. Its purpose is precisely described by Jesus, “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

A city on a hill where mercy will be like salt and truth declared like light in darkness.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13-16).

There’s something incredible that Christ does with his people who are willing to suffer for Him in this world. His love and grace in us acts like salt in this decaying world. His truth abiding in us acts like light in this darkness. “Such a Church (said John Stott) — joyful, obedient, loving, and free — will do more than please God: it will attract the world. It is when the Church evidently is the Church, and is living a supernatural life of love by the power of the Holy Spirit, that the world will believe.”

That’s what Jesus says His Kingdom in us is all about. He is creating a city on hill where mercy will be like salt and truth declared like light in darkness... so that “that they may see your good works and ... give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16).

Rev. Matt Dyck
Minister, Hillside RPC



RP Global Alliance

The RP Global Alliance website
www.rpglobalalliance.org
is the place to find news, information
and prayer points about the RP
Church around the world.



The RPGA Team sends out weekly
prayer emails and a monthly newsletter
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INTERVIEW

Mr. Rod Finlayson
Ruling Elder in Toronto RPC



Give us a brief life history:

I was born in Toronto, Ontario in 1952 and grew up there. My parents, Cameron and Ruth Finlayson (Campbell) were both faithful Christians. My father was born and raised in Lucknow, Ontario where his parents were members of the Free Presbyterian Church at Lochalsh, Ontario. My mother was raised by godly parents who immigrated to Canada in the early 20th century. My mother's father was committed to Jesus Christ and had a large library, read the puritans widely, while running his own construction company.

I often tell people that my parents primary desire for their children was that they would grow up to love and serve Jesus Christ. I believe that my siblings and I can say with the psalmist in Psalm 65:5b, "... you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name."

What is your current situation?

After graduating from the University of Toronto in 1974 I moved to Kenora, Ontario and started working for Dunwoody and Company. I received my CA degree in 1977. I moved back to Toronto in 1980 because I wanted to be closer to a Reformed church that I could join in all good conscience and serve the Lord there; and to be closer to family.

In the providence of God, I spent four months at the beginning of 1981 in Fort Frances, which is where I met Helen at a prayer meeting. It soon became apparent that the Lord had made us for each other. We were married in 1984, and the Lord has blessed us with three children, David, Jonathan and Kendra. It is with a deep sense of God's mercy and goodness that we can say that our children are walking with Jesus. As John says in 3 John 1:4, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth."

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

I believe that my father and mother's constancy and humble commitment to Jesus Christ were the greatest influences. My parents understood that a humble reliance upon God as our rock is what we should prize. Life was not without its challenges for them, but they had an unshakable confidence in the truth that "the Lord reigns"

My father was consistent in teaching us the Shorter Catechism, believing that it was an excellent summary of biblical truth.

In God's Providence he has also brought across my path many of his servants who have been a real blessing in teaching me to live and think the Christian life.

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

As a young boy and then a young man I was very timid. I believe that the Lord has shown me that he has made me and fashioned me according to his wise plan and according to his purpose. We all need to use the gifts God has given us and not be constantly comparing ourselves with our neighbours.

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

We live at a time when it is very easy to focus on what is lacking and negative in the world and in the church. We need instead to point out that Jesus is the answer. We need to be confident that Jesus is building his church and that his Kingdom will come.

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MISSION UPDATE

Steadfast Teaching Bears Fruit in Pakistan



If someone were to walk the streets of a major city in Pakistan, he or she would find several churches bearing the name of Christ. Yet, after more than a century of missionary labour in the region, the theological foundations beneath much of that outward Christianity remain shallow—shaped more by borrowed frameworks than by a biblical faith. Into this landscape, the Lord is raising up reformers.

Dr. EM*, a reformer of the Church in Pakistan, makes two trips a year, crisscrossing the country training men in the deep truths of Reformed theology. After receiving his Ph. D. in South Korea and moving to the U.S. with his family, he has been making trips to Pakistan for over a decade. He is a prolific theologian, teacher and writer in the Urdu language and founder of the Urdu Center for Reformed Theology. He began his ministry in his home village of Chaura, where his people, who were nominal Catholics, eventually became over many years Reformed Presbyterians in both conviction and practice. From this first organized RP Church in Pakistan, three other unorganized churches have been planted in other parts of the country.

Between trips, Dr. EM is writing books and delivering online training to the two students under the care of the Commission overseeing the development of the work in Pakistan. On his visits, Dr. EM is giving lectures and seminars in many seminaries and churches. For example, in a partnership with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of Pakistan, Dr. EM has been teaching 120 students in intensive courses in systematic theology. He distributes his books widely, finding hun-

**Full names are not given for security purposes.*

gry readers of his Reformed resources in Urdu. For a country still shaped by hierarchical church models and near-universal dispensationalism, his books are slowly spreading a reformation among churches.

Training of teaching elders remains the most strategic work at this time. Two RP seminary students have now completed their first semester of formal pastoral training, with the help of online teaching from Brad Johnston, Vince Ward, and Derek Moore. Coursework in

Systematics, Homiletics, Church History, and other subjects, continues under the oversight of the RPCNA Pakistan Commission, alongside presbytery exams.

Translation work presses forward as well. R.C. Sproul's "Everyone's a Theologian" has completed translation, editing, and formatting, and will soon go to print—a landmark resource for Urdu-speaking

students. Other titles written by Dr. EM are close behind, feeding the growing library at the Urdu Center for Reformed Theology.

Please pray for Dr. EM, his wife, and their children in Kansas. Pray for Pastor IB, Pakistan's only fully-certified teaching elder/minister, and for Elder ND as he perseveres through a hard season of ministry. Pray for a recent majority-religion convert and his wife, now under discipleship, and for MS, a young man walking in visible repentance. May the Lord establish this work for his glory across Pakistan.

Rev. Vince Ward
Interim Teaching Elder, Beckwith RPC



RPCC FAMILY CAMP

Making Memories that last a lifetime



We had another wonderful RP Family Camp at Wesley Acres this year. The change in the date, bringing the camp two weeks earlier was a huge success. It meant the weather was warmer, and most of our school going kids were still on summer vacation. God blessed us with wonderful weather with only a very short-lived sprinkle of rain on Sunday morning.

The speaker was one of our own, Rev Scott Wilkinson, Pastor of New Creation RPC in Kitchener. He brought a series of talks to us on the ascension of Christ. It is always a blessing to learn more about our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are grateful to the planning committee for all their hard work ensuring a successful weekend. Special thanks to the registrar, our genius administrative lady, the cooks, and all the others in the kitchen who helped provide wonderful food all weekend. From the outside looking in, it appeared that the kitchen ran like a well-oiled machine. Cooks, front of house, drinks, dish pit, servers, so many people participated in ensuring delicious and abundant food. Thank you so much!

Family camp offers something that no ordinary vacation can. We get to spend extended time with like-minded believing families. A highlight for me is all the beautiful conversations with people from our sister congregations. It is a time to get to know one another better, and to encourage and edify one another in our faith. Our children have a glorious time forging new friendships and renewing old ones. This year particularly, our high school/young adult group was well represented.

After one of the most successful, blessed Psalm sings of any family camp, our youth did not want to stop singing. They continued, while many of the oldies felt hoarse from singing. The decision to have the Psalm sing at the tables outside the kitchen was fabulous! The location encouraged higher participation. The four-

part harmonies could be heard far and wide into the night, as we made a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Reformed Book Services blessed us with their presence once again. They had a wonderful array of bibles, psalters, children's books, and others.

The Polar Bear swim at 6:30 am is growing in popularity. Rev. Kingswood said there were record numbers out. He has renamed the swim, the "Teddy Bear" swim as the water temperature was way too warm!

A highlight of the weekend was the annual talent show on Saturday night. There was much talent on display, as instruments were played, songs sung, and hilarious skits acted out by family groups and church members.

The presentation on Monday morning on RP Missions, Brazil and the Canadian seminary was very encouraging! It was great to hear of the vision for the seminary, and the request for us to pray for the August 2028 cohort, that God would bring many men to be trained as Gospel ministers. It was also good to hear how well the present students are doing. Praise the Lord!

Lastly, I would be remiss not to mention the inter-congregational volleyball tournament on Saturday afternoon. Emotions ran high, as the goal of some of the teams was to depose Russell from first place. Apparently, Russell RP has held the first place position for a few years, and they remain unbeaten. Russell first, Beckwith second, and Almonte third. There is always next year!

If family camp has not been a part of your vacation plans before now, please plan to join us, Lord willing, in August 2027 for a restful, edifying time away.

Mrs. Melanie Alexander, Member of Russell RPC



CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Bill 107: Gambling Legislation

Earlier this year, the National Post shared the story of a Canadian medical student named Phil, who spends his nights sleeping in his car after completing his daily studies. His homelessness is not the fault of the burdensome cost of medical school, but of his crippling addiction to online gambling, which has cost him \$400,000 in losses over 4 years.

Although Phil's story is unusual, his struggle with gambling is not. A 2022 Statistics Canada study reports that 64.5% of Canadians over the age of 15 gambled in the past year. In an online discussion about gambling ads, one user wrote, "the scariest part about online betting is how quiet it is; you can be losing your entire future while sitting right next to your family on the couch. There's no bouncer to see you're spiralling, no bartender to cut you off . . . and certainly no oversight to check if you're struggling with trauma or under the influence."

Since 2022, when the Ontario government legalized online gambling through private companies, the rate of young men contacting the mental health helpline for gambling issues increased by over 300% (CMAJ, 2026). This statistic is unsurprising given how aggressive sports betting advertising has become in recent years. One study estimates that sports fans are exposed to approximately 2.8 gambling references per minute, always followed by the hollow warning to "game responsibly" (Cardus, 2024). The harms of gambling addiction go beyond financial hardship, as it has been proven to increase the risk for relational and psychological harm including suicidal tendencies, substance abuse, and domestic violence (PubMed, 2023).

These troubling trends can be traced back to problematic legislation, which has made online gambling more

accessible and appealing. In 2021, the federal government decriminalized single-game betting, which encourages impulsive and continuous betting, and opened the door for provinces to privatize online gambling through apps like FanDuel and DraftKings. Alberta followed Ontario's lead in 2025 and welcomed private gambling companies, with apps becoming available as of July 2026. Even in provinces where privatized gambling is still illegal, many users play on unregulated sites and apps without realizing it—it is estimated that half of all gambling revenue in British Columbia goes to these unregulated providers rather than the licensed provincial gambling site.

Unfortunately, legislation restricting gambling has been either non-existent or directly opposed. Liberal MPPs recently introduced Bill 107, which would have significantly limited gambling advertising in Ontario, but it was voted down by Conservative MPPs. Legislators across Canada should be hearing Canadians' concerns about the harms of gambling addiction, and encouraged to take steps to restrict advertising and in-game betting. As Christians, we are certainly not immune to the temptations of online gambling and should remain vigilant and look out for friends and loved ones who may be struggling with temptation. Like any other addiction, this should be seriously addressed through biblical counselling and the use of practical means like site-blocking tools. "Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it." (Proverbs 13:11)

Mrs. Lydia Hrkach
Member, Russell RPC





Group Picture taken at Family Camp 2026, Record attendance of 285!

... continued from page 3, Rosemary Loughridge Memorial

out their mother. She was grateful that God was sparing her to see her sons growing up. She frequently quoted what someone who also suffered from MS had said to her, “You don’t die from MS. You live with it.” And live with it she did.

She ran her household and family, was involved in her sons’ school activities, played an active role in her church, and travelled extensively. Rosemary’s MS did not hinder her; it simply created obstacles to be overcome. And with Ronnie by her side—a person of equal tenacity and determination—they overcame. So, when diagnosed, two-and-a-half years before her death, with an inoperable tumour, she and Ronnie continued to live life to the full. They travelled to Scotland to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with their three sons and wives, and seven grandchildren; continued to be involved in family and church events; and attended church conferences.

In Nov. 2019, with the tumour causing greater obstruction, she was given the prognosis of a few days or weeks to live. This period, in God’s providence, extended to over seven months. Ronnie cared for her in their home with incredible selflessness, thoughtfulness, skill, and devotion. She continued to live with a God-granted peace, confidence, serenity, and clarity of

mind, which enabled her to be in control of her circumstances. During this time, she enjoyed her 76th birthday with her sons and their families around her, and welcomed her eighth grandchild, who was born just four weeks before her death.

From the recesses of my mind comes the memory of Rosemary as a young teenager, having received a little plaque with the words, “And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us” (Ps. 90:17). She was impressed by that verse then, and, as many who knew her testified, it became a reality in her life.

Her son Mark wrote, “She was living proof that His ‘grace is sufficient...and His strength is made perfect in weakness’” (2 Cor. 12:9). An open house, an open heart, an open smile—her family was much bigger than three sons and the Kerr and Loughridge clans. Everyone belonged. She lived with MS and then an inoperable tumour with confidence that her heavenly Father knew what He was doing, and that all His ways were perfect, kind, and good. And so, she smiled—a lot. A radiant, trusting smile. She led me to Christ and modelled faith-filled suffering. She taught me to read, and to love books, birds, puzzles, and nature. She disciplined me in the way of a wise and loving parent. And now she is released from the broken shell of her body, freed to see her Savior face-to-face, to rest from her labours, and to hear His “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

PRAYER'S POWER

Scientific experiments have been conducted into the power of prayer. For example, one report stated that, “Studies have shown prayer can prevent people from getting sick—and when they do get sick, prayer can help them get better faster.” This conclusion was apparently based on an “exhaustive analysis of more than 1,500 reputable medical studies.” A study conducted by researchers at Brandeis University concluded that, “new research shows that over the last four decades, medical studies of intercessory prayer—the prayer of strangers at a distance—actually say more about the scientists conducting the studies than about the power of prayer to heal.” And, a report published in the *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, entitled “Prayer and healing: A medical and scientific perspective on randomized controlled trials”, concluded that, “We believe that the research has led nowhere, and that future research, if any, will forever be constrained by the scientific limitations that we outline.” What are we to make of these kinds of studies? Is prayer effective or not? How could we demonstrate its power? A review of the studies conducted on the effectiveness of prayer will indicate that they suffer from problems, such as:

- Some include the “empty phrases” (Matthew 6:7) of Hindus, Muslims, and Jews, which are not prayer because they are directed to false gods and are not offered in the name of Jesus and with an express desire to see the will of God administered.

- They often confuse cause and effect and co-variants when considering possible instances of correlation. For example, those who offer true prayers may have better health, but while their health and prayers may be correlated, they are not necessarily causal factors of one another but the result of a true faith that changes how people live and worship.
- They cannot delve into the mysteries of how God works through prayer. Trying to prove, empirically, that prayer works is like attempting to prove the existence or non-existence of God through a physical experiment. This is impossible. God does not subject his glory and power to human tests.

Considerations of the power of prayer are also confused by faulty interpretation of what the Bible teaches about prayer. For example, a book by Bruce Wilkinson called *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* (2000), based on 1 Chronicles 4:9-10, encourages a ‘name it and claim it’ approach toward God. It has led to a cult-like and superstitious offering of mantra-like utterances to God. It suggests that God should do what people demand of him—with the ‘prayer’ becoming a limitless credit card—rather than our doing what he demands of us. Without question, the Bible indicates that we are to anticipate answers to our prayers. For example, Jesus states, “Ask, and it will be given to you” (Matthew 7:7), “if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them



by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:19), and, “whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith” (Matthew 21:22). However, Jesus does not provide a systematic analysis of proper prayer in these aphorisms. Rather, we need to consider a complete scope and context of Scripture to establish the conditions that are necessary for experiencing the full power of prayer, such as:

- The statements of Jesus are not absolute, giving us anything we want. If it were the case that Christians should always receive everything they ask for, then none would suffer any illness and would never die because they could continually ask for healing. However, the idea that God always heals is destructive to faith and contrary to the teaching that all men must die and face the final judgement (Hebrews 9:27).
- Everything that we ask for must be in accordance with the will and plan of God (1 John 5:14). For example, Pope Francis made statements indicating that “Poverty is not inevitable!” and calling for the elimination of poverty. Yet, even if he were able to offer a true prayer and ask God to eliminate poverty, this prayer would not be answered in that way, because it is contrary to the will of God who has placed a curse on the earth (Genesis 3:17-19) and to the words of Jesus, who says that there will always be the poor (Matthew 26:11). To ask God to establish a heaven on this earth is sinful.
- James informs us that it is the prayers of a righteous person (James 5:16) that are effective. Likewise, Jesus states that for prayer to be effective we must be abiding in him (John 15:7). Most Christians fail miserably in this.
- Prayers must be addressed to God the Father in the name of Jesus (John 14:13). This means that whatever is asked for in prayer must be consistent with God’s character and will and with what Jesus would ask of the Father.
- Prayers must never be offered with the wrong motives such as fulfilling our own desires and passions (James 4:3).
- Prayer is not like getting three wishes from a genie. God owes mankind nothing and does not bend his will to our wills but does as he pleases (Psalm 115:3), for his own glory (Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
- Effective prayer is conditional on obedience to God’s commands (1 John 3:22).
- True prayer is willing to acquiesce in the answers which God gives, which may be “No”—as Moses (Exodus 33:18-20), Jesus (Matthew 26:39-46), and Paul (2 Corinthians 12:7-9) experienced—or “Wait and see what great things I am doing!”
- Prayers must be offered earnestly and with effort (Luke 18:1-6; Luke 22:44).

Powerful prayer is not mere asking and receiving. It is “an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies” (Shorter Catechism, Q98). We must pray because it is powerful and changes things.



Mr. Jim Hughes
Ruling Elder, Toronto RPC



RP CHURCH OF CANADA www.rpccanada.org

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A collection of news items from the RP Congregations across Canada



CHURCH UPDATE

Nissi Reformed Presbyterian Church

Leadership

Nissi Reformed Presbyterian Church currently has 11 communicant members.

Nissi currently has only one local elder, Rev. Kevin Jia. He began a church-planting ministry in the Greater Vancouver area in the fall of 2019 and has served as the pastor of the Nissi RPC since the congregation was officially organized with the approval of the RPCNA's Pacific Coast Presbytery in July 2021. We thank God for his faithful and steadfast service over these years.

When RPCC was first established, Rev. Andrew Quigley and Rev. Matt Kingswood were also appointed as provisional elders to assist with the pastoral oversight of the congregation. Both of them completed their service in this role in 2024, and we are thankful for their ministry among us.

At present, Rev. Kevin Jia is assisted in the pastoral oversight of Nissi RPC by four provisional elders: Rev. James Zhou, Rev. Matt Dyck, Rev. Patrick McNeely, and Rev. David Matthes. Rev. Patrick McNeely serves as clerk. We are deeply thankful for their help, love, and sacrificial service. They have made a significant contri-

bution to the functioning and growth of the congregation.

Lord's Day Worship

We currently use the basement of Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church as our meeting place. The address is 12300 92 Ave, Surrey, BC V3V 1G4. Our Lord's Day worship service begins at 9:45 a.m., followed by Sunday School. We also have a fellowship meal once a month.

We thank God that Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church is willing to share its church building with us, and we also enjoy good fellowship with them from time to time.

In addition to Lord's Day worship and fellowship, we have a Reading Club, prayer meeting, and Bible study during the week, meeting on Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Congregation

Our congregation is small, and our members live in different areas rather than close to one another. Most of our members are middle-aged. In addition to our formal



members, several brothers and sisters in Christ from other churches regularly participate in our weekday studies and prayer meetings.

Our membership has not changed in number over the past two years, but members of our congregation have faced many different challenges.

One elderly retired man underwent cancer surgery last year and has suffered from persistent insomnia since the operation. One woman has been troubled by severe dizziness, which has prevented her from working normally and from driving to church for worship. One family has been stranded in China for two years while waiting for their visas to be approved. Two other families have had to return to China to care for their mothers, who are seriously ill.

Recently, however, new families have begun attending our church and have expressed a willingness to commit themselves to serving God in this congregation.

We have been meeting at our current location since the end of 2022. Although the room is not large, it is sufficient for our present needs. We continue to pray that God will add to our number and provide us with a larger place in which to worship and gather.

The people in the neighborhood where we currently meet predominantly have a background from India, while the members of our congregation are scattered throughout the surrounding areas. Our primary means of outreach is through the personal relationships and friendships of our members. Through these connections, we seek to share the gospel with unbelievers and to introduce Reformed doctrine and faith to evangelical Christians from other backgrounds.

Compared with the total population of Greater Vancouver, the Chinese population in our immediate context is still relatively small and dispersed, so there is not a clearly defined Chinese community in the geographical area where we meet.

Prayer requests

Please pray for members who suffer from long-term illnesses, including our minister and his family. Pray that God would grant healing and strength so that they may better serve the Lord and others.

All of our current members are first-generation immigrants, and they have elderly parents living in China, most of whom are not yet believers. Caring for two families separated by thousands of miles, places a heavy burden on them and often leaves them ex-

hausted. Please pray that the Lord would give them strength to meet this challenge faithfully.

Please pray that the Lord would add to our number and raise up elders and deacons who are able and willing to serve him.

Please also pray that God would provide for the needs of our pastor and his family. Since this ministry began in 2019, our pastor has served either without a salary or with only partial financial support because the congregation is small and unable to provide his full salary. Please pray that God would continue to sustain his family in Vancouver through various means, especially through his part-time work translating theological books.



... continuation of Rod Finlayson Interview from page 6

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

My prayer is that the RP Church in Canada would be successful in prioritizing the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. My desire is that many would join our congregations and that we would have congregations throughout the country join us because they see a Church committed to the historic teaching of the word of God and place it above the opinions of men..

Let's prioritize the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and believe that it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, both Jew and Gentile. I long to see the Holy Spirit come to the church in power.

Psalm 67 describes beautifully the greatest need of the RP Church in Canada and indeed the whole church of God throughout the world. May we be used by God to spread his glory throughout the earth. "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea." (Habakkuk 2:14).



RPC OF CANADA

ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT



OCT 30 & 31



2026

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