

A Famine in the Land



*Members of the Presbyterian Church
of Dakar, Senegal, West Africa*

*August - September 2010
News and Prayer Letter*



Reformation Christian Ministries

News & Prayer Letter

August-September 2010

"Behold, the days come," saith the Lord GOD, "that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it." (Amos 8:11-12)

A Famine In the Land

When Amos spoke these words, there were many prophets in the land. From the time of Malachi to the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, there were no prophets. The people were starved for the word. There were many false prophets, but none true. The Scriptures were available, but true preaching from them was very scarce. There was a famine of the word of God in their land. It was very scarce.

There is a parallel between those days and what surrounds us today. The Bible is readily available throughout the land, and yet faithful preaching is hard to find. Churches abound, and yet those that truly preach the unabashed gospel are far too rare.

Is our day much different? Sadly, much of our world believes we all worship the same God, just in different ways and by different names. Allah, Jehovah, the Unitarian god, the non-Trinity god, what's the difference? The same is true of the "gospel". What difference does it make if we are Arminian, Calvinist, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Pentecostal, charismatic, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian or Reformed. We all have the same gospel, right?

The fact that most people think this way makes it all too clear there is a famine in our lands. Everything is a muddle. Even most Christians think this way. Many denominations think they are on the top of the heap and all the rest are just knuckle-dragging Christians because they have the same gospel. The others just don't know as much as we do.

We are in a famine where the true God and the true gospel cannot be differentiated from false gods and gospels. As a result we don't recognize the difference between beating our swords into plowshares and beating our swords into welfare checks. We need another Reformation. We need more of what RCM is doing that brings differentiation to these gods and these gospels and show the antithesis between them in practical ways. Pray with us and help us to that end.

RCM has been having a tough time of it financially. We are still very solvent, but increasingly limited in what we can do because our donation income has gone down considerably. Many of you are doing all you can and it is greatly appreciated. The Lord will fill this void in His time, but we sincerely would appreciate your prayers.

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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

Gospel-centered Education & Outreach

Increasingly, Reformation Christian Ministries finds itself on the forefront of fighting for the centrality of the Gospel not just in preaching and teaching in the church, but in every area of life. Every Christian is either a lamp or a bushel basket with the gospel of his life. He lives it out in every area of his life. It is the basis for educating his children, talking to his neighbor, doing his job, playing sports and even voting. The gospel must not stop at the church. It must infiltrate every aspect of life in which every Christian has a part. Let your light so shine!

There are a great many problems in the world's nations. The gospel is the solution to every one of them in one way or another. We dare not lose sight of that for to do so is to lose our foundation for living not just in the church, but in every area of life.

Geoffrey Donnan

Rev. Dr. Richard Knodel Back From Scotland Continues His Work with RCM

After nearly four years in Scotland as an RCM missionary, Dr. Richard Knodel has returned to the U.S. due to lack of funding. He and his wife Susan are temporarily residing with their son's family until they locate a home in the Cincinnati area.



He will be continuing his work for RCM as a missionary now switching his focus to the development of both college and seminary level courses. In this, he will be providing some relief to Rev. Poettcker. Dr. Knodel will also continue his work on both the college and seminary doctoral committees. (Dr. Knodel was one of the co-founders of Christ College of Lynchburg, VA, for whom our college provided distance-learning services until they closed some years back.)

Additionally, he will be a part-time church-planter for the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and is already in the process of transferring his credentials from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

His wife Susan has found a job locally and they hope between her income, his work with RCM and his part-time work as a church-planter, that they will be able to sustain themselves.

One of the most exciting prospects is that he will be available, funds permitting, to travel and assist in teaching on the mission fields of RCM. In God's providence this may soon involve opportunities for distance-learning seminary instruction for RCM's college and seminary degree programs in the Philippines and Indonesia assisting local established Reformed and Presbyterian denominations with their educational needs.

Those of you wishing to continue supporting or take on the support of Dr. Knodel's work with RCM, may do so by designating donations to the project name "Hear Ye". See the coupon on page 3.

RCM Briefs & Updates — Meet Who We Met

During June & July we traveled extensively to tell RCM's story, make new friends and sell some books to help support the work of RCM and cover our travel expenses.

Biblical World-View Student Conference

May 31 through June 4, Milligan University, Milligan, TN
Approximately 150 students from around the U.S. and Canada came together for instruction in the application of Scripture into every area of life.



(L) Rev. Geoffrey Donnan
(R) Gary DeMar

(L) Rev. Geoff Donnan
(R) Prof. James Nickel



Gary DeMar, President of American Vision and prolific writer, has been a friend to RCM since 1983. Teacher and writer James Nickel, captivated the students at this conference with the subject of mathematics. At the conclusion 150 students gave him a standing ovation.

American Vision World View Conference July 21-24, Atlanta, Georgia



Several fellow exhibitors

(L) Author, Martin Selbrede; (C) Rev. Geoff Donnan,
(R) Dr. Philip Kayser



Display for RCM set up at the United Reformed Churches of North America General Synod.

(L) Rev. Mitchell Persaud
(R) Rev. Geoffrey Donnan

United Reformed Churches of North America 2010 General Synod held at London, Ontario, July 26-30

As a number of URCNA churches are supportive of RCM and one of our board members is pastor of the Thunder Bay, Ontario church, we have always been invited to exhibit at their synods every three years. Since 1991, Rev. Donnan has been at most of the meetings that led to their formation as a federation in 1996. He has been to all but one synod since then.



(L) Rev. Geoff Donnan,
(C) Rev. Tony Zekveld,
(R) Rev. Mitchell Persaud.

At the Synod, there was time to meet with two URCNA ministers with whom RCM has had association for years.

RCM worked originally with Rev. Zekveld when he was associated with

Urban Nations in New York City. He later moved to Toronto and began a work among the Urdu and Punjabi speaking people there. We now collaborate on the translation of the Good News Bible Study into Punjabi and Urdu.

Rev. Mitchell Persaud was hired by Rev. Donnan to work for Christian Liberty Academy in Suriname as a trainee in 1982. At the time he was a Pentecostal believer from Guyana. In a



short while, he became reformed and began teaching and later administrating the school. He also was called as an elder and later a preacher at the church founded there by Rev. Donnan. In the early 1990s he went to the US for theological studies, ended up marrying Sha-beeda Hussein, a former student from our school who then lived in Canada, and accepted a call to plant churches. He now resides in Toronto and pastors a URCNA church plant in the inner city.



Both Revs. Zekveld and Persaud are promoting a Toronto-wide use of the Good News Bible Study as an outreach of the Reformed churches in the area. Rev. Donnan met with one interested church mission committee while in the area.

RCM Updates & Schedules— Meet Who We Met (cont'd)



West Timor, Indonesia
Rev. Geoff Donnan (L) and Rev. Yonson Dethan (R).
As we were standing here, someone commented that we looked like the “long and short of it”.

Rev. Dethan is a second generation minister from a Dutch Reformed church heritage. West Timor was an island formerly held by the Dutch during colonial times. He represents a federation of 13 churches. He was at this synod to begin the establishment of relations with the United Reformed Churches of North America.

He was successful in moving that process to the first step.

Rev. Dethan was educated at the Canadian Reformed Church Seminary in Toronto, is married to a Dutch Canadian girl and has four children.

RCM has been invited to assist their churches with setting up a distance learning seminary program that would enable their minister candidates to study from home, or on occasion together, and receive degrees from abroad. This is exactly what our seminary program was designed to do, so we are excited about the prospects of serving in this regard. Rev. Donnan is considering a trip to West Timor at the same time he visits the Philippines in the near future to do further investigation.

Rev. Barry Beukema
(Pastor of the URC Church of Thunder Bay and RCM Board member) meets with Rev. Yonson Dethan of West Timor at Synod.



Five Countries Sent Seminary Course on DVD.

RCM is experimenting with sending seminary courses on DVD to pastors without computers. MP3 files can be played on DVD players. The materials to be read can be printed at an Internet Cafe. Countries receiving these were Nepal, Liberia, Senegal, Swaziland and Russia. Please pray for these. It costs us about \$50 to prepare and send out one course. The first course was Covenants of Promise, a course on covenant theology.



Meet **Rev. Jacques Teguel**, a Presbyterian missionary from Cameroon to **Senegal** (West Africa), with wife Clois beside him. He wears the typical uniform of a minister. The church in Cameroon was planted by American Presbyterians in 18th century.

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- \$ _____ Other

- 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:

Meet Mary Montague — God's Answer to Prayer in Suriname



Mary Montague is from Grace Presbyterian Church in Redding, California. She is a former high school English teacher and department head. Quite committed to Reformed theology and healthy in other respects, she decided at the youthful age of 78 to offer her services to the Lord by committing at least one school

year to teaching at our school in Suriname.

We sent out an appeal for prayer on July 8. Rev. David Stark, her pastor, forwarded the email to her and she emailed Rev. Donnan on July 11. She was interviewed by Rev. Poettcker on July 12. Her application went in on July 13. She was interviewed again on July 14 and on July 15 was offered the mission job opportunity and accepted. She obtained her visa by July 28, in time to join Rev. Poettcker on the flight to Suriname August 2. They had teacher's preparation day on August 6 and she began teaching August 10. This is an incredible display that God answers prayers and works out His will through His providence.



Mary teaching in several of her English classes in Suriname



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