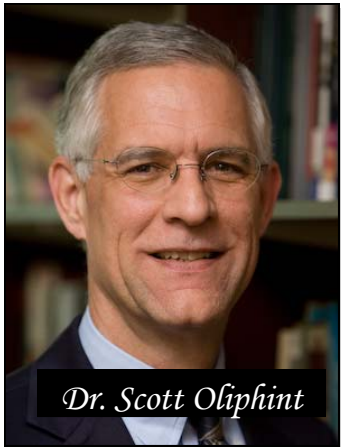


COMMUNIQUÉ

October 2011



The Newsletter of
Westminster Presbyterian Church,
Lancaster, Pennsylvania



Dr. Scott Oliphint



Dr. David Garner



Rev. John Currie

28th Annual Reformation Conference

Saturday, October 29 – Sunday, October 30

Full Confidence in Scripture

Every year on Reformation weekend at the end of October we seek to bring to Westminster a stimulating topic that distills lessons of the historic Reformation for our faith, worship, and living. We have taken up the doctrine of Scripture in this conference before. However, this year we cooperate with Westminster Theological Seminary of Philadelphia to bring you a somewhat different conference they have offered at a half dozen other venues earlier this year.

Full Confidence in Scripture as a theme arises from the tragic fact that across the nominal evangelical world, many pay lip service to “infallibility,” “inerrancy,” or other issues regarding the authority of the Bible. However, in practice they quickly depart from these declarations, to ignore or twist Scripture in any direction they please, often to suit cultural ideals. This is an insidious reality in growing numbers of churches, at Christian colleges, and seminaries. The late Dr. James Boice spoke at our 1999 Reformation Conference on the subject, not long before his death. He declared that he saw the focus of struggle for the early twenty-first century being over “the *sufficiency* of Scripture—do we really *trust* all that the Bible has to say?”

Our three 2011 speakers are all on staff at Westminster Seminary. Many will remember Dr. David Garner as a former missionary to Bulgaria. David is now associate professor of systematic theology. Dr. Scott Oliphint is professor of apologetics. John Currie is a former pastor and serves as director of student development and alumni relations; he is known as a good preacher. Together, they will bring us a weekend of messages planned to be helpful and encouraging to you in practical ways.

You must register to attend on Saturday. Lunch is provided for Saturday registrants, and there will be a Question and Answer Time at 1:00 PM. On Sunday, October 30, Dr. Garner will speak at both morning services on “*The Gospel from Above*.” There will be a joint class for all adults at 9:30 AM where Dr. Oliphint will address “*The Context for Confidence*.” Then at the Sunday evening service, the Rev. Currie will speak on “*Confident Strategy for the Times*.”

Register at the Information Counter before and after services during October. There is a modest discount for registering by October 9. You can also register online from our website. We want to be a church where the Word of God is trusted fully and in detail, not merely by a formal declaration. Set aside time to join us, to understand all that this means.

See full conference schedule on page 8.

Marriage Conference Draws More than 500

By Dr. Joan Stratton

Approximately 550 people, both couples and singles, representing six states and a wide age range, joined together at Westminster Church for a weekend marriage conference on September 23-24.

Under the title, *What Did You Expect? Redeeming the Realities of Marriage*, Dr. Paul Tripp presented five sessions of firm, biblical truths relating to the marriage relationship and to our understanding of ourselves and our relationship with the Lord. Dr. Tripp's insights, often startlingly stated and indelibly illustrated, reminded us that no *horizontal* relationship issues can be genuinely corrected until the *vertical* relationship with God is as it should be. We saw clearly that "marriage is war" when we individually live for our kingdom-of-one, that marriage is not a bargain or *contract*, but is *sacrifice*.

Many took advantage of the book table which offered DVDs, CDs, and books on various topics that Dr. Tripp addresses such as living within a broken world, being useful in helping people change, parenting biblically, and reorienting ourselves toward a God-focus in mid-life years.

Many attendees gratefully commented on the unusual depth of Dr. Tripp's message. The conference definitely led us to think biblically and honestly into the heart of relational problems and dynamics.



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Good News Club at Washington Elementary



Last year, God gave a core group of Westminster women a vision for starting a Good News Club in the city, and George Washington Elementary School was open to it. The school is located at the corner of S. Ann and Conestoga Streets in Lancaster City. New City Fellowship offered to be the sponsoring church with the financial help of Westminster.

Construction was taking place in the school, and space was secured in a church across the street to hold the meetings. Invitations were handed out after school; only two students made it that fall, enjoying the stories and the songs.

Enter Mimi Stem, new director of Lancaster City clubs, and someone with a heart for Washington School and for keeping this club going. Two of the core group stayed on, and this past spring brought an average of nine to fourteen eager students to the club. Through the stories and songs, hearts were convicted and children received Jesus.

Now, it's fall 2011; construction is finished and Washington Elementary is ready to host the club in their building. Returning students from the spring were taken on a mini golf outing and are eager to return to the club meetings. A new Christian family from Nepal is eager for their children to hear God's Word at Washington's club. One of the core group remains, and there is a need for a few more workers and helpers. Club is slated to begin Monday, October 17, running for seven weeks. Please contact Shelley Armstrong: sarmst@gmail.com if God is tugging at your heart about getting involved.

Harvest Church Holds Dedication Services

By Harvest Church Ruling Elder Lee Troup



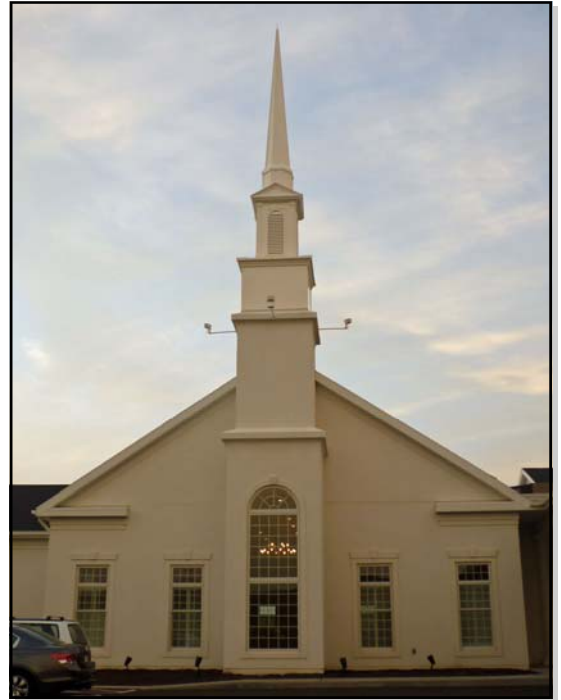
Dedication services for Harvest Presbyterian Church were held September 24 and 25 in the new building at 517 Beaver Valley Pike (US 222) in Willow Street. The new organ and piano were dedicated on Saturday, the 24th, at 7:00 PM, with an organ recital by Pat Bleecker, assisted on the piano by Steve Fikkert, Harvest's music director. The program featured sacred and classical selections, including an organ and piano duet.

The New Building Dedication was Sunday at 3:00 PM, preceded at 2:30 by a sacred concert by the "Ministers of Music." Dr. Paul

Kooistra, director of Mission to the World (MTW), was the keynote speaker. Pastor Bill Massey, who was his student at Covenant, says, "We thank God for Dr. Kooistra's distinguished leadership in the PCA, marked by his dedication to the Lord. What a high honor it was to welcome him to address this historic event!"

Other ministers participating in the dedication service were Dr. Michael Rogers; Dr. John MacRae, senior pastor of Faith Reformed Presbyterian Church, Quarryville; and Rev. Chris Labs, former pastor of Wheatland Presbyterian Church and who chaired the organizing committee composed of representatives of these three churches.

Harvest Church began as a church plant of the PCA Susquehanna Presbytery. Pastor Massey came as organizing pastor in October 2001, and in January 2002 started a Bible study on Sunday evenings in the basement of the Willow Street Restaurant, with 25–35 people attending. The first morning worship service was held on April 21, 2002, in the Lancaster Seventh Day Adventist Church. In January 2004, the Presbytery received Harvest as a "particular church" with its own elders. Later that year the church acquired 5.3 acres on Beaver Valley Pike, and a building committee was formed. A groundbreaking service was held on June 20, 2010, and



construction began in September after all permits were granted.

The first worship service in the new building was held on August 28, the weekend of Hurricane Irene. In the threatening weather, 239 gathered for worship, nearly double the previous attendance record. "This was a very special moment for Harvest Church," says Pastor Massey. "When we made the decision Saturday night not to cancel the service because of the weather, we thought it was right even if we would have a small attendance. We thank the Lord for giving us an abundant beginning. We have grown in grace and numbers, and now the Lord has entrusted us with a building which reflects our faith and vision. Our mission is clear and our mandate strong, as we trust in God's great faithfulness."

Library to Add Rich Stock of Books on Reformed Faith

By Laura Stackhouse

Come see our new display in the library this coming November! We are featuring a table of thirty-two books that Dr. Rogers has personally picked as favorite classics on the topic of Reformed Faith. He calls our attention to these classics so that we can read and grow in our knowledge and faith. How fortunate we are to have these books available to us in our library!

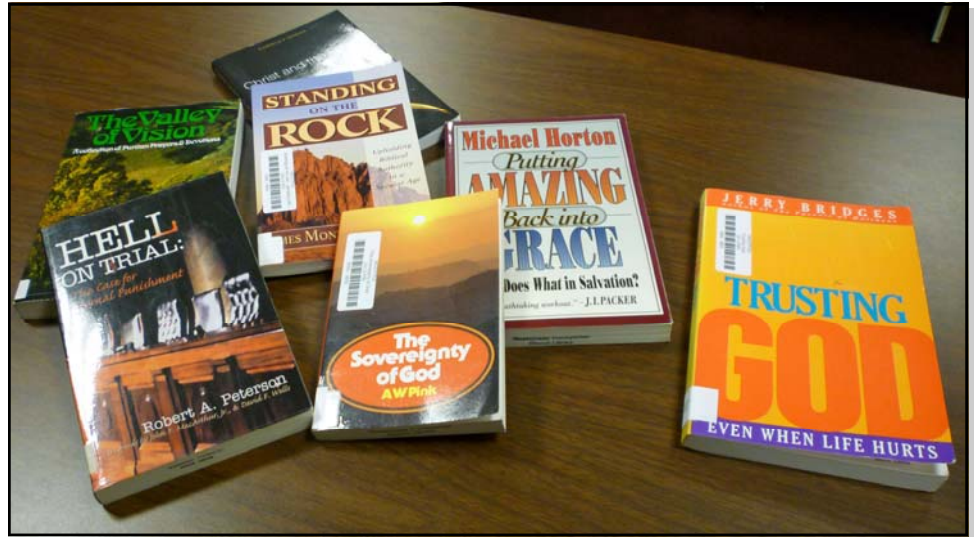
A sampling of titles includes:

The Doctrines of Grace by James Boice and Philip Ryken, *Grace Unknown* by R. C. Sproul, *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer, *Christianity and Liberalism* by J. Gresham Machem, *No Place for Truth* by David Wells.

If biographies are more to your liking, you may choose from *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography* by Iain Murray,

J. Gresham Machem: A Biographical Memoir by Ned Stonehouse, and *George Whitefield: The Life and Times* by Arnold Dallimore.

There are plenty more—by authors from John Piper and A. W. Pink to Jerry Bridges and B. B. Warfield, from D.M. Lloyd-Jones and Edward Donnelly to Robert Peterson and Arthur Bennett. And that's to name just a few. Come and browse. You just might find something that piques your interest!



Mark Your Calendars!

Women's Ministry Thanksgiving/Christmas Fellowship

A Son...A Savior

December 3, 2011, 10:00 AM — Noon

Singing, Christmas goodies, fellowship, speakers.

Lancaster Right to Life Hosts Pro-Life Workshop at Westminster



Is it possible to explain one's pro-life position in thirty seconds or less? Yes, says attorney Lindsey Hoban (photo on right), who led a workshop on Saturday, October 1, to help participants learn to do just that. About fifty people, from youth to seniors, gathered in the Reformation Room to learn (and practice!) how to express their pro-life convictions in a succinct, compassionate, and persuasive manner. The workshop also dealt with common pro-choice and pro-abortion arguments (yes, there is a difference!) and how to respond to them.



Lancaster Right to Life is planning to take a group from Westminster to the 2012 March for Life in Washington, D.C. For more information, or to learn how you can be a part of fighting for the lives of the unborn, e-mail lancaster.right.to.life@gmail.com.



Above: The event really was a workshop, where attendees were challenged to put in writing their pro-life convictions in a succinct, courteous, and non-threatening way.

Left: If a picture is worth a thousand words, a visual aid is probably worth ten thousand! The small case in the photo contains reproductions, in actual size, of the stages of development of a baby in the womb.

The Shepherd's Staff

Changes in Children's Church

Let me use this page to promote understanding of a recent decision of the Christian Education Committee and Session that affects Westminster Children's Church at the 11:00 AM service. **Beginning the first week of December 2011, Children's Church will end the eligibility of first graders to attend, so the program will only serve children ages four through those currently attending kindergarten.**

This may seem like a negative development. I will try to explain reasons for it.

At Westminster we strongly advocate families worshipping together. Based on the covenant view of the family as the primary unit for spiritual development, and viewing parents as a child's best instructors in the gospel, we reject the common notion that all children through grade six must be in segregated activities while parents worship. Of course, we acknowledge a need for nursery care for infants through age three; and Westminster has an excellent nursery program. Cindy Lux leads a great team of volunteers that includes scores of you, providing nursery care at Sunday morning and evening services. We have first-rate facilities for our nurseries, and child-protective policies are carefully observed.

From four years old and upward, many children should be able to attend the adult worship service. They can have books, paper and crayons, or other items to quietly occupy them in the pew. Years ago we began creating a weekly children's bulletin to engage those who can read. At our 8:10 AM service, you can observe many pre-school children sitting quietly with their families. We realize young children do not follow everything said in a service, but in many cases they do grasp more than we might think. They gradually absorb the patterns of adult worship and praise. Comprehension of a sermon comes over longer time, as they mature and progress through elementary grades.

Once a child is able to spend weekdays in school, they should be under a parent's supervision in the worship service. It has been our aim until now to provide an 11:00 AM Children's Church extending through first grade. Children's Church is not babysitting. It is a structured program in which children who leave midway in the adult 11:00 AM service are taught about and experience worship.

Our Children's Church has a pressing leadership crisis we can no longer ignore. With 30-40 children in attend-

ance, we believe four adults in the room are a minimum: some as primary leaders, others as helpers. No one should serve there every week. Even helping out for six Sundays a year is a commitment we are glad to have. But this program has been strained to recruit adults. (I pause here to sincerely thank all those who *have* faithfully served in this area!)

Several months ago, a letter was sent to all parents of children using Children's Church, stating that without more adults volunteering, we would have to reduce the program in size by removing first graders. That letter received few helpful responses. Therefore, the Christian Education Committee unanimously recommended to Session that first grade attendance shall end beginning in December. Session concurred. A number of our leaders would prefer to continue including first graders, but given the circumstances, no one feels the program can continue in its current state.

One clear cause for this volunteer gap is the sheer breadth of Westminster's other programs for children and youth. It is not as though parents are generally failing to serve in ministries to our youth. Quite the opposite. We count more than 250 Westminster individuals (25% of our membership) taking on *some role* in our Nurseries, Sunday School, Wednesday Children's Clubs, Vacation Bible School, Music Camp, Youth Ministry, Children's Choirs, and other special activities. Praise God for all this sacrificial service! I will not load guilt upon parents for the fact that Children's Church cannot draw volunteers. I suspect we have nearly "tapped out" the pool of eligible people, with most already serving in some capacity. And we know that 11:00 AM is a hard time spot for volunteers who must miss the Sunday service themselves, although not every week.

I hope I've shed light on a program decision which was not done in haste. By the way, this change was not initiated by our new Children's Director, Mary Jo Rader—it was underway before she was hired.

If you have feedback on the issue, or you might volunteer to help in Children's Church, speak to Mary Jo or to Children's Education Committee chairman Paul Rogers. They join with all Westminster leaders in praying for and seeking the very best ministry we can offer our youngest members.

—Dr. Michael A. Rogers, Senior Pastor

✠ Words of Thanks from Two Grateful Churches ✠

Dear Missions Committee of Westminster Presbyterian Church,

Jen just called to inform me that you are giving a special one-time gift of \$5000 toward our current financial needs. This is a wonderful blessing, and I'm very thankful for your support and your generosity. Westminster's support has been a critical part of our ministry here in Reading. Thank you so much for considering our needs and responding in this very generous way. May the Lord bless you richly in your service of him.

Blessings in Christ,

Mel

Rev. Melvin Sensenig
Christ Presbyterian Church
www.ChristPresReading.org
pastormel@christpresreading.org

Iglesia La Vid
4703 Gallagher
Laredo, Texas 78041
956-774-5699
lavidlaredo@aol.com

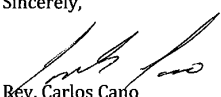
July 25, 2011

Westminster Presbyterian Church
2151 Oregon Pike
Lancaster, PA 17601

Dear Westminster,

On behalf of our Pastor, Rev. Carlos Cano, and our church family we would like to thank you for the team that faithfully assisted our church, La Vid, the week of July 18th-22nd. They were a great blessing and served not only our church but our community as well. All of the team members, demonstrated Gods love through their hard work and willingness to participate and assist us with our Vacation Bible School (VBS). Our church was filled with over eighty children who were able to hear the Gospel and feel the love of God. We would also like to thank you for all team members who served wholeheartedly in extremely hot conditions to beautify and restore different areas around our church. They were truly a great example of having a humble servants heart. Our Lords name was glorified and will continue to be glorified through those who are faithful and serve him. Thank you and May God Bless You.

Sincerely,


Rev. Carlos Cano
Iglesia La Vid

BEAMM Update

More than seventy friends and family of Gene and Luann Bowman gathered Saturday, October 1st, for a dessert and presentation of the BEAMM (Border Evangelism and Mercy Ministries) work at the Mexican border. Gene and Luann were accompanied by Pastor Josué Mayo, BEAMM's Central Regional Director, who, along with his wife, Martha, is overseeing the planting of BEAMM's first work in the city of Nogales (State of Sonora).

Attendees learned about BEAMM's "E4 Teams" ("E4" being based on Ephesians 4:13), a life-on-life team discipleship program. Each E4 Team is made up of five members with expertise in Evangelism, Church Planting, Education, Justice and Mercy, and Administration. As a team, they disciple apprentices, equipping them as future leaders of God's church.

While BEAMM will continue to welcome short-term missions teams, they are also looking for people willing to make a long-term commitment of at least four years to work with E4 Teams. One new development in the area of short-term missions teams is that, as much as possible, team members will be staying with local families, giving them a much deeper cultural experience.

To learn more about BEAMM or about E4 Teams, visit their site, www.BEAMM.org.



Westminster Presbyterian Church
2151 Oregon Pike
Lancaster, PA 17601

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October 2011

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Check us on the Web:
www.westpca.com/communique

2011 Reformation Conference ***Full Confidence in Scripture*** — Schedule —

Saturday, October 29

8:15 AM

- ◆ Registration, book table open

9:00 AM

- ◆ ***What More Can He Say?*** *A look at the biblical argument from Hebrews 1 for the sufficiency and authority of Scripture—*Dr. Oliphint

10:10 AM

- ◆ Fellowship break, book table open

10:45 AM

- ◆ ***The More Sure Word:*** *A look at the biblical argument from 2 Peter 1 for the unparalleled character of Scripture as the object of our full trust—*Dr. Garner

12:00 PM

- ◆ Lunch

1:00 PM

- ◆ Questions and Answers until 2:00 PM

Sunday, October 30

8:10 AM Worship Service

- ◆ ***The Gospel from Above***—Dr. Garner

9:30 AM Adult Sunday School

- ◆ ***The Context for Confidence:*** *God's special revelation does not come to us in a vacuum, but is linked to God's "speech" in all of creation—*Dr. Oliphint

11:00 AM Worship Service

- ◆ ***The Gospel from Above***—Dr. Garner

6:30 PM

- ◆ ***Confident Strategy for the Times***—Rev. Currie