



The
Reformed
Parish

Please pray for us!
And if you are able, could
you help me as I raise
monthly support?
Click here to donate.



The Reformed Parish

August 13, 2024

Dear friends & prayer partners:

We thank the Lord for continued opportunities to deepen and expand the work of Reformed Parish Mission. There's a lot to share about the summer . . . and it's not even over yet!

I started preaching in Spanish—with some crutches. I've preached three times now on my own, and I'm told my Gringo accent isn't too bad. Here's a [video of my maiden voyage](#). “¡Paso a paso!” (“Step by step!”)

We held our evangelistic outreach in Vineland, with three preachers preaching in English and Spanish through the temptations of Christ in Matthew 4:1-11. We sang a psalm in English and one in Spanish, and a number of folks came out from our congregation and two others. We engaged in some advance outreach and promotion in the neighborhood the Saturday mornings before each meeting. One fellow we met, pictured on the first page, is a devout Christian who used to run with the Latin Kings. Jesus, however, had arrested him, and now he is “preaching the faith he once destroyed.” I also ran into [some Hispanic JW's](#) and engaged in some deep discussion about the identity of Jesus as Jehovah.

The Riveras arrived from Puerto Rico a few weeks back and are settling in. It's a great encouragement, and it couldn't have come too soon. Already I'm getting some renewed interest from a Mexican family in the Woodbine parish. I just visited them again yesterday and read from John 10 concerning Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Peter and Daya will definitely be great helpers, especially since they are living right in Woodbine.

Yours for Jesus' sake,

Michael Ives
reformedparish.com (outreach)
westportexperiment.com (theology & missions)

August 2024
Quarterly Update

Collateral Repair

“And perhaps it will give in your eyes less of a Utopian, and more of an experimental character, to our anticipations of a result so general—if we ask you to consider the just observation of Mr. Wilberforce, on the effect of Christianity even beyond the circle of its own proper and genuine disciples. It elevates the general standard of morals, in every country or neighbourhood which it enters. Even though it should but spiritualize the few, it civilizes the many. Over and above its direct influence on those whom it converts, it has, through the medium of their example and their virtues, a reflex or secondary influence on the families of every little vicinity around them—inasmuch that the sanctities and the extraordinary graces of a small number, with the influence of a purifying and preserving salt on the general mass, tell, by a certain overawing power, in restraining the profligacies, and so in raising the character for decency and morals of society at large. This will be remarkably seen in any parish that is under a reclaiming process from the out-fields of heathenism, if the experiment be but well and vigorously conducted. We do not say that the minister will Christianize all; or that he will introduce the worship of God, the voice of psalms, into every family. But the melody that is heard in the habitations of the righteous, will have a certain softening and subduing effect on the inmates of other habitations; and it will be found no romance, but in strict accordance with the realities of human nature, if-by means of his schools and of his other parochial institutes, and (of no small account either) if, by means of his own frequent and various intercourse with the people, and the dignifying effect upon all the householders of their personal acquaintance with the clergyman, and of the personal cognizance which he takes of them and of their families—he mollifies, and to a very great degree, the general aspect of that parochial community over which he presides; and bequeaths to his successors a far blander and better generation, than he had to encounter himself at the outset of his great undertaking.”

Thomas Chalmers
(Works 14:334-335)



West Port Experiment

On parish missions, the care of souls, and all things Reformed

Shore to Shore:

Rhode Island to South Jersey

And beyond



As you have probably heard by now, last October I took a call to serve our congregation in South Jersey. We're so grateful for our new home and church family, but also for the opportunity to return to Rhode Island periodically to see Gabriel and Mikayla and also keep outreach leads back there alive.

Yet this decision was not totally straightforward. I no longer have much of a 'runway' to launch a full-time cross-cultural ministry, as I had earlier planned. Taking this call has meant surrendering a full-time salary, as the S. Jersey church can only manage to support me at a third of that amount. They are fully supportive of my laboring there with an explicit view to serving the local congregation and engaging in aggressive missions, especially to Hispanics. They also understand that my vision reaches beyond their local witness.

So I am increasingly visiting other churches to preach and give RPM presentations. If your church would be interested in **giving me an opportunity to serve** in this way—even if it's just a pulpit supply need—please drop me a note at michael@reformedparish.com or call me at 609-459-3580.

I'm happy to report that progress has been promising! As of now, I am making steady progress in monthly support, between my presbytery's commitment and the generous giving of many friends. We give God thanks! And for those of you have contributed, I am in your debt.

But I could really use your help. If you can make a monthly commitment of any amount, however small, it would be a tremendous blessing. And one-time gifts of course would be wonderful. My hope is to give myself full-time to cross-cultural missions here in the U.S., become fluent in Spanish, do outreach on the parish model, and all the while working closely and organically with one of our established local congregations. This is my passion. **Donation options are here.** But please don't feel pressured. I would rather have just your prayer support if you are already fully committed in your giving. Thank you.

*“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14).*