



The Reformed Parish

April 20, 2023

Greetings!

This is the first, formal quarterly update of the Reformed Parish Mission. I'm still going to continue to post updates at westportexperiment.com as I have in the past, some of which will incorporate these updates.

So springtime is here, which means a resuming of the regular door-to-door work in my two districts. I've also started doing some open air witness on Broad Street in South Providence and hope to try other areas between our house and South Providence.

A couple updates on previous contacts. First, our Iraqi friend, "Fatima." (More on our [history with her here](#).) I met her going door-to-door about five years back. Aubrey and I then became increasingly involved in caring for her in her loneliness, taking advantage of this 'open door' also to read the Bible, praying with her, and bringing her to church. That was five years ago—how time has passed! At present, one of my elders and his dear wife have graciously opened their home for her to live with them. They give her a lot of life-coaching, counseling, and above all, they show her Jesus' love up close by words and deeds. She's made a lot of progress in her vocation, and she even became a U.S. citizen this year. Great job, Fatima!

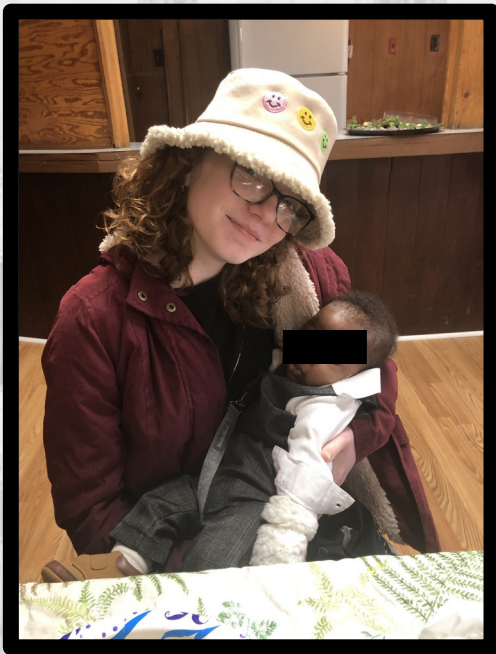
This elder of mine leads a bimonthly Bible study, and "Fatima" regularly participates. She also periodically comes to church, but she has many personal struggles and is taking baby-steps towards Christ. O that she would run and embrace Him! But we will take any approach we can.

Please pray for "Rebekah." This dear young lady had come along through the outreach years back and was eventually baptized and joined our congregation. By her profession of faith and outward conduct, she showed herself a genuine follower of Jesus. Sadly, she fell into sin and became pregnant. She would have married her boyfriend, but he refused. She was caught between a rock and a hard place, and ended up choosing to 'go along to get along' through cohabitation. She has been under discipline for more than a year now, and attempts to gain her repentance haven't as yet prevailed. I'm presently working on arranging another heart-to-heart with her. Yet we are encouraged from time to time that she will still come to church and bring her precious little baby boy. Our family has also visited her and her extended family, ministering the Gospel to them, albeit under less than comfortable circumstances. Please pray that the Lord would break through and do wonders. Truly, "there is no restraint with the LORD to save by many or by few" (1 Samuel 14:6).

Yours for Jesus' sake,

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

April 2023
Quarterly Update



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.



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Vision and Plans for RPM

As you probably know, I've been engaged for the last 14 years in cross-cultural, urban missions here in Rhode Island while serving as pastor of my own congregation. I've had many challenges, but even more encouragements over the years. After giving it much thought, prayer, and seeking counsel, I've recently come to a decision.

I want to master Spanish and increase my time in these home mission labors, if not to become dedicated to this work full-time. The harvest, I'm convinced, is plentiful, but the laborers are few. With that in mind, I could really use your help. If you are happy to receive—or continue receiving—these quarterly updates, please remember us at the throne of grace. Also, if you could support me with any amount of giving, especially with monthly contributions—even if that's just \$10/month—I would really appreciate it. [Donation options are here](#). But please don't feel pressured. I would rather have your prayers if you are already fully committed in your giving.

If you'd like to learn more about the effort, I have a short slideshow presentation that introduces the vision and progress of Reformed Parish Mission. If you have a window of time to spare, drop a note to me at mjives.refparish@gmail.com if you'd like to sit in on a presentation by Zoom, and I'll get you the call-in info. Here are the next scheduled presentations:

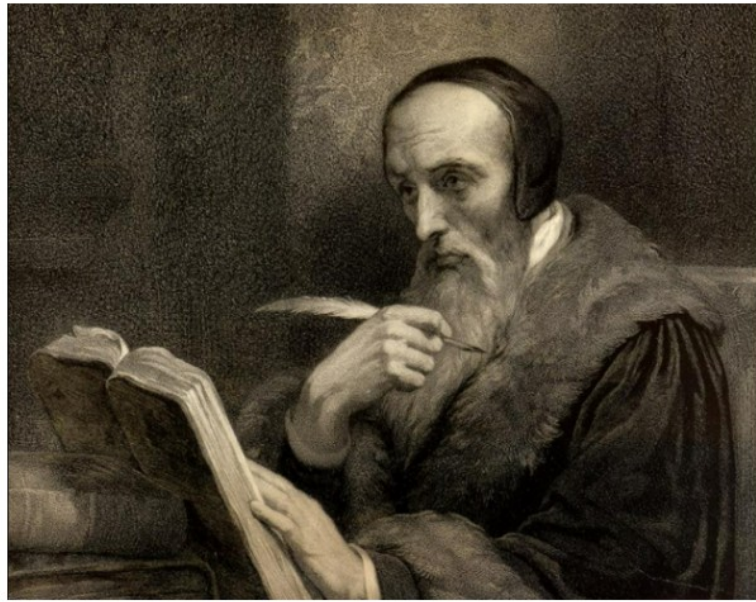
Wednesday, May 3 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT
Wednesday, May 10 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT
Wednesday, May 24 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT
Wednesday, May 31 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT

Saturday, April 29 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT
Saturday, May 6 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT
Saturday, May 20 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT
Saturday, May 27 @ 7:00 p.m. EDT

I'm scheduling these in 30 minute increments. The slideshow is only 10 minutes, but the rest of the time will be open for question & answer, and you can sign off at any time. Thanks so much, and may the Lord bless you and yours. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

Calvin: parish & principle

August 19, 2022 by westportexperiment | Edit



“This arrangement ought, as far as possible, to be commonly observed, that every one, content with his own limits, may not encroach on another’s province. Nor is this a human invention. It is an ordinance of God. For we read that Paul and Barnabas appointed presbyters over each of the churches of Lystra, Antioch, and Iconium (Acts 14:23); and Paul himself enjoins Titus to

ordain presbyters in every town (Titus 1:5). In like manner, he mentions the bishops of the Philippians, and Archippus, the bishop of the Colossians (Phil 1:1; Col 4:17). And in the Acts we have his celebrated address to the presbyters of the Church of Ephesus (Acts 20:28). Let every one, then, who undertakes the government and care of one church, know that he is bound by this law of divine vocation, not that he is astricted to the soil (as lawyers speak), that is, enslaved, and, as it were, fixed, as to be unable to move a foot if public utility so require, and the thing is done duly and in order; but he who has been called to one place ought not to think of removing, nor seek to be set free when he deems it for his own advantage. Again, if it is expedient for any one to be transferred to another place, he ought not to attempt it of his own private motive, but to wait for public authority.”

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. II, pp. 321

West Port Experiment

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