



PRAY FOR US

(2 THESSALONIANS 3:1-5)

Many organizations publish letters and articles explaining who they are and what their vision is, hoping that people will give to their cause. Of course, PRTS also needs financial support (and we are thankful for the gifts we receive) but that is not our primary need. We have need of your prayers. The battle we are engaged in is a spiritual one, and therefore God's continued blessing and abiding presence among us is greatly needed. No doubt one of the primary targets of the evil one is faithful seminaries where the training of gospel ministers takes place.

Paul, in his letters to Thessalonica, often mentions the need for prayer. At the end of his first letter, he calls believers to "pray without ceasing" and urges the "brethren" to "pray for us" (1 Thess. 5:16, 25). When Paul closes his second letter to them, he puts it more strongly: "Brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course" (2 Thess. 3:1-5). He asks for prayer that the Word of the Lord would spread rapidly and unhindered, that the gospel message would be heralded with great effect, and that his ministry would be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men. Paul was surrounded by some who were intent on

corrupting the Word of God. These same assaults are being waged against the church and believers today, which means that the work of the seminary and those who are being trained will face opposition in this world. Therefore, we covet the prayers of the men and women of God. We ask you to come alongside us in our work, through prayer, so that it will not be hindered by "wicked men." We pray that as Paul said to the church, it will be said of you who are reading this, that the word of the Lord would be glorified even as it is in you.

If God's Word has come to your heart with power in the Holy Spirit and with much assurance, join together with us in praying that God would be glorified in the work of PRTS. We also know that in spite of the opposition of unfaithful men who surround our work, the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and will establish us in this work. Paul affirms in 1 Thessalonians 5:24, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." We are confident, then, in the Lord, that He who began this good work will continue it until the day of Christ Jesus. Brothers and sisters: continue to pray for us.

—Dr. Mark Kelderman

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

I hope you enjoy this issue of PRTS Update. As you can see, much is happening at PRTS, all of which is possible only because of people like you who catch our vision and feel the value of investing prayers and gifts in a seminary where all the professors are committed to teaching our students from a thoroughly biblical, Reformed, confessional, experiential, and practical perspective that aims to minister to the whole man—head, heart, and hands.

We are looking forward to graduating 23 students on May 14, with Paul Washer as our commencement speaker this year. Pray that our graduates will be a great blessing around the globe for decades to come, if our Lord tarries.

We are excited about the future as we believe that our God can bring revival in the midst of dark times and that

He usually is pleased to do beginning with ministers that are zealous for His glory. Let us pray earnestly that the Lord would rend the heavens and come down (Is. 64:1), and in wrath, remember mercy (Hab. 3:2).

Thanks too for your prayers for me personally. Presently, my heart is in normal sinus rhythm and thus no longer in atrial fibrillation, and I am taking a mild dose of medication that seems to be helping, by God's grace. I am writing this from Mississippi, where I am speaking three times on revival at the Twin Lakes Conference Center. The fellowship and prayers of the brethren here are a blessing to me. God is unspeakably good. May we all seek abundant grace to live wholly and solely to His glory in and through Immanuel.

Warmly, Joel Beeke

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING

In speaking with church leaders about the need for a counseling ministry in the church, invariably they express their perception that the church must become more aware of and make provision for biblical counselors. Within Reformed and Presbyterian churches, there is a wide range of understanding about what biblical counseling is and how valuable this ministry would be for the people of God. Some church leaders believe their pastor should take care of most or all of the counseling needs in the congregation, and if the case is too difficult, they believe the congregant should seek “professional” counseling at some other location. Others do not really understand the role of a counseling ministry in a church and what it should look like. However, there is a growing number of churches who realize that in our present culture there is a pressing need for churches to get involved in a counseling ministry. They also understand that their pastor cannot begin to shoulder this task alone, lest his pulpit ministry be compromised by the sheer time commitment that counseling takes. In light of this, churches are beginning to get involved in counseling centers and hiring counselors on their own or in tandem with a number of other conservative Reformed and Presbyterian churches in their local area. Together they are working to serve the Christian community and even the non-believing world as opportunities arise.

There are several seminaries who offer training or degrees in biblical counseling, but not all of them promote a firm grounding in biblical doctrine and practical training. PRTS hopes to begin a Master of Arts degree in Biblical Counseling starting in August 2022, subject to ATS approval. The program will highlight both biblical doctrine and practical training. Preparations are underway for developing the

courses and the structure of the curriculum, and securing professors to teach the courses. Dr. Mark Kelderman, who recently received his Doctor of Ministry degree in Biblical Counseling, is heading up our program. Dr. Kelderman will teach several of the foundational courses, such as introduction and practice of biblical counseling, and will seek to have various guest lecturers who are known within the biblical counseling movement to teach other courses as weeklong intensives. These latter courses will also be taught as part of the MDiv degree requirements. We desire to have a firmly Word-centered approach to counseling; therefore, students will be required to attend all the regular systematic theology courses, some of the biblical theology courses, some historical theology courses, and several hands-on practicums.

We believe that Christ has equipped the people of God to minister to one another, as Paul says: “And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another” (Rom. 15:14). While some are more naturally equipped for this work, through training they may be further equipped, along with those for whom counseling is a more challenging, but desired, ministry to grow in. We trust that God will make provision for counselors to minister to those who are hurting in life because of various sufferings and trials. Our desire is to train men and women in the practice of counseling so that we may disciple one another in a more thorough fashion than traditional discipleship is able to do in the church. We recognize our need for the work of the Holy Spirit both to lead and guide the development of this program, the applicants who will be accepted into it, and the practice which we trust they will engage in for years to come.

—Dr. Mark Kelderman and Chris Hanna

PHD AND DMIN PROGRAMS IN HOMILETICS

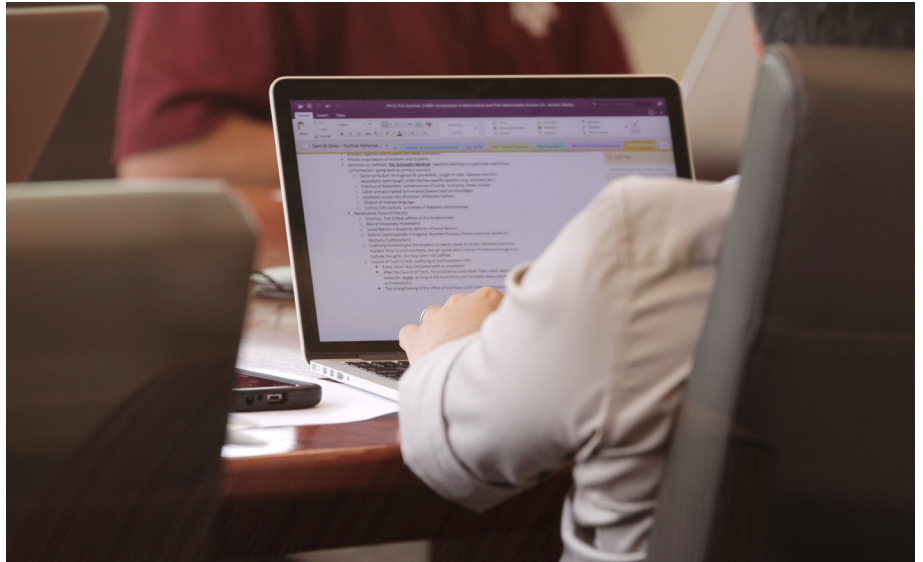
One of the distinctives of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is its attention to preaching. Various courses on preaching, such as experiential preaching, catechism preaching, and other homiletics courses mark the cornerstone of the MDiv degree program. Furthermore, the *magnum opus* of Reformed preaching by Dr. Joel Beeke, *Reformed Preaching: Proclaiming God's Word from the Heart of the Preacher to the Heart of His People*, has contributed to the seminary's reputation and earnest attention to homiletics. Moreover, alumni and others from around the world have over the years inquired about the possibility of a degree program with a dedicated focus on homiletics, which comprises the analysis, classification, preparation, composition, and delivery of sermons.

The long-term goal of the seminary included the establishment of a Global Center for Reformed Preaching. To contribute toward this goal, a PhD in Homiletics will commence in August, and in addition PRTS hopes to launch a Doctor of Ministry degree program, subject to ATS approval in August 2021, Lord willing. The former is designed to

train the next generation of teachers of preaching, while the new DMin in Homiletics program aims to assist in the development of preachers as effective communicators of biblical, Reformed, Christ-centered, and experiential gospel preaching. The PhD in Homiletics is more theoretically oriented, while the DMin in Homiletics has a more practical focus on the preparation, composition, and delivery of sermons. The core courses for both programs include an introduction to homiletical studies, experiential preaching I and II, and a course on aspects of the delivery of a sermon. The instructors, Dr. Joel Beeke, Dr. Gerald Bilkes, and I, will be assisted by other preachers from around the world.

These new programs, then, have weighty implications for the work of God's kingdom, as the Lord reminds us in His Word, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14). Your continued prayers are very much coveted.

—Dr. Adriaan C. Neele



ONLINE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM

Since its inception, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary has offered classes for non-resident students. However, distance education was limited to fifty percent of the degree program. The remaining credits had to be earned on campus. As time went on, the seminary became increasingly aware of a significant demand for a degree that could be earned entirely via our distance education program. This demand came not only from students here in the US, but especially from our partner seminaries worldwide. This has led the seminary to reconsider this rule, especially as it pertains to our MA degree programs. Starting in the fall of 2022, students will be able to earn any of our MA degrees entirely online. A key concern is that the online

course maintains the same standards and requirements as in-person classes. In order to do this effectively, each of the faculty records their lectures in our studio rather than simply livestreaming classes as they are taught on campus. As these newly recorded lectures are completed, they are uploaded to our online learning platform and made available to the students. PRTS is grateful to God for giving us this opportunity to reach the worldwide church with the teaching of the Puritan and Reformed tradition. Join us in praying that God will use this in an abundant way to expand His kingdom throughout this dark world.

—Michael Barrett

ALUMNI UPDATE

Dear brothers and sisters,

We rejoice in the Lord, for whatsoever the Lord pleased, that He did in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deep places (Ps. 135:6). As we remember the first coming of our Savior and King—His death, resurrection, and ascension—may the peace of Immanuel fill you and your families.

It has been some time since we have sent any updates on our family and ministry. We passed through many unprecedented times in which we experienced God's benevolence and grace. We were supposed to go to Grand Rapids as a family in June 2020 for me to finish my PhD. But due to the rise of COVID-19 and the cancelation of all flights, we could not. We tried to reschedule our plans to travel in October 2020, and we knew that we had to renew our visas through an appointment, but the US embassy canceled all appointments and rescheduled ours to January 2021. Providentially, by the end of October, we were able to renew our visas by mail without an interview through some connections. Thankfully, we were able to make it as a family to Grand Rapids on February 24, 2021. This has not been an easy time for us, and especially for my studies! But God's timing is always the best! Please keep us in your prayers as we settle in as a family in Grand Rapids again.

We trust that staying in Egypt through 2020 has been purposeful; we were able to see at least some of that clearly. Early in January 2020, I taught my first class for the PRTS ThM program offered at Alexandria School of Theology (AST) in Cairo. The course was Research Methodology in biblical studies. Because of the pandemic, I had to teach the remaining courses at AST in the spring semester on Zoom. Praise God that the feedback was very encouraging, but teaching online was still nothing like interacting with the students in the classroom. Starting in September, we were able to teach in-person classes again at AST. However, one of our faculty members left AST for personal reasons, leaving us with a heavier teaching load in the fall semester. I have had to teach three courses from two different branches of study in person, and two courses from a third branch through a video format. I was able to finish my lectures by the end of January 2021.

For our local church things were not easy. We had to stop meeting from March to August! As a session we decided to send short, weekly sermons to our congregation through our Facebook page. It was a kind of exilic experience. During that time, I was asked by the elders to write devotions on the book of Psalms and send them to every household in the church so that families may use it in their family devotions. By God's grace I was able to write fifty-two devotions, forty-two of them covering Psalms 1–41. I am thankful that



these devotions on the first part of the book of Psalms turned into my second book, which was published in December 2020, titled *My Heart Rejoices in Him: Encountering Christ in the Book of Psalms*. I pray that God would use this book to bless many people in the Arabic speaking world.

Last August we were able to gather again as a church for three months with three meetings on the Lord's day instead of two to keep the numbers in each meeting down. However, our Synod decided that all its churches had to stop meeting in person again until mid-January due to a second wave of COVID! I must admit that I was greatly concerned for the spiritual state of our people because of the unstable times in which we live. We needed lots of wisdom to care for God's sheep!

Despite these challenges, God blessed the work of the El-Soora ministry abundantly. Earlier in February, we hosted our second teaching conference in Alexandria. The title of the conference was *The Blessed Assurance*. The main speaker was Dr. Joel Beeke who gave four main talks. A member of our team and I did one talk each. It was such a blessed time with more than 180 attendees, among them leaders, ministers, elders, pastors, and other Christians who were hungry to learn the Word of God. We also had different breakout sessions during the conference on different topics facilitated by different local and foreign speakers. It was such a blessed time full of engagement, fellowship, and edification for the people of God at the conference. We pray that God would use this teaching and all who attended to encourage true believers in their faith, restore backsliders, and quicken the spirits of those who have not tasted the grace of God yet.

The year 2020 was special for El-Soora due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus. We translated a book titled *Coronavirus and Christ* by John Piper during the first wave of the pandemic. We have two versions of the book in Arabic: one in formal and one in conversational Arabic. About two thousand copies have been distributed to different churches and groups all over Egypt. Furthermore, it was our first time to produce an audiobook. We produced a conversational and formal version of the audio book and made them available on our YouTube channel and SoundCloud. In addition to that, we are working on translating and reviewing other titles such as, *The Holiness of God* by R.C. Sproul, *Finally Free* by Heath Lambert, and *Elders of the Church* by Lawrence Eyres. Also, we were able to make new contracts with RHB to translate and publish the *Family Worship Guide* and partnered with Desiring God to publish seven titles in the next two years in addition to publishing John Piper's *magnum opus*, entitled *Providence*, in Arabic.

Early in February 2021, in God's providence, we were

able to have our yearly conference in spite of the pandemic. We had not been sure whether this would happen or not until mid-January. But our gracious God blessed us tremendously as we had our third conference with about eighty-five attendees. Pastor Mark Dever from Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington DC was our main speaker, giving four talks.

At the beginning of 2020, the plan was that I would travel to Tunis, Kurdistan, and Turkey from April to May to teach different groups before I traveled to Grand Rapids. Again, all these plans were frustrated. However, God opened other doors which I had never thought of. I was asked by a Christian TV channel to write a program on the Reformed faith with 52 episodes, 30 minutes each, and to choose three to four speakers besides myself to present them! I could not believe that this was true. By God's grace I wrote fifty-two episodes covering the articles of the Westminster Confession of Faith and four of us who taught at AST recorded them in a professional setting. Two months ago, the TV channel started broadcasting them and Arabic speaking people all over the world can watch them now. This may be the first Reformed program ever produced by Arabic speaking teachers in the Arabic Christian media. Praise God!

God opened the door with other Christian TV producers to do more teaching programs, so I recorded about five episodes on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood and eight to ten episodes for each of the following topics: Christology, the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of Man. May the Lord use all these videos, whether on TV Channels or on

different social media platforms, to spread His Word in the Arabic speaking world.

The year 2020 was another year of experiencing God's sustaining grace as a family. I had some problems with migraine headaches and some issues with my trigeminal nerve which causes some pain on the left side of my face. Happily, it gets better with medicine. During the pandemic, I was able to spend more time with Marian and the girls which was a great blessing for us as a family. In late October, we were diagnosed with COVID-19. Only Naomi (the smallest girl) did not have any symptoms. Marian had it the worst. It was not an easy time for us, but again it was such a special time from the Lord to experience His care and mercy. Praise God: we are much better now and almost totally recovered from COVID.

As I turn forty years old today, it is good to look back and ponder: O Lord, how great are Thy works! And Thy thoughts are very deep (Ps. 92:5), Thy faithfulness reaches unto the clouds (Ps. 36:5).

Christ's incarnation reminds all who dwell in a land of deep darkness that for us a child was born, and His name is Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. May this year bring the peace of our Wonderful Savior to you and your family.

Grace and Peace,

Sherif A. Fahim

Lecturer & Administrator

Alexandria School of Theology

General Director, El-Soora Ministries

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Stephen Myers

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You will want to join us for three days of Christ exalting, soul edifying messages on the grace of the gospel!



Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake (Psalm 115:1).

Reformation Heritage Books (RHB) exists to glorify God and strengthen His church around the world through the publication and distribution of biblical, Reformed, and Puritan literature at affordable prices. This has been our mission for more than twenty-five years now, as we have worked hand in hand and under the same roof as Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. Over that period our ministry has exponentially grown through the blessing of our great God, and it has been evident to visitors that for some time we have outgrown our current facility. Therefore, through the generosity of a diverse group of donors, at the end of 2020 we purchased our own building in the heart of the main retail thoroughfare of Grand Rapids. Since that time, we have been dismantling, refurbishing, and preparing the property to become a purpose-designed head office, warehouse, bookstore, and café, which we hope to open to the public in May this year.

We want this to be a destination that people will return to time and time again, not only to find excellent books to feed their souls, but also to be a meeting place where you can be physically refreshed by a blend of coffee grown by a missionary in Cuba, or that supports a church plant in Costa Rica, or that assists in the publishing of solid literature across Latin America.

Throughout the process of searching, buying, and equipping the facility, we have witnessed God do what we could not—from the purchase of the building below market price despite other bidders exceeding our offer, to finding affordable library shelving in an auction at a stunningly low rate so that we can suitably equip our new warehouse operation.

We covet your prayers as we seek to raise the remainder of the money to complete the refurbishment (including the

purchase of bookstore shelving, flooring, and furniture), as we undertake the major upheaval of moving, and as we integrate key new employees into the team. Pray with us that God will continue to lead us in this process and use this building to His glory to reach out beyond our typical customer base, both here in West Michigan, and with God's help, to the ends of the earth.

We look forward to seeing you there!

—David Woollin

CEO, Reformation Heritage Books

The PRTS and RHB teams have been blessed as fellow workers in the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have prayed together, fellowshiped together, and benefited from cooperating as our ministries intersected. As both ministries have grown within shared building space and facilities, the Lord has blessed us with the need for expansion. With RHB leaving our building we will have access to space that will serve our growing faculty, counseling program, and new degree programs anticipated over the next few years. Future classroom and office expansion is therefore possible in our existing building.

We intend to operate a modified campus bookstore using PRTS staff with RHB inventory management to serve our students and visitors to our campus. The other services RHB has provided will be absorbed by PRTS staff without the need to hire new team members.

It has been humbling to have witnessed the Lord's blessings as He continues to take our meager talents and multiplies them so that His Word is brought to many thousands of needy souls throughout the world. May His blessings continue with the gifts of wisdom and faithfulness to His Word as we seek to serve Him and His church under these new arrangements.

—Henk Kleyn

PRTS VP for Operations

ats The Association of Theological Schools The Commission on Accrediting

Dr. Lester Ruiz is our liaison with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), our accrediting agency. I became acquainted with Lester at our first accreditation visit in 2013. Since then, we have reconnected each time our accreditation was up for review and renewal. We share a mutual respect and appreciation for one another's work. In the fall of 2019, Dr. Ruiz asked me to be a member of an ATS team visiting another seminary as part of its accreditation review. This experience was stimulating, stretching, humbling, and exhilarating for me both personally and professionally. I was able to meet other educators from around the country and work together as a team in assessing this seminary. We met some wonderful people at the seminary and

enjoyed a collegial atmosphere. Since that time, Lester has asked me to serve on three additional teams, and each time I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting and working with some wonderful people involved in theological education in the North American context. I continue to be professionally stretched and stimulated to improve my own skills in the areas of assessment, interviewing colleagues, interacting with the ATS standards for theological education, and writing reports. These collaborative efforts and opportunities speak highly of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and its place within North American theological education.

—Laura Ladwig, PRTS Librarian

FACULTY ITINERARIES & PUBLICATIONS

MICHAEL BARRETT

Recent Publications

A Radical, Comprehensive Call to Holiness, with Dr. Beeke (CFC)
“Zechariah” for the Lexham Context Commentary series

JOEL BEEKE | Itinerary

May 1–2: Grand Blanc, Michigan: Berean Baptist Church: Conference/preaching

May 5–6: Birmingham, Alabama: Conference at Briarwood PCA

May 19–22: Ridgecrest, North Carolina: Church and Family Life conferences

June 6: Lansing, Michigan: University Reformed Church

June 12–14: Manila, Philippines: Freedom Fest conference (virtual for me)

July 26–29: Bonclarken, North Carolina: Family Bible Conference at Devenger Road ARP Church

August 1: Virginia Beach, Virginia: Grace Covenant Church

Recent Publications

A Radical, Comprehensive Call to Holiness, with Dr. Michael Barrett (Christian Focus)

Beginning: Family Worship in Genesis, Teach Your Children the Scriptures Series (with Nick Thompson) (RHB), vol. 1 of 9 projected

Calvin on Sovereignty, Providence, and Predestination (Free Grace Press)

The Christian Teacher as Office-Bearer (Free Grace Press)

A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life, with Mark Jones (in Chinese) (Christian Classics Publishing House)

Developing a Healthy Prayer Life, with James Beeke (in Chinese) (RHB)

“The Spiritual Advantages of Faith in Divine Providence,” in *The Spirit of Holiness: Reflections on Biblical Spirituality*, ed. Terry Delaney and Roger Duke (Lexham Press), 123–47

“Count Your Blessings: Enjoying the Benefits of Being a PK” (with Mary Beeke), in *Surviving the Fishbowl: Letters to Pastors’ Kids*, ed. Catherine J. Stewart (RHB), 25–36

Editor, *The Lord’s Supper: Doctrines, Encouragements, and Duties*, by John Shower (ca. 1657–1715) (RHB)

ADRIAAN NEELE | Itinerary

June 7–11: New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University

August 5–13: Brazil: Martin Bucer Seminary

June–August: Various preaching occasions

Recent Publications

Early Modern Dutch Biblical Exegesis: Renaissance and Reception (UPenn Press)

The Reception of Jonathan Edwards in The Netherlands (T&T Clark)

The Reception of Jonathan Edwards in Africa and the Middle East (OUP)

GREG SALAZAR | Itinerary

August: Leuven, Belgium: Evangelical Theology Faculty, Teaching “Minor Prophets, Major Theologies”

Recent Publications

“The Context of the Westminster Assembly,” in *Tabletalk* (January 2021)

DANIEL TIMMER | Itinerary

January–April: Faculté de théologie évangélique, Montreal: “The Writings”

Recent Publications

Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Tyndale Old Testament Commentary (Nottingham: InterVarsity, 2021)

“Observations linguistiques en lien avec le débat entre approches synchroniques et diachronique dans le livre d’Ésaïe,” *Théologie Évangélique* 20 (2021)

“Unity and Diversity in the Book of the Twelve,” pages 187–200 in *The Law, The Prophets, and the Writings: Studies in Evangelical Old Testament Hermeneutics in Honor of Duane A. Garrett*, ed. A. King, W. Osborne, and J. Philpot (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2021)

“The Nations in the Minor Prophets,” pages 130–45 in *The Oxford Handbook of the Minor Prophets*, ed. Julia M. O’Brien (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021)

WILLIAM VANDOODEWAARD | Itinerary

June 8–10: Flat Rock, North Carolina: ARP Synod

June 15–18: Marion, Indiana: RPCNA Synod

June 21–24: Houston, Texas: Reformed Theological Seminary

Recent Publications

Editor, *The Puritan Reformed Journal* (January 2021) 13.1

PURITAN REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

FINANCIAL REPORT

For period 8/1/2020–3/31/2021

| | Year to Date Actual | Annual Budget | Variance | Percent of Annual Budget |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Income | | | | |
| Donations | \$1,796,244 | \$ 2,410,030 | (\$613,786) | 75% |
| Tuition Income | 467,417 | 600,000 | (132,583) | 78% |
| Scholarship Donations | 530,874 | 500,000 | (30,874) | 106% |
| Other Income | 254,147 | 349,970 | (95,823) | 73% |
| Total Income | \$3,048,682 | \$ 3,860,000 | (\$811,318) | 79% |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Instruction | \$1,156,051 | \$ 1,905,171 | (\$749,120) | 61% |
| Scholarships | 381,893 | 505,000 | (123,107) | 76% |
| Administrative | 1,212,145 | 1,449,829 | (237,684) | 84% |
| Total Expenses | \$2,750,089 | \$ 3,860,000 | (\$1,109,911) | 71% |
| Net Income | \$289,594 | | | |

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- ☐ PRTS Foundation ☐ Puritan Resource Center
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- ☐ I am enclosing \$20 USD for a 2021 US subscription to *Puritan Reformed Journal*.
(See *Journal* for international rates.)
- ☐ Send a free copy of *The Gospel of Exodus*, by Michael Barrett

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Please consider a gift to PRTS.
Together, we are training today
for service tomorrow.

—CHRIS HANNA

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