

## Bringing the Reformed Faith to the people of Costa Rica

### Latin American Fellowship of Reformed Churches

Rev. Bill Green has worked in Costa Rica since 1985. Bethany URC in Wyoming, MI, called him in 1997 to work with the Latin American Fellowship of Reformed Churches (Spanish acronym CLIR) to help establish a network enabling various Reformed denominations to work together and broaden the scope of Reformed work in Latin America.

Rev. Green is CLIR's Executive Secretary and says, "Our goal is to promote church planting and leadership training throughout the region."

Since Rev. Green began working with CLIR, the organization has set up its own print shop, printing 3,500 copies two times per year of the only Reformed theological journal for all the continent.

"This has probably done more than anything to consolidate Reformed-minded leaders in various countries."

CLIR has published over 30 books that are available at cost to Latin American churches (see [www.clir.net](http://www.clir.net)) and CLIR helps coordinate conferences that have trained thousands of church leaders.

Rev. Green and his wife, Aletha, have also been involved in planting three churches and establishing a Christian school, which Aletha serves as principal.

He says, "God has blessed our work far beyond what we imagined."

Alumnus Nick Lammé (2007) "hit the ground running" when he and his wife, Rose, returned to Costa Rica after his ordination at Trinity URC in Caledonia, MI, in July. And he says, "We've been running ever since."

Rev. Lammé works with Rev. Bill Green and has been in Costa Rica for over a year, serving an internship prior to his ordination. Trinity URC invited Nick and his wife, Rose, to see the work in Costa Rica and to consider pursuing missionary service there.

"What we saw was remarkable," Nick says. "Being of Hispanic descent and having for many years desired to be missionaries in Latin America, what we saw Rev. Green doing with CLIR (see sidebar) really excited us. We were humbled and excited to be considered for this work."

Rev. Lammé pastors a small church in Cartago, the historic capital of Costa Rica. The church is five years old and has about 40 members. It recently relocated to a main street of the city, which resulted in higher visibility and more visitors.

He also teaches Bible at the Christian school and is the general editor of publications for CLIR, editing material and doing design and layout.

The work of Rev. Green and his wife, Aletha (who is the Christian school principal), had become so busy that the need for assistance was urgent.

"But our expectations were high," says Rev. Green. "We needed someone who could jump right in with Spanish and who could help with computer design and layout for our publications. This person also needed a seminary education since all our work was theological. The Lord finally



*Nick & Rose with their daughters Ester and Abby and Nick's mother, Donna Lammé*

brought the Lammés to Costa Rica. Nick and Rose fulfill all the requirements! Fluent in Spanish, a computer 'nut' and theologically trained, Nick hit Costa Rica with a full time job awaiting him. Because one church was without a pastor and the school urgently needed a Bible teacher, Nick also became pastor and professor. Rose is a wonderful companion to Nick, hospitable and eager to serve her Costa Rican brothers and sisters. We thank the Lord for sending help to the Costa Rican field!"

"It is remarkably humbling to reflect on the Lord's providence in our lives," says Rev. Lammé. "My Spanish abilities, my wife's long-time desire to serve as a missionary in Latin America, my training at Mid-America Reformed Seminary, and my internship at Faith OPC (Pole Tavern, NJ) all contributed to equipping us to serve in this current capacity. But above all, it is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in our hearts that has most equipped and fitted us for any service whatsoever."



*Rev. Bill Green baptizes a family*





# Development Report



## Willful Planning: Property

by Keith Le Mahieu

In the last *Messenger*, we began a brief series on the creation and maintenance of wills and living trusts. We discussed the crucial question of how your will can help provide care for your minor children in the event you are unable to do so. In this issue, we will briefly discuss the creation of a will as it pertains to matters of property. Keep in mind that estate matters are more complicated than can be covered in this short article and you should always seek competent legal help when creating or updating your will.

When it comes to property, the first thing you need to do is determine what property you own by writing it down. Your list will help you avoid overlooking something important. While there is some property that you should not include in your will (for example, a life insurance policy, property you have placed in a trust), write it all down anyway and your legal professional will help you sort things out.

**If you are married and plan to leave your property to your surviving spouse, estate law is very simple.**

If you are married and plan to leave your property to your surviving spouse, estate law is very simple. It becomes more complicated if you plan to leave your property to one or more persons in

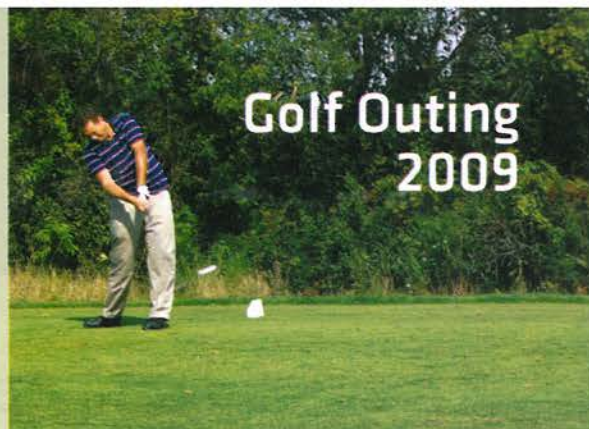
addition to your spouse. Since you cannot give away property for which you are not the sole owner, it is important to determine what you actually own, and what property your spouse might have the right to claim after your death.

What you own according to the law may depend on whether you are governed by community property or common law estate laws. Generally speaking, if you live under community property laws, you can leave half of any community property (property you own jointly with a spouse without right of survivorship) to anyone you wish. The basic rule of community property is simple: all property acquired or earned during the marriage is owned 50-50 except for property received by just one spouse through gift or inheritance.

If you are governed by common law property rules, ownership is generally based on whose name is on the title. If your spouse earns or inherits the money used to acquire the property but your name is on the title, you own it. If the property is valuable but has no title document, the person whose income paid for the property owns it. Things can get complicated if you move and the governing estate laws change from common to community or vice versa. It is always wise to consult a legal professional if you move.

If you are not married and own property with someone else, you probably own it in common tenancy. Since you are free to sell or give away your interest in the property, a beneficiary should be named in your estate documents. If you owe money on the property, your beneficiary will become responsible for that debt.

Next time we will look at the question of *how* to leave your property.



## Golf Outing 2009

Mid-America's annual Golf Outing on September 3 was on a "picture-perfect" day at White Hawk Country Club in Crown Point, IN. After Dr. Kloosterman opened in prayer, teams of 56 golfers teed off. A buffet dinner followed play.

First place teammates Gerry Swets, Mike Spender, George Ophoff, and Derek Vermeulen each won a gift certificate to Dick's Sporting Goods.

Second place team winners Ryan Terpstra, Derek Terpstra, Bill Zandstra, and Jay Zandstra each won a gift certificate to Giovanni's Italian Restaurant.

Mike Spender had a good day. He won a golf bag for "closest to the pin," a driver for "longest drive," and a hand cart for "straightest drive." Derek Vermeulen won a putter for "longest putt."

Thanks to all participants for helping support the Seminary in this way!

## Scholarship Awards

Mid-America is pleased to announce the following recipients of this year's academic scholarship awards: **Curtis Moleterno** ('10) Albert M. and Eleanor Rodenhouse Scholarship, Roger Vander Veen Memorial Scholarship; **Nathan Tomlinson** ('12) Gerrit and Kathryn Schiebout Tuition Scholarship, Bartel Zandstra Memorial Scholarship; **Robert Van der Woerd** ('12) Tuininga Scholarship, Albert and Janet Vedders Memorial Scholarship; **Erik Stolte** ('11) Iowa Falls Foreign Student Scholarship, Carrie Van Surksnum Venema Memorial Scholarship; **Brian Blummer** ('11) Russell E. Horton Ministerial Scholarship.





# Welcome, Juniors!

Another academic year is off to a great start at Mid-America, and new juniors are beginning their first year of classes. The Seminary welcomes its new students and would like to introduce them to you.

**Andrew De Young** is from Orland Park, IL and a member of Trinity Lutheran Church (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) in Tinley Park, IL. He began classes last term and was profiled in the April 2009 *Messenger*.

**Gregory Grissom** is a member of Bellingham (WA) URC, currently attending Westminster OPC in Indian Head Park, IL. He is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree with a goal toward ordination as a Minister of the Word. He hopes to be involved with church planting or foreign missions.

“Though I looked at and prayerfully considered a few different Reformed seminaries, I kept coming back time and again to Mid-America,” he says. “After talking to past graduates and some of the professors at the Seminary, I became convinced that its goal was to prepare men for the academic rigors of the ministry, as well as develop a deep and pastoral concern for the people of God.”

**Dan Nicholson** previously attended Mid-America Reformed Seminary and recently returned to his studies.

**Roberto Rosshas** served as a missionary in Ukraine and as a youth director at Crete Reformed Church in Crete, IL. He attended Mid-America in the past and returned to classes last term. A more complete profile appeared in the April 2009 issue of the *Messenger*.

**Nathan Tomlinson** is from Merrimack, NH, and is a member of the First Congregational Church there. He is currently attending Momenca (IL) OPC. He is working toward a Master of Divinity degree with the hope of returning to New Hampshire as a church planter or being called to another home or foreign missionary context.



L to R: Peter Turner, Roberto Rossi, Dan Nicholson, Nathan Tomlinson, Geoffrey Grissom, Robert Van der Woerd, and Andrew De Young

Nathan was raised in a covenant home and cannot remember a day in which Jesus Christ was not his Lord and Savior.

Having been raised and trained in the Westminster Standards, he was attracted to Mid-America by his desire to become better acquainted with the Three Forms of Unity. He also appreciates Mid-America's focus on preaching.

**Peter Turner** is from South Holland, IL, and is a member of Oak Glen URC in Lansing, IL. He graduated from Trinity Christian College in May with a degree in theology. He is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree with a view toward ordination as a Minister of the Word and possible foreign missions work.

“I felt led to become a preacher and to teach God's people and proclaim the gospel,” he says, “I chose Mid-America because it is close to home, makes a good effort to be affordable, and most importantly strives to train men in living for and serving God and His people within a close and caring community.”

**Robert Van der Woerd** is from Abbotsford, BC, but moved to the area when his father began attending Mid-America Reformed Seminary four years

ago. Robert and Rachel were married in May of 2008 and Robert graduated from Trinity Christian College in May of 2009. He and Rachel live in Griffith, IN, and are members of Lynwood (IL) URC.

Although initially focusing on business during his college career, the Lord used other people to encourage him to seek training at Mid-America. He is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree with a goal of ordination as a Minister of the Word.

## YOU ARE INVITED

to Mid-America's annual  
FALL LECTURE SERIES  
*Jesus Christ and the Care of Souls*  
featuring Dr. Eric L. Johnson  
November 3-4, 2009  
Dr. Johnson is Director of the  
Society for Christian Psychology,  
Professor of Pastoral Care  
at Southern Baptist Theological  
Seminary, and associate editor of  
the *Journal of Psychology and  
Theology*. He co-edited *Christianity  
and Psychology: Four Views* and  
authored *Foundations for  
Soul Care: A Christian  
Psychology Proposal*.

## Church Education

### Adjunct Faculty: Front Line Perspective



From September 8-18, Dr. John R. Sittema, Senior Pastor at Christ Church (PCA) in Jacksonville, FL, taught an introductory class on church education (often referred to as “catechetics” in the Reformed tradition). Five first year students attended the class on Monday through Friday afternoons.

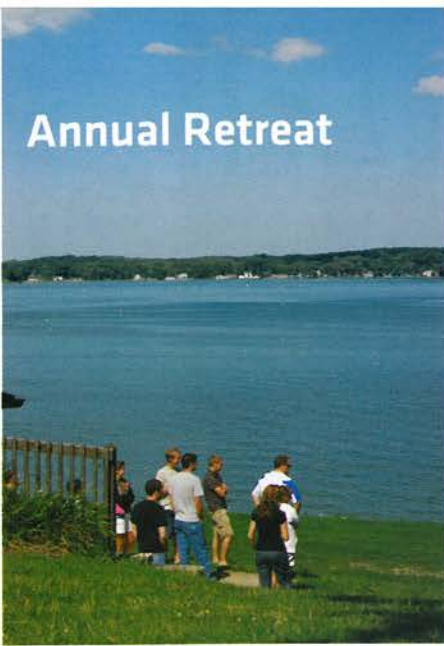
Mid-America periodically benefits from the expertise of adjunct faculty, men in full-time ministry or professors at other institutions, who instruct students in various subjects.

“The benefit, as I see it,” says Dr. Sittema, “is that we have been on the front lines of ministry and can provide a ‘state of the church’ perspective. In my case, I am not ministering in a traditional Dutch Calvinist community, so discipleship is a radically different enterprise.”

Other adjunct faculty include Rev. Brian Allred and Rev. Charles Telfer, who teach Greek; Dr. Peter J. Wallace, who teaches church history; and Dr. George Knight, who has taught on the pastoral epistles.



# Annual Retreat



Gorgeous weather, warm fellowship, and excellent teaching characterized Mid-America's annual retreat at Cedar Lake Ministries Center on September 1.

Dr. A. Craig Troxel (pastor of Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, IL), used 2 Corinthians 5:20 as the foundational text for his addresses on being "Ambassadors for Christ."

In "Faithful Ambassadors for Christ," Pastor Troxel contended that the

Christian minister's first loyalty is to know and communicate the will of the one he represents. The ambassador truly "for Christ" will evidence his faithfulness by remaining steadfast to the *message* of the gospel and by remaining loyal to the *means* by which it is proclaimed.

In "Effective Ambassadors for Christ," Pastor Troxel stressed the need to be acquainted with the language, culture and customs of those to whom the minister is sent so as not to unnecessarily offend or hinder his usefulness as a messenger.

"In love we remember that the effectiveness of our Savior's ministry hangs upon His identifying with sinners by taking our nature upon Himself," he said, "and in this way becoming the propitiation for our sins and a sympathetic high priest."

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*Dr. A. Craig Troxel*

"Dr. Troxel's pastoral experience shaped his presentations," said Dr. Kloosterman. "As a skilled communicator, he was effective and winsome in bringing his message to both heart and head. The response was enthusiastic on the part of everyone in attendance, and this retreat may surely be marked among the best we've enjoyed over the years."



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