

PURITAN REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PRTS *Update*

And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

—ACTS 18:26

MEDITATION | JACK SCHOEMAN

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The primary goal of PRTS is to train students for biblical, experiential, and practical ministry in the church of Jesus Christ. It seeks to fulfill this mission through its MDiv program, which is the cornerstone program of the seminary. The MDiv program is specifically designed to equip men who do not yet have a theological degree for sacred ministry.

But PRTS offers another degree program—the ThM. This program is designed for men who are already in the ministry but who desire to deepen their understanding of the Scriptures as it applies to various aspects of the ministry. The men who enroll in this program come from a wide variety of denominations and backgrounds; some come from different countries. But they all have one thing in common: a desire to grow in their understanding of the holy Scriptures. Such men recognize that even though they have a theological degree and have served as pastors in some cases for many years, they still have a lot to learn. And rightly so. The Word of God is an inexhaustible fountain of truth. When I was a student at PRTS, Dr. Beeke used to say that even the most brilliant and knowledgeable student of God's Word is merely dabbling at the edge of an ocean. No one knows this better than ministers who devote so much of their time to studying and preaching the Word of God.

This brings me to the verse quoted above. The man in question was Apollos—a Jew from Alexandria. He is

described in verse 24 as “an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures.” One day this same Apollos came to Ephesus and “began to speak boldly in the synagogue” (v. 26). While he was there, Aquila and Priscilla, friends of the apostle Paul who had recently come from Rome, heard him and detected a deficiency in his preaching because he knew only the baptism of John. So what did they do? We read in verse 26 that “they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” Apollos was “mighty in the scriptures” and yet there were things he still had to learn. And, amazingly, God used two ordinary people, Aquila and Priscilla, to teach him what he needed to know.

Through its ThM program and distance education program, PRTS is following this pattern still today. Like Aquila and Priscilla, the seminary is continuing to expound—to men who are already well-versed in the Scriptures—the way of God more perfectly. What a blessing that we may have a seminary that not only trains men for the ministry, but also men who are already in the ministry. May the Lord grant that this aspect of our seminary's calling be advanced and promoted, especially today when the attacks on God's Word are becoming more and more fierce and where many are being led astray by false teaching.

Rev. Jack Schoeman is pastor of Providence Free Reformed Church in St. George, Ontario, Canada.

PRTS Seminary Library

This past year was exciting as renovations for the PRTS building expansion came to fruition. The heart of the seminary, its library, received a much-needed facelift and expansion. We would like to use this Update issue to introduce our readers to several important aspects of our library.

BUILDING

With careful thought, research, and student input, the new layout of the library took shape. In addition to adding shelf space for books, the library staff, Kim Dykema and Laura Ladwig, designed and added several new student study spaces, including quiet study spaces, individual, lighted carrels, and group study rooms.

RESOURCES

The PRTS library (<https://prts.edu/library>) is privileged to partner with Cornerstone University and Kuyper College in sharing an online catalog and integrated library system. Here is a brief overview of the many important resources available to faculty, staff, local and distance students:

Books:

- Our online catalog (www.eaglelink.cornerstone.edu) allows students to search three libraries with print holdings totaling 221,000 and then borrow books at any of the three institutions.
- The Puritan Research Center (PRC) which houses what we believe to be the world's largest collection of works by or about the Puritans. The Center also includes 3,000 (and still growing) articles about the Puritans.
- Early English Books Online and Eighteenth-Century Collections Online give students online access to nearly 400,000 full-text digitized books published between the years 1475 and 1799.

Other Resources:

- Periodicals: PRTS subscribes to over 140 periodicals which are available for browsing, research, and copying. PRTS also

has access to many electronic journals through database subscriptions. Our most recent acquisition in this area is JSTOR's Religion and Theology Collection of 81 full-text journals.

- Puritan Electronic Research Tool (PeRT): PRTS's Scripture-text index contains over 300,000 records and is growing with plans for individuals to create "my PeRT."
- Pamphlets: PRTS has catalogued its collection of over 8,000 pamphlets so that students can easily access pamphlet contents.

SERVICES / STAFF

Personnel: Laura Ladwig and Kim Dykema regularly serve the faculty, staff, students, and guest patrons during the daytime hours with research and reference help and book checkouts. During the evening hours and on Saturdays, three student workers (Isaac Gajendron, Spencer Snow, and Getachew Woldeamanuel) work the circulation desk and assist patrons.

Kim works primarily with the periodicals, inter-library loan, indexing, and book preservation. Laura's time is spent on acquisitions, cataloging, indexing, the website, databases, and finances. Three women volunteer weekly in the library: Betty Baas, Ruth Post, and Plonia Swets. The amount of work they accomplish belies their years!

Preservation: The staff actively preserves the collection through binding books whose spines are broken, repairing books that are falling apart in-house, and sewing pamphlets in homemade pamphlet covers. Since we started in-house collection preservation practices, the library staff has repaired more than 3,000 volumes.

Book Giveaways: PRTS students are regularly treated to book giveaways through the generosity of our donors. We often receive donations that either are duplicates of what we already have in the collection or are books specifically designated for the students. These giveaways are always fun times for the students and those observing the excitement of book-lovers connecting with books!

DONATIONS: Our goal is to provide useful, pertinent, and accessible resources for our faculty, staff, students, and guests. To that end, we regularly take book suggestions from our faculty, staff, and students. This helps build the collection around the research interests of our community. We have several more costly books on our wish list that we'd like to share with you. If you would like to donate the money to purchase one or more of these, please contact Laura (laura.ladwig@prts.edu / 616-432-3415):

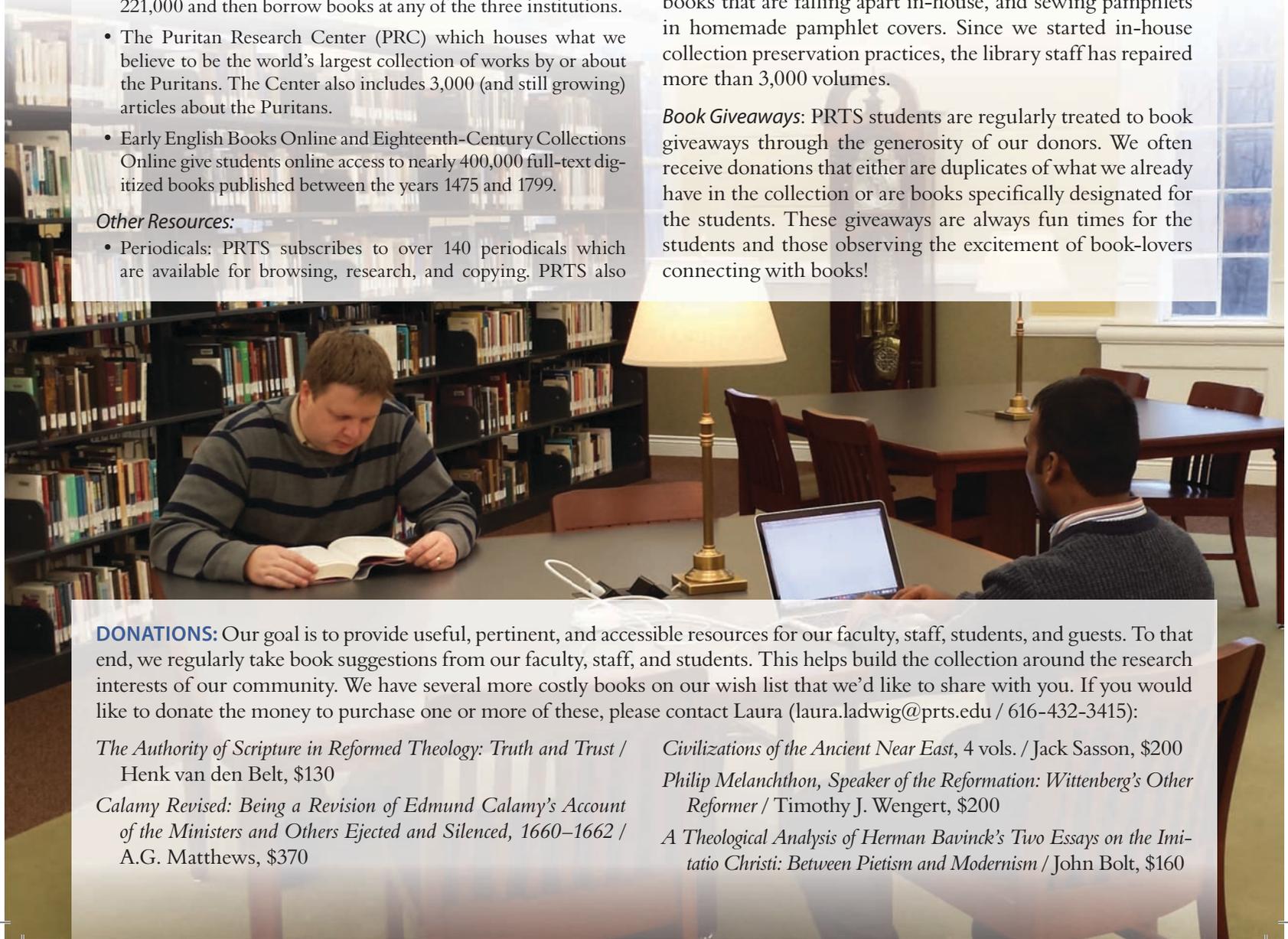
The Authority of Scripture in Reformed Theology: Truth and Trust / Henk van den Belt, \$130

Calamy Revised: Being a Revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the Ministers and Others Ejected and Silenced, 1660-1662 / A.G. Matthews, \$370

Civilizations of the Ancient Near East, 4 vols. / Jack Sasson, \$200

Philip Melancthon, Speaker of the Reformation: Wittenberg's Other Reformer / Timothy J. Wengert, \$200

A Theological Analysis of Herman Bavinck's Two Essays on the Imitatio Christi: Between Pietism and Modernism / John Bolt, \$160



Serving Christ and His Church in Tanzania

Rev. Joseph Marwa recently earned his Master of Arts degree from PRTS and has returned home to Tanzania with a big vision and mission for the church in his area. As one of the founding leaders of the newly established Independent Bible Fellowship Church of Tanzania, Rev. Marwa and others have a plan to bring the Word of God to the Tanzanian people. They are looking to first start a thoroughly Reformed Bible College, followed by ministerial retreats, seminars, orphanage centers, and nursery schools.

According to Rev. Marwa, most Tanzanians are not well educated and their churches have very few trained ministers. This lack of training is due in large part to the poverty rate that is common throughout the country. Many of the ministers wanting formal theological training are unable to pay the tuition rates and are left to be taught by indiscriminating teachers and preachers.

By God's grace, Rev. Marwa has over forty student applicants for the new Mwanza Bible College. However, the objective is to

start with just fifteen men this year. These students will be trained for three months and then given a three-month practicum, at which time Rev. Marwa will follow up with a visit to each student and the church under his care. The school's model is that of Paul to Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

Please pray for Rev. Marwa and the others who have come alongside him to strategically teach and preach the glories of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Tanzanian people.

—Chris Hanna



DR. MICHAEL BARRETT | Itinerary:

February 1: Grand Rapids: Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church

February 15: Grand Rapids HRC: Family Living Class

February 22: Grand Rapids HRC: Family Living Class

March 1: Grand Rapids: Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church

March 22: Grand Rapids HRC: Family Living Class

March 29: London, Ontario: Free Reformed Church

April 5–10: Greenville, South Carolina: Geneva Reformed Seminary

April 26: Grand Rapids HRC: Family Living Class; afternoon service

Writing Project:

The Next to the Last Word: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

DR. JOEL BEEKE | Itinerary:

February 8: Grand Rapids: preach in afternoon for Spanish-speaking church

February 9–13: Colombia: Ministerial Conference in Latin America

February 20–23: Augusta, Georgia: Conference and Preaching for Cliffwood Presbyterian Church (PCA)

March 19: Lamont, Michigan: Annual Dinner address for Lamont Christian School

March 21: Burgessville, Ontario: Men's conference

March 22: Jordan, Ontario: Preaching for HRC

March 27–29: Jackson, Mississippi: Conference for Pastor Robert Hill

April 10–12: Nashville, Tennessee: Philadelphia Conference of Reformed Theology

April 25–26: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Philadelphia Conference of Reformed Theology

Recent Publications:

General Editor (with Derek Thomas). *The Works of William Perkins, vol. 1*, ed. Stephen Yuille. Grand Rapids: RHB.

Editor, Anthony Burgess, *Faith Seeking Assurance*. Grand Rapids: RHB.

How Should Men Lead Their Families. Grand Rapids: RHB.

Espiritualidade Reformada: Uma Teologica Pratica para a Devocao a Deus [Portuguese translation of *Puritan Reformed Spirituality*]. Sao Jose dos Campos: Fiel Editora.

Inchinarea in Familie [Romanian translation of *Family Worship*]. Bucharest, Romania: Societatea Misonara Coresi.

Faculty Itineraries & Publications

"A Salutation from the Throne of Heaven." *The Gospel Trumpet*, no. 19.

Edit with Scott Brown. William Gouge, *Building a Godly Home, Vol. 3: A Holy Vision for Raising Children*. Grand Rapids: RHB.

Three chapters in *A Theology of the Family*. Ed. Jeff Pollarad and Scott T. Brown. Wake Forest, NC: NCFIC.

"How to Battle Hostility and Worldliness." *Puritan Reformed Journal. Taking Hold of God* (in Korean). Seoul: YWAM Publishing

DR. JERRY BILKES | Itinerary:

January 25: Pompton Plains, New Jersey: Pompton Plains FRC

March 15: Hamilton, Ontario: Maranatha Free Reformed

March 29: Bradenton, Florida

Writing Projects:

Studies in James

The Gospel of John

REV. MARK KELDERMAN | Itinerary:

February 1: Dorr, Michigan: New Hope Reformed Church, morning service

February 15: Dorr, Michigan: New Hope Reformed Church, morning service; Grand Rapids: Heritage Reformed Church, afternoon and evening services

February 22: Dorr, Michigan: New Hope Reformed Church, morning service

March 8: Grand Rapids: Heritage Reformed Church, afternoon service

DR. DAVID MURRAY

Recent Publication:

The Happy Christian: 10 Ways To Be A Joyful Believer In A Gloomy World. Nashville: Thomas Nelson

DR. WILLIAM VAN DOODEWAARD

Itinerary:

February–April: Grand Rapids: Preaching at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church

April 9–10: Toronto, Canada: Canadian Presbytery (ARP)

Writing Projects:

The Quest for the Historical Adam (RHB)
1 & 2 Peter (Evangelical Press)

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FINANCIAL REPORT

For period 8/1/14–12/31/14

Thank you for
partnering with PRTS.

Your contributions
and prayers are
a tremendous
encouragement to us.

If you would like to
learn more about ways
you and/or your church
can support PRTS,
please give me a call
at 616-432-3407.

—CHRIS HANNA

	Year to Date Actual	Annual Budget	Variance	Percent of Annual Budget
Income				
HRC/FRC				
Church Support	\$ 209,085	462,000	(252,915)	45%
Other Donations	853,423	883,000	(29,577)	97%
Tuition	165,605	275,000	(109,395)	60%
Scholarships	75,141	250,000	(174,859)	30%
Other Income	45,117	222,000	(176,883)	20%
Total Income	\$ 1,348,371	\$ 2,092,000	\$ (743,629)	64%
Expenses				
Instruction	\$ 254,470	677,000	(422,530)	38%
Scholarships	150,552	250,000	(99,448)	60%
Administrative	475,626	1,165,000	(689,374)	41%
Total Expenses	\$ 880,648	\$ 2,092,000	\$ (1,211,352)	42%
Net Income	\$ 467,723		\$ 467,723	

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- I am enclosing \$20 for a 2014 subscription to *Puritan Reformed Journal*.
- Send me a free copy of David Murray, *The Happy Christian*.

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