

# News...Views...Reviews...

## CHURCH UNION IN CHULA VISTA

Bayview OPC in Chula Vista, California is praising God for his grace in adding the thirty-seven members of the Xaris Gospel Fellowship to their number recently. Pastor John Toews of Xaris led his congregation out of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in August of 1980 for the sake of the unhindered preaching of the Gospel, and Bayview opened their doors to the group for Saturday use.

After a year of fellowship on many levels—including Pastor Lewis Ruff of Bayview preaching a few times to the group—the Xaris members determined they could better serve Christ and one another by joining with Bayview. A special praise service of reception was held Sunday, December 6 in which the new members were received. Pastor Toews will be examined for reception as a minister at the next meeting of the Presbytery of Southern California.

## CHURCH CELEBRATES 45 YEARS

This past fall Calvary OPC in Middletown, Pennsylvania observed its 45th anniversary and burned the mortgage on its present buildings. Organized in 1936 under the leadership of Pastor Robert S. Marsden, the church developed through the determination of a group of 63 Christians who wanted to maintain the purity of the Reformed faith and biblical presbyterianism at a time when modernism was sweeping into the church.

Meeting first in a local theatre, the group soon moved to an old post office for worship services. Four years later it acquired its present property, and by 1944 the Christian School of Middletown was also using the facilities. Abe Ediger is the seventh and present pastor of the congregation.

The congregation's second and third pastors, Edward Kellogg and Robert Atwell, preached in the worship ser-



Celebrating at Calvary OPC: from the left, Abe Ediger, George Marsden, Edward Kellogg and Robert Atwell

vices on Sunday. At a special banquet the preceding Friday evening, Dr. George Marsden, son of Calvary's first pastor, spoke on "Growing Up in Calvary Church." Speaking on church history is normal for Dr. Marsden, whose father was so instrumental in early OPC History. Dr. Marsden teaches church history at Calvin College, and his new book, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, has drawn lavish praise this past year.

## MISSIONARY GOES FROM SUNNYVALE CHURCH

Cathy Anderson, a member of First OPC in Sunnyvale, California, is eagerly awaiting taking a giant step in her ambitions to serve the Lord through Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Cathy was brought to the Savior during her college years by the witness of a Christian friend and through her own study. She had a love of anthropology and linguistics, and it seemed apparent to her from the start that God was preparing her for some sort of foreign missions activity. She immediately began thinking and planning in terms of a life of service to her Lord through Wycliffe.

Three years ago Cathy came to our congregation and has grown in her understanding and love for the things we stand for. She has been actively involved in the life of the congregation while here.

In February Cathy hopes to join about twenty others in Papua, New Guinea, for Wycliffe's South Pacific field training course which involves four months of cross cultural and sur-

vival training. During the last half of the course the trainees will be dispersed through various villages to test their skills and form relationships with the villagers.

Sabah, Malaysia is Cathy's assignment. Sabah is located on the island of Borneo in a rain forest—complete with orangutans, pythons, horn bills, mangrove trees and orchids. The population in the state capitol is Malayan, Chinese and Indian; but as you travel further in to Sabah, you find indigenous native people without God's Word in their language. That is where Cathy and a team of translators will fit in. They will be involved in learning and analyzing the language, devising an alphabet, translation and teaching the people to read.

A New Testament translation usually requires a team of two translators about fifteen years. Cathy is grateful the station to which she is assigned is composed largely of Reformed Christians—mostly in the Presbyterian Church in America. She still needs some financial support to be able to leave in February, but most of all she feels the need to be upheld by the prayers of God's people.

Salvador M. Solis, pastor  
First OPC, Sunnyvale, Calif.

## SEMINARY BOARD DISMISSES SHEPHERD

At its meeting last November, the trustees of Westminster Theological Seminary dismissed Norman Shepherd from his position of associate professor of systematic theology effective January 1, 1982. The board made provision for a full hearing before a five-member board/faculty committee which is to report February 11.

Mr. Shepherd joined the faculty in 1963 but had drawn criticism in recent years for his formulations regarding justification by faith and doctrines related to the covenant. He had presented thirty-four theses concerning works and justification by faith to the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and that body in early 1980 had not found them

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inconsistent with the Bible or the subordinate standards of the church. The faculty and board of the seminary came to the same conclusion and exonerated him at the end of that year. They did, however, urge him to develop less provocative language and different means of argument (less open to misunderstanding) in presenting his proper concerns.

In November of 1980 Presbytery warned opponents of Mr. Shepherd's views not to distribute documents alleging doctrinal error unless they followed the instructions of Matt. 18:15-18 and regular forms of presbyterian church government. Nevertheless, at least ten members of Presbytery signed a letter in May of 1981 charging Shepherd with error and distributed the letter to the wider seminary constituency. Arthur Kuschke, one of the drafters of the letter, said that he was not satisfied that the judicial process of the OPC's Book of Discipline was adequate to handle this situation. Concerned that the signers may have violated the instructions of Presbytery, the latter formed a three-man committee in October 1981 to meet with those men and recommend proper action in reference to them.

In its decisive meeting last November, the seminary board not only removed Mr. Shepherd but also appealed to the signers of the May letter to consider the possible damage caused by the letter to Shepherd and Westminster Seminary and to make all possible amends. Mr. Kuschke, for one, has indicated that he is in the process of drawing up formal charges against Shepherd, drawing upon materials recently made available to him. He emphasized that his goal has been the resolution of the doctrinal questions and not the dismissal of Mr. Shepherd.

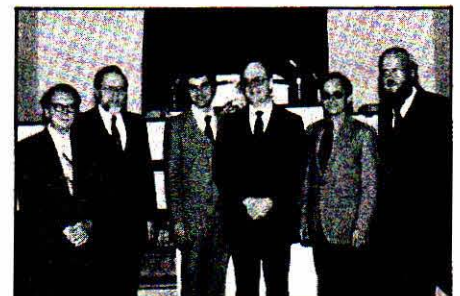
The seminary board said that in its

mature judgment, removal of Mr. Shepherd was "necessary for the best interests of the Seminary." In order to protect the reputation of Mr. Shepherd—who remains in good standing with his presbytery—the board emphasized that it was making no judgment whether his views contradicted any element in the system of doctrine taught by the Westminster Standards. Rather, it judged that "the controversy over Mr. Shepherd has reached such dimensions and such tangled complexity that it appears unresolvable."

## HARRELL ORDAINED IN WESTFIELD

The congregation of Grace OPC in Westfield, N.J. has welcomed its newly ordained pastor, Mack F. Harrell. Having been trained in and taught philosophy for several years, Mr. Harrell worked for three years as a teacher and counsellor at L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland with Francis Schaeffer. He then returned to the States and taught courses in ethics and social and political philosophy from a Christian perspective.

Mr. Harrell received awards in homiletics and theology upon graduation from Covenant Theological Seminary last spring. He is married and has a daughter in high school.



Leaders in the ordination service: from the left, Calvin Busch, Douglas Rogers, Michael Simone (PCA), Mack Harrell, Al Steevers and Egon MiddeImann (RPCES)