

O CHURCH, ARISE

**A PASSIONATE PLEA FOR BIBLICAL
AND CONFSSIONAL FIDELITY**

**BEEKE | DEYOUNG | GRECO | HELOPOULOS
MCWILLIAMS | PAYNE | REEDER | STRAIN**

**MAY 5-6, 2021 | BIRMINGHAM, AL
BRIARWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**





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O CHURCH, ARISE!

WELCOME LETTER FROM
JON D. PAYNE

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Gospel Reformation Network (GRN) Council, I warmly welcome you to the 2021 GRN National Conference – *O Church, Arise! A Passionate Plea for Biblical & Confessional Fidelity*. We rejoice that so many dear friends from across the country, and around the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), have joined us for this encouraging time of teaching and fellowship.

We hope that over the next two days you will find spiritual refreshment as you sit under the ministry of an array of faithful preachers who are committed to warmhearted confessional Presbyterianism. To be sure, we are living in challenging times. Cultural pressure and worldly hostility against God's truth are on the rise. But thankfully, God refines His people through periods of testing. The PCA has maintained a strong gospel witness for nearly 50 years, and God calls us today to arise in defense of God's unchanging Word. While we are concerned for the spiritual health and doctrinal fidelity of our beloved denomination, we joyfully anticipate what the Lord will continue to do through the faithful preaching of the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes. Each generation of Reformed Presbyterians must heed God's call to Biblical and Confessional fidelity, and we hope that our time together this week will encourage us all to stand with and for our Savior and King.

Many thanks to Westminster Theological Seminary Philadelphia, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and Ligonier Ministries for generously partnering with us. We also extend a big thank you to Reformation Heritage Books for supplying our conference bookstore. Finally, I would like to express thanks for the gracious hospitality of Briarwood Presbyterian Church and her leadership for opening up "your home" to us.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Jon D. Payne

Jon D. Payne
Senior Minister, Christ Church Presbyterian, Charleston, SC
Executive Coordinator, Gospel Reformation Network

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CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



Joel R. Beeke

Dr. Joel R. Beeke is President and Professor of Systematic Theology and Homiletics at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, a pastor of the Heritage Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, MI, Editor of *Puritan Reformed Journal* and *Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth*, Editorial Director of Reformation Heritage Books, President of Inheritance Publishers, and Vice-President of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society. He has written and co-authored over one hundred books, edited another one hundred books, and contributed 2,500 articles to Reformed books, journals, periodicals, and encyclopedias. His Ph.D. is in Reformation and Post-Reformation theology from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, PA. He is frequently called upon to lecture at seminaries and to speak at Reformed conferences around the world. He and his wife Mary have been blessed with three children and two grandchildren.



Kevin DeYoung

Dr. Kevin DeYoung serves as Senior Pastor of Christ Covenant Church (PCA) in Matthews, NC. A native of Jenison, MI, DeYoung graduated from Hope College in Holland, MI with a B.A. in Religion. He earned his Master of Divinity degree at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, MA. He earned his Ph.D. in Early Modern History at the University of Leicester in the UK. His dissertation is on the theology of John Witherspoon, a Scottish-American Presbyterian theologian who was a founding father of the United States. Before accepting the call to lead Christ Covenant, Dr. DeYoung served as Pastor of University Reformed Church (PCA) in East Lansing, MI. Dr. DeYoung is a member of the Council and blogs for The Gospel Coalition. He regularly speaks at churches, conferences, colleges, and seminaries in North America and overseas. He has published a dozen books for adults and children. He is an Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC. Kevin is married to Trisha, and they are the happy parents of nine children.



Fred Greco

Fred Greco currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Christ Church (PCA) in Katy, TX (West Houston). He grew up in the Buffalo, NY area, along with his wife, Deb. Fred studied Classics and History at the University of Buffalo, and then moved on to graduate studies, earning an MA in Classics at the University of Chicago. He then earned a J.D. at the University of Michigan Law School and practiced as a corporate attorney specializing in commercial finance and real estate law in Cleveland, OH. Since becoming a minister in 2006, he has served in the PCA in many different capacities, chairing various committees, and is the current Chairman of the Standing Judicial Commission of the PCA. He has written for *Tabletalk*, the Gospel Reformation Network online blog, and other outlets, especially on topics related to the church and church polity. He serves as a board member for a Reformed seminary in China, and he teaches practical theology classes at Reformed Theological Seminary in Houston, TX. Fred and Deb are the happy parents of four children.



Jason Helopoulos

Jason Helopoulos was born in central Illinois and graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 1999. Jason then attended Dallas Theological Seminary and completed a Master of Theology degree with a concentration on Historical Theology and Christian Education in 2003. He served on the staff of Park Cities Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Dallas, TX as a pastoral intern for one year and then accepted a call as an Assistant Pastor at Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Lexington, NC. In the fall of 2007, Jason was called by Christ Church (PCA) in Grand Rapids, MI to plant a daughter church in Lansing, MI. He accepted the call and moved to the field as church planter and pastored Providence Presbyterian Church (PCA) in East Lansing until 2012. In the summer of 2012, Jason accepted the call as Assistant Pastor of University Reformed Church (PCA) in East Lansing, MI and accepted the call to Senior Pastor in the spring of 2018. Jason is married to Leah, and they are the happy parents of two children.



David B. McWilliams

Dr. David B. McWilliams is the Senior Minister at Covenant Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Lakeland, FL, and he has served there for more than three decades. He is married to Vicky, and they have a son, Evan, who is a pastor in England. David's passions are the study of Scripture, Reformed and Puritan theology, Christ-centered preaching, and shepherding God's people. He is a graduate of Mercer University (B.A.), Westminster Theological Seminary (M.A.R., M.Div.), and of the University of Wales (Ph.D.). Formerly, Dr. McWilliams served as Associate Professor of Systematic Theology on the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary in Dallas, TX. Dr. McWilliams has authored numerous books and articles, and he serves on the Board of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Taylors, SC.



Jon D. Payne

Dr. Jon D. Payne is Senior Pastor of Christ Church Presbyterian (PCA) in Charleston, South Carolina. Before planting Christ Church in 2013, he was Senior Pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Douglasville, GA from 2003-2013. Dr. Payne has served as Executive Coordinator of the Gospel Reformation Network since 2015. He also serves as a trustee with the Banner of Truth Trust, the Heidelberg Society, and Westminster Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Manchester, England. Dr. Payne is the Series Editor of and contributor to the *Lectio Continua Expository Commentary on the New Testament* (Reformation Heritage Books) and author/editor of numerous books. Dr. Payne has also contributed to a number of publications including *Tabletalk*, The Gospel Coalition, *Expositor*, Reformation21, and *Modern Reformation*, among others. He and his wife, Marla, have been married for 20 years and have two children, Mary Hannah and Hans.



Harry L. Reeder, III

Dr. Harry L. Reeder, III is the Senior Pastor at Briarwood Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Birmingham, AL. Increasingly his time outside the pulpit is spent doing conferences on Christian manhood, effective leadership and addressing public theology in the public square. Dr. Reeder is devoted to the ministry of Church Revitalization and does a number of seminars each year both nationally and internationally. He authored *The Leadership Dynamic: A Biblical Model for Raising Effective Leaders*, *From Embers to a Flame: How God Can Revitalize Your Church*. His latest book is called *3D Leadership: Defining, Developing and Deploying Christian Leaders Who Can Change the World*. Dr. Reeder has several daily Podcast Programs – *In Perspective* – a thirty-minute expositional study of the Scripture; *Today in Perspective* – a ten minute look at current news through the lens of Scripture and *Fresh Bread* – a five minute daily devotional. He and his wife Cindy are natives of Charlotte, NC and have three children and ten grandchildren.



David T. A. Strain

Dr. David T. A. Strain is the Senior Minister of the historic First Presbyterian Church (PCA) of Jackson, MS. Born and raised in Glasgow, Scotland, he came under care of the Glasgow Presbytery of the Church of Scotland and studied theology at Trinity College (Glasgow University), where he won the gold medal in Systematic Theology and again graduated with honors. He subsequently attended the Free Church of Scotland College in Edinburgh, graduating with distinction. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in the Free Church in September 2003, and took pastoral charge of Cole Abbey Presbyterian Church in London, England. In 2008, Dr. Strain and his family moved to the United States where he became the Senior Pastor of Main Street Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Columbus, Mississippi. Dr. Strain possesses a Doctor of Ministry degree from Reformed Theological Seminary. David is married to Sheena, and together they have two teenage sons.

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GRN VISION & DISTINCTIVES

Biblical Fidelity & Confessional Integrity

An unyielding commitment to the inspiration, inerrancy, authority, sufficiency, and efficacy of Scripture for faith and practice, along with a resolute adherence to the Westminster Standards (Isa. 55:10-11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Titus 1:9; 2 Pet. 1:21; Rom. 10:17; Jude 3; Heb. 10:23)

Gospel-Driven & Christ-Exalting Ministry

A sincere passion to proclaim the gospel of grace, always with the aim of exalting Christ in the hearts, minds, and affections of God's people (1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2; Eph. 3:8; John 21:15-19; Phil. 1:21; 3:8)

Earnest Prayer & Expository Preaching

A resolve to practice fervent prayer in the closet and from the pulpit, along with an unbending dedication to expository preaching that informs the mind, transforms the heart, and stirs the affections (Matt. 6:5-13; 1 Thess. 5:17; Acts 2:42; Eph. 1:15-23; Acts 2:14-36, 42; 12:5; 20:27; Rom. 10:14-15; 2 Tim. 4:1-5)

Intentional Evangelism & Personal Discipleship

A purposeful commitment to bold evangelism, coupled with a dedication to the old paths of serious, deliberate, faith-maturing discipleship (Luke 9:1-6; Acts 7:1-60; 8:26-40; Matt. 28:19; Luke 9:23-24; Col. 1:28-29)

Godly Leadership & Presbyterian Polity

A sincere devotion to personal piety among church leadership, coupled with a strong adherence to biblical Presbyterianism (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 15:1-21; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)

Reformed Worship & Vibrant Community

A joyful commitment to, and humble confidence in, the ordinary means of grace in Lord's Day worship, coupled with the nurture of loving Christian fellowship (Ex. 20:1-11; Ps. 100; Acts 2:42-47; 20:7; Rom. 12:10; 1 Cor. 11:17-34; 12:12-31; John 13:34; WCF XXI; WLC Q. 153-196)

Missional Clarity & Church Multiplication

A fervent and undistracted commitment to make disciples of all nations through the preaching of the gospel and the planting and strengthening of biblical churches (Matt. 28:16-20; Acts 14:7, 21-23; 15:35; Rom. 10:14-17; Titus 1:5-9)

Notes

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CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Wednesday, May 5

- 9:30 am Greetings (M. Duncan & Payne)
- 10:00 am Session 1 - *"We Believe": Why Creeds & Confessions Matter* (Strain)
- 11:15 am Session 2 - *The Puritans & the Old Paths of Christian Piety* (Beeke)
- 12:15 pm Lunch Break
- 1:30 pm Session 3 - *The Crisis of Ministerial Isolation: Learning from Calvin's Company of Pastors* (Helopoulos)
- 2:45 pm Session 4 - *Reformed Doxology: Worship According to Scripture* (McWilliams)
- 3:30 pm Season of Prayer & Small Group Discussion
- 5:00 pm Dinner Break
- 6:15 pm Session 5 - *A Faith Worth Fighting For: Reformed Orthodoxy, Cultural Revolutions, & the Future of the PCA* (Payne)
- 7:30 pm Session 6 - *A Sacred Calling: The Ministry, Message, & Mission of the Church* (Reeder)

Thursday, May 6

- 9:15 am Greetings (M. Duncan)
- 9:30 am Session 7 - *The Glory of Plodding* (DeYoung)
- 11:30 am Session 8 - *Rediscovering the Genius of Biblical Presbyterianism* (Greco)