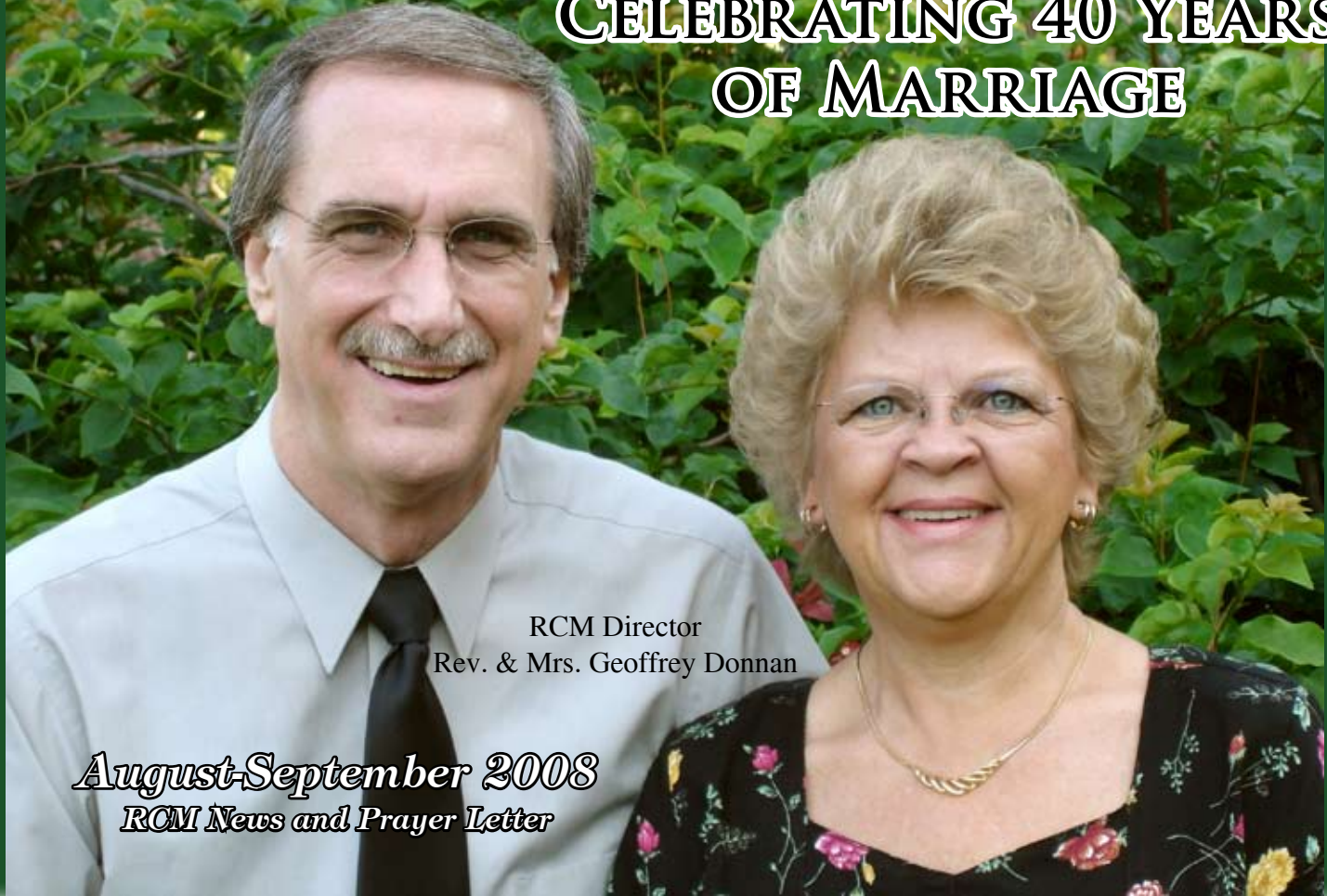


# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF MARRIAGE



RCM Director  
Rev. & Mrs. Geoffrey Donnan

*August-September 2008*  
*RCM News and Prayer Letter*



# Reformation Christian Ministries

## News & Prayer Letter

### August-September 2008

***We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance...[1 Thessalonians 1:2-5 ]***

In life we often find ourselves drifting along with certain routines that make us feel good as Christians, and in the process taking for granted the gospel. With all the political, financial and climatic events of this past few months, it is easy to become overwhelmed with how to comprehend and sort through them all and still carry on with our life's callings.

As we consider the work of RCM in light of these, our flesh is so inclined to lead us to despair (*the complete loss or absence of hope*). Yet, as a Christian, we decry such present despair by focusing on our future hope because of our position in Christ. We let our hope focus on the future while remaining in despair in the present. We are tempted to say, *Come Lord Jesus and get us out of this mess*. In fact, prophecy buffs have their trained "cadaver dogs" sniffing out all kinds of *end times* fulfillment in the present circumstances as escapists are so prone to do.

We see in the passage above that the *work of faith, labor of love* and *patience of hope* are in the Lord Jesus Christ, not in the circumstances. And while it is true that there is a future aspect that motivates these, they are all active in the present, no matter the circumstances. Why is that so? Because the elect of God who have received new life and, with it, the Holy Spirit, **live in the gospel here and now**. That gospel comes not in mere words only, but also in power and the Holy Spirit, who releases that power in us.

Two RCM supporters come to mind who exhibit this. A woman in California has been fighting terminal cancer and has an elderly mother for whom she cares. The other is a woman who just went through Hurricane Ike in Texas and remains without power and with debilitating illnesses exacerbated by lack of air conditioning. She has been cooking on a butane gas camp stove and finally has running water. Her unbelieving husband can't work and doesn't help.

In the midst of their present "despair" they have continued in their *work of faith, labor of love* and *patience in hope*. In the gospel, they find their Christian life is lived like their salvation was obtained—by grace through faith in what Christ has done, and not what they are doing. They have discovered the meaning of *my yoke is easy and my burden is light* (Matthew 11:30). As a result, instead of despair in their otherwise seemingly desperate situations, they are able to truly rejoice in the Lord and praise Him. You can hear it in their voice and see it in their perseverance. They are *light* in the midst of *darkness*.

This power of the gospel far exceeds anything that man can manufacture or conjure up himself because it is *divine power* (2 Peter 1:3). The assurance it gives is not only for the future, but also for the present. This enables them to persevere through the seemingly impossible circumstances in which they presently find themselves. While despair is a temptation, they consider it a sin and confess it as sin. In this way, they crucify their flesh. Despair takes hold when confidence is in man's power rather than the Lord's. They have learned that the gospel applies as much to their Christian living as to their regeneration. Everything about the Christian relies upon God's powerful grace. This not only applies to floods, hurricanes and illness, but also financial troubles.

Not only is this applicable to our personal lives, but also to the work of RCM and its colleagues overseas. And that is where you come in. We have been so encouraged by your *prayers, your work of faith, your labor of love* and *patience of hope*. You have ministered to us in ways unimaginable. We are thankful to God for such a team that stands behind us that is sensitive to God's leading and lives in the gospel's power however imperfectly. The gospel empowers you and by that power sheds the love of the Holy Spirit towards us, who in turn bring it to others. This is most humbling.

Our present financial and personnel challenges are in the hands of Him who oversees all things and works them for the good of His people. We rely upon Him directly, but also through you. We know this power in the gospel will prevail against the most dire predictions and greatest despair before us, so please join in prayer with us to that end. While frequently tempted, we do not live in the flesh, but in the power of the Spirit, which comes specifically through the word of the gospel. We trust that is true of you as well; you who share in this work with us. May God continue to bless us through you, that we may continue to be a blessing to others.

The RCM News & Prayer Letter is published almost monthly by  
Reformation Christian Ministries

**U.S.A.:** 13950 122nd Street, Fellsmere, Florida 32948-6411

Telephone: (772) 571-8833; Fax: (772) 571-8010

E-mail: [gwd@reformation.edu](mailto:gwd@reformation.edu)

Internet: <http://www.reformation.edu>

Editor: G. W. Donnan

Layout: G. W. Donnan

**CANADA:** R.R. #1, 5060 Oliver Road, Murillo, ON P0T 2G0

Telephone: (807) 473-9344; E-mail: [canada@reformation.edu](mailto:canada@reformation.edu)

The RCM News & Prayer Letter is available upon request without obligation  
(an annual donation of \$15.00 is suggested to cover costs).

Reformation Christian Ministries, an international, educational missions ministry, is under the oversight of The King's Reformed Presbyterian Church and Sharon Orthodox Presbyterian Church. RCM is eligible to receive tax-exempt donations in both the United States and Canada and is underwritten by donations from individuals and other churches. The Board of Directors for RCM in Canada is responsible for the affairs of RCM in Canada. RCM in the U.S.A. and Canada cooperate on like-minded projects. RCM cooperates by agreement with like-minded churches and denominations by assisting with mission work in specific fields and/or projects. Ecclesiastical authority for missionary ministers comes from their respective churches, not from RCM.

Fields: Albania, Italy, Russia, U.K., Europe and Suriname. Director of Missions: G. W. Donnan, Minister

 Geoffrey Donnan

# Poettcker's Prayer Partners

May to August 2008 Update: Greetings in our Lord and King!

My trip to Suriname (for graduation in May/08) went so well; we had more people attend than I have ever seen at Christian Liberty Academy.

We are sincerely thankful that both Lance Visser and Courtney Withington have returned to teach for this present school year. It makes our planning and work so much easier, especially since they both have become well-acquainted with the procedures and the expectations. We have been praying for more help and to date the Lord has seen fit not to provide it. As a result we have worked out plans so that grade 6 is taught by Rev. Hamid's mother (who has returned to Suriname) and that other staff (librarian and accountant) will help out with covering a few Jr. High courses.

Through a former teacher (Michael Beukema), contact has been made with the head of the Education department in a Christian College. We hope this will lead towards recruiting help for future years. If anyone has further leads for me to contact in regards to Christian Colleges and especially their Education departments, please do so!

I would like to pass on a link to a remarkable article, called "Secrets of Suriname". It is about secret diplomatic moves being used during the years that Reagan was president, to keep Suriname free from communism. The article is available from our website but also at the following link: <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=ZmUxNWQ5MTUxODI1ZWQ0MDhmYTkxMjlyZDU5ZDMxMWI>

What was so gratifying to me is that this was found and passed on to me by a former student who is now teaching this history at CLA. In fact he started teaching by using the taped lectures I had made for teaching the history courses and now no longer needs them, and instead teaches them himself. He is also a student in the B.Ed. program, and doing very well!

This is but a small evidence of the many ways the Lord is able to cause the "seeds of education" to grow. The results are often not seen or only seen later, but even while teaching, there are blessings along the way. One proof of this is both Courtney and Lance came to Suriname with the plan to be there only one year. Now Courtney is returning for a third year and Lance for a second year! Pray for the ongoing work of recruiting help in teaching at CLA.

**Please pray for CLA for the new school year** (begun August 11). Pray for my work in the B.Ed. program; there is much to do in preparing courses but also in the ongoing administration of them with students. Now that I am back from the school opening, I am now working on a course for the M.Div. program—it is a course of "Exegesis Basics for Preaching". I do appreciate your prayer for this as well.

**Praise the Lord that Sharilyn has returned to work** and that in the heart unit. This will mean much less stress for her ,and we appreciate your prayers for all to go well for her in this new position.



**Pray also for our financial support** (SALT); the work of preparing courses is a blessing but requires a great deal of time.

Finally, praise God that on July 31st, **I was blessed in celebrating my 60th birthday!**

**Some thoughts on turning 60:**

Yes, as of, July 31, I am 60 years old; since I was born in 1948! Although I must admit I am tempted to get negative about that, I can also say that I

started to "deal with getting old" when I turned 40. Here I am 20 years later and I realize that I have no cause for complaints, none whatsoever. Very honestly I think of what Moses said (when he was facing the fact that he could not enter the land of Canaan and was really facing the end of his service to the Lord), *I proclaim the name of the LORD...He is the Rock, His work is perfect...righteous and upright is He.* Ah, I also think of a Calvin & Hobbes cartoon which I have behind me on a bulletin board, and Calvin says, *God put me on earth to accomplish a certain number of things; right now I am so far behind, I will never die!*

I am truly thankful that I do have much work to do and I am far from completing it! But as I think back, sure the Lord has brought me through a lot of deep waters (trials), but in His grace He brought me through them, to where I am today. I am still able to run 3 miles and lift light weights each day, except for Sunday, and at the end of each run I think/pray to the Lord of how thankful I am for one more run. And, yes, on Saturday I am thankful that the next day is Sunday and I do not need to run! As I grew up thanking God for food and blessing it to my body, so now I thank God for it and ask him to bless it to my body that I do NOT eat it, and that He would bless my exercise to my body. By God's grace I am healthy and I know that tomorrow I could lose it and be faced with great infirmity. As long as I have it I will praise God for it, and if He should be pleased to give me physical infirmity, I will seek His grace to deal with that when it comes. So, I have no complaints; even if my life, as it is today, were to end tomorrow.

I often said to my students at the end of a week, *work hard, play hard, and pray hard.* God has given me a love for each of these and an understanding of how important each is in my life. I love the work I am doing, I love living where I don't have to shovel snow, and I love the people I work with. I love to do various sports and some I can still do; like volleyball, golf, and runing. I am deeply grateful to the Lord for each time He calls me and uses me to lead His people to worship and preach; and usually my prayer is, *Lord, if just one more time, use me to bring your word to your people.*

My 60th birthday is nothing but another day that God gives to me and that I thank Him for! We are deeply thankful for your partnership.

*Rudy & Sharilyn Poettcker*

[For brief regular prayer emails, email me at [rep@reformation.edu](mailto:rep@reformation.edu) .]

## RCM Headquarters Update

### Meet Rev. Dr. Jackson Snyder



Dr. Jackson Snyder comes to RCM from a Methodist pastoral background but with an extensive experience with the internet, websites and publishing. While we share the same gospel basics, there are other areas of doctrinal difference that we hope to discuss as time goes on. Aside from his expertise in much needed computer areas, his theological training enables him to serve as Registrar for the college and seminary program. For more information on him, see his page on our website at <http://reformation.edu/content/view/433/555/>.

Jack suffered a mild heart attack recently, but has recovered and is back at work.

### Mission Field Briefs

**Russia:** Prayer is requested by our Russian colleagues regarding the tension building between Russia and the West as it may hinder the free flow of personnel, contact and finances.

**Italy:** Andrea Modolo continues his studies in theology. We have secured several website domain names for the new Italian website. We welcome suggested articles and resources (especially in the respective languages) for all of our websites.

**Albania:** The tedious process of continuing to update and format the confession statements continues. Nardi Doka is in daily contact as we train him for the work.

**Suriname:** The new school year has begun, though additional teachers are very much needed.

**France:** We are opening a presence in France with the intent of having a European office through the able services of Dr. Annemie Godbehere. She is a Dutch scholar who has worked for many years with Dr. Stephen Westcott in the U.K. They hope to interest students in our seminary's doctoral program. For more information see our website at <http://reformation.edu/content/view/434/557/>

**U.K.:** Pray for Dr. Stephen Westcott who has unsuccessfully tried to get onto high speed internet access. He is also working on a Coverdale New Testament which we hope to publish for him in the near future. The book on Dr. John Owen, entitled *By Bible Alone*, is nearing completion. We hope to have it in print before year-end.

**Website:** Sadly, we have had to migrate to another web software, which has delayed us somewhat in our timetables, but the Lord has brought to us a very knowledgeable and committed volunteer (Todd Tomlinson), who is an expert in almost everything we are in process of doing. Pray.

To: Reformation Christian Ministries

E-MAIL: [gwd@reformation.edu](mailto:gwd@reformation.edu)  
WEB: <http://www.reformation.edu>

**Aug.-Sept. 2008**

U.S.A.: 13950 - 122<sup>nd</sup> Street • Fellsmere, FL 32948-6411 • Phone (772) 571-8833 • Fax (772) 571-8010

CANADA: RR#1, 5060 Oliver Road • Murillo, ON P0T 2G0 • Phone (807) 473-9344 • [canada@reformation.edu](mailto:canada@reformation.edu)

Internet connection:  
 High Speed  
 Dial-Up

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip /Post Cd: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send e-mail updates from RCM to (e-mail address): \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in staying on your newsletter list.  Please remove my name from your newsletter list.

Send me the following  Newsletters and/or  E-mail updates for:  Russia  Italy Report  Poettckers: Prayer Partners (SALT)

Enclosed is a contribution of  \$10  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$500  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

METHOD OF DONATION:  I plan to contribute per  mo.  qtr.  year

Check or money order is enclosed payable to REFORMATION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

Credit card donations: call 772-571-8833 or visit our website @ <http://reformation.edu>

STOCK DONATIONS: Contact Rev. Geoff Donnan.

I would like to designate my donation for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ HQ Needs \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Student Sponsorship Program

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Albania \$ \_\_\_\_\_ SALT \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Good News Bible Study Ministries

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ China \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Russia \$ \_\_\_\_\_ RCM Construction Debt Reduction

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Italy \$ \_\_\_\_\_ H.E.A.R. Ye! Other \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to teach at C.L.A. in Suriname.

I would like to assist with the college and/or seminary program. I am sending a resume.

Please add this/these person(s) on your newsletter/e-mail list:

---

---

---

## Celebrating their 40th Wedding Anniversary



Geoff and Nancy Donnan at reception after their wedding in Edina, Minnesota, September 13, 1968.

In 1968, Geoff Donnan met Nancy Nuottila from Calumet, Michigan. They were married on September 13 by Rev. Stephen Diller in a United Church of Christ. (*Anecdote: The minister was the brother of comedian Phyllis Diller's husband known as Fang.*) Nancy was a Lutheran but had married Geoff at a time when he had been an atheist for about seven years.

The loss of the middle of their three children jolted Geoff out of his atheism. The Lord used this as the beginning of a series of events through which the Lord opened their eyes to the depths of their sin and gave them new life in late 1974. Less than four years later, they were in Suriname, South America serving as missionaries. The Lord used them to found Caribbean Christian Ministries in Suriname, which later became Reformation Christian Ministries after they moved to the U.S. Through them, the Lord has established what is now First Presbyterian Church and Christian Liberty Academy of Paramaribo.

Thirty-six of their forty years of marriage have been as Christians. Without a doubt, the work of God has enabled them to arrive at this celebration with a love for each other given to them by Him. It has been often tested, but has survived, prospered and grown beyond either of their expectations. The Lord has used the challenges through which He has brought them over the years to bring encouragement to others. They've clearly seen the application of *2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be God...of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

It is their objective in the next five to ten years to see Reformation Christian Ministries successfully in the hands of a new generation of reformation-minded leaders who will carry on this life-time work when they are no longer able to contribute to it. Incidentally, Geoff is turning sixty-five in November. Please pray for the future leaders needed for RCM, that God will lead us to them and get them trained in the coming years. *The Donnans thank you for your support.*

FOR CONVENIENCE IN MAILING YOUR DONATIONS,  
PLEASE CUT AND PASTE THE APPROPRIATE ADDRESS  
(U.S. ADDRESS FOR U.S. AND ALL OTHER COUNTRIES, CANADA ADDRESS FOR CANADA ONLY)

Reformation Christian Ministries  
UNITED STATES REGIONAL OFFICE  
13950 - 122ND STREET  
FELLSMERE FL 32948-6411

Reformation Christian Ministries  
CANADIAN OFFICE  
RR#1 5060 OLIVER ROAD  
MURILLO ON P0T 2G0  
CANADA