

S P R I N G 2 0 1 6 E D I T I O N

# NIPISSING *update*

NEWSLETTER OF THE NIPISSING FREE REFORMED CHURCH PLANT



## Maple Syrup Festival

*It was a beautiful but chilly day on April 23rd for the Maple Syrup festival in Powassan, where it was estimated that 10,000 people attended! We set up a booth again, were able to give good literature to many people, and had many opportunities to speak about the Word. We plan to set up a tent at several other events over the summer. Please pray that the Lord will bless these efforts!*



## Preaching & Teaching

On Sunday mornings, we have continued through the book of Genesis, currently considering the life of Jacob. It has been sad to see the effects of his selfishness, lies, the alienation, and favouritism in the life

of his family. Yet we find real hope in the work of the Lord, who repeatedly intervened to rescue Jacob and reform his broken family. Our hope must be that He alone is our Redeemer! We pray that the Lord would work mightily among His people in our day. In the

afternoon services, we are going through a series on the Lord's Prayer, using the Heidelberg Catechism. At Wednesday evening Bible Studies, we are still working verse-by-verse through the gospel of Luke, currently looking at the last verses of chapter 11.

## ✧ Jacob's Reformation ✧

Old Testament history is filled with "Reformations." These revivals are preceded by times that God's covenant people have chosen to sin, and then struggle with its consequences. As prodigals and rebels, they find themselves not only with a myriad of personal and family problems, but also distant from communion with the Lord.

Jacob is one example of this pattern, with his sinful deceptions leading to exile and slavery in the east. We might think of the high point of his life as being his entrance back into the promised land, and his wrestling with the Angel of the Lord. After all, it is there that Jacob is first given the name "Israel."

It is important to realize that after that encounter Jacob's return is *still* not a whole-hearted homecoming. In Genesis 34, Jacob's new name is not used. He delays in keeping his vow to return and worship at Bethel. The family settles near the Canaanites, reaping consequences

of living near an evil city. His household becomes a mixture of violent pillagers, idolators, and even Canaanite women and children. Jacob is a sinner who lingers and delays, unwilling to fully commit to the holy pilgrimage. And yet the Lord patiently visits and speaks to Jacob, with an irresistible call:

*"God said to Jacob, 'Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother.'"*

*And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone."*

- Genesis 35:1-3

The Lord still calls his people back, through the Word and the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. May we be praying for and desiring this pattern of reformation in our homes and churches!

For more information see [www.nipissingrc.com](http://www.nipissingrc.com) or call Pastor Rob VanDoodewaard at 705-724-5070