

RUF REPORT

News of Reformed University Fellowship in the Northeast and Midwest

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RUF Summer Conference

The grand finale to RUF's annual ministry is our summer conference held in Panama City, Florida. This year 1,481 students came from all over the U.S. to hear excellent preachers, participate in engaging seminars, and enjoy the sun.

RUF has been holding these conferences for several decades, but this year we expanded from two weeks to three. The large majority of our schools finish in the first two weeks of May, but as we expand, we are picking up more schools that finish later. Chris Garriott at University of Maryland led the effort to launch a third week, and although there was some hesitation, the third week was a huge success. University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins, and Johnson and Wales attended with an assortment of students from other schools. We are hoping the third week will grow as other late schools join us.



RUF Summer Conference Week 3

We invite the best preachers we can find to give the evening messages, and we were not disappointed. This year the topic was sanctification, and we were urged to grow in God's grace by believing the gospel, and to beware of self-help schemes for moral improvement. The morning seminars are taught by the campus ministers. This year I taught a seminar on evangelism and many of the staff I supervise also taught seminars.

I attended all three weeks this year, and Ruth and Benjamin joined me for two. It was a wonderful opportunity to spend time with staff and students, hear my staff teach, and get to know the families better.



Chris Garriott giving a seminar on the trustworthiness of the Bible

Change in Connecticut

Eleven years ago Joseph and Katie Pensak left the deep south and moved to New England to pursue seminary studies. They are still here, and have been leading the RUF ministry at the University of Connecticut since 2004. Joseph started this ministry, and it has grown from a hand full of students to a group of 60. New England is a famously difficult place to minister, but God has richly blessed Joseph's work.

Now Joseph and Katie are moving even farther north, to an even harder field. Next month they will move to Burlington, Vermont, to start a new gospel-centered church there. We hope that Joseph will make a good start this year, and then we will send a campus minister there to start RUF at the University of Vermont.

The University of Connecticut is critical to the state of Connecticut, and there was general agreement that we needed a strong minister to take over from Joseph. Lucas Dourado comes to us from Covenant Seminary. He grew up primarily in New Jersey and studied communication at Wake Forest University where he was part of RUF. After graduating, he served as an RUF intern at the University of Tennessee before going to Covenant.

Lucas visited UConn in April and preached at the last large group meeting of the year. The students loved him! He was also able to preach at the local church and was



warmly received. He will be examined for ordination this month and move to Connecticut in July.

Joseph is one of our best campus ministers, and we are delighted to have someone of Lucas' caliber to succeed him. Pray for Lucas as he undergoes exams, moves, and prepares to start a new year.

Thanks and Funds

Thank you for your faithful support of RUF, and of my ministry to campus ministers, students, and interns. One student wrote to her campus minister that the summer conference was a major turning point in her life. Many have said so over the years. This is just one of the many ways your funds and prayers are shaping lives. Thanks!

Focus on Rob Ilderton



South Carolina native Rob Ilderton describes himself as a Southerner who doesn't always feel like one. The son of a pastor, Rob spent his formative adolescent/teen years in his father's church in Hilton Head, South Carolina. This attractive

beach town is known for drawing a Northern crowd, and Rob's father's congregation, comprised of about one-fourth former Pennsylvanians, was no exception. In many ways, Rob's experience in his father's church helped to pave the way for Rob to minister eventually in Lancaster, PA as the RUF campus minister at Millersville University.

When Rob became a campus minister at Millersville four years ago, he also had experience with RUF under his belt. As a student at Clemson University, Rob was deeply involved with the RUF there. He recalls falling in love with God's grace during this time and has fond memories of his RUF campus minister, Stephen Speaks, investing in his life as they met regularly for coffee or lunch. While Rob greatly respects and values growing up with a father who was a pastor, he realizes that he primarily saw his father as "Dad" and not as his pastor. RUF marked Rob's

first experience of having a non-relative pastoral voice speak into his life and ask challenging questions, and this had a significant impact on him. Rob left Clemson convinced of a call to ministry, but not positive it would be with RUF. Upon finishing his undergrad education, Rob immediately pursued seminary at Reformed Theological Seminary Charlotte, and when he received his M.Div. degree, Rob decided RUF was a natural choice for a young seminary graduate. RUF Director Rod Mays encouraged Rob in this call and helped to place him quickly at Millersville.

In fact, the placement was much quicker than Rob had expected. During seminary, Rob had met Jenny through the local church. As Rob was finishing seminary, he and Jenny planned their wedding for December 2006, and the couple intended to wait until after marriage in the New Year to pursue an RUF placement. However, the presbytery was eager to place someone at Millersville, and so Rob and Jenny instead squeezed in an interview two weeks prior to their wedding. On their visit to Lancaster, the not-quite-newlyweds were greatly encouraged by the local church and enthusiastically accepted the earlier-than-anticipated call to serve with RUF at Millersville.

While Rob felt at home in Pennsylvania and with RUF, he admits that it's taken some time to figure out how to effectively minister to the specific culture of Millersville. Looking back at his own collegiate experience, Rob explains, "You go to Clemson to be a tiger!" Clemson students are very proud of their identity as Clemson students. By contrast, Rob describes Millersville as more of a pragmatist school, where students see college as a means to an end. Millersville students tend to want to graduate, get a good job, and lead quiet lives with their families and a handful of good friends. To this end, many students commute and many resident students still spend weekends at home.

Rob has felt the challenge of ministering in such an environment and is learning what it looks like to reach the Millersville population effectively. He has learned that it works best to get to know students in the large group context before engaging them in one-on-one conversations and is working to develop a core group of student leaders who are motivated to reach out to their friends on campus. In this way, Rob regularly affirms the students in their loyalty to their families and close friends, while also challenging them to love those beyond their immediate family/friend circles. As such, Rob is seeing the students grow in their desire to be a part of and serve a whole community. As one example, some students are getting involved in the local church in Lancaster. For Millersville students who like to spend weekends at home, this reflects a great level of growth in committing to a new community.

While Rob has been stretched by some aspects of Millersville's climate, he is also encouraged by a unique oppor-

tunity as a campus minister on this particular campus. Millersville is known for training teachers and about 90% of Rob's RUF students are studying education. This gives Rob the chance to speak into and influence the sphere of public education as he discusses everything from mundane matters to deep struggles to deep theological questions with so many future educators.

In addition, Rob loves the family-friendly nature of RUF as it gives his whole family a chance to take part in ministry. He and Jenny especially like to invite students into their home. The RUF students love to be around the Rob and Jenny's kids, Miriam (age 3) and Augustine (aka "Gus," age 1). For this reason, Rob often takes the kids to campus with him. Miriam will occasionally ask, "When are we going to campus to have lunch again?" and notices when students are absent from RUF large group. It seems Rob's enthusiasm for reaching Millersville's campus is influencing not only the students but also spreading to the next generation.

For more information on Rob Ilderton or RUF at Millersville, check out their website: www.millersville.ruf.org.

— by Kristen Boe

Personal Reflections



"For this is the will of God, your sanctification..."

1 Thessalonians 4:3

Sanctification was the topic of this year's RUF summer conference, and was also addressed during one of the sermons at our General Assembly. It is an important, yet tricky topic to address. The Bible lays out clear behavioral expectations for

believers, but it also clearly states that living by those standards will not save us. Too much attention to Christian living – or the wrong kind of attention – so easily leads to deadly legalism. On the other hand, too much attention to our freedom in Christ – or the wrong kind of attention – quickly leads to licentiousness. But sanctification cannot be ignored because it is God's will for us.

I have often heard it said that salvation is the wrong motive for holy living. Instead we are urged to accept and rest in Christ's work for salvation, and then live for Him out of gratitude for His love and sacrifice. I have been

thinking about this, and I cannot think of a place in the New Testament where we are urged to live godly out of gratitude for salvation. If you know of such a passage, please send it to me. (Dgreen@ruf.org) As we studied Romans last year, I noticed Paul pointing us to our new identity in Christ and our freedom from slavery to sin as reasons why we should live godly lives. His attitude is not so much "be grateful," but "you're crazy to return to the old wretched way of life when you have it so much better now."

Perhaps part of our struggle is to recognize how much better it is to live in Christ. The world, the flesh, and the devil are working 24 hours a day to deceive us into thinking it is a burden to follow Jesus, when in fact it is a joy. We must face their deception, remember the truth, and live accordingly.

So we must remind each other, and such is the task of RUF. We hope that students graduate neither uptight in their own righteousness, nor wildly abusing their freedom, but knowing who they are in Christ and learning to live accordingly.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Green".

Remember to check out my weekly report at <http://dgreenruf.org>. And email me if you wish to get weekly prayer requests.



iPhone: winner of the sand sculpture contest on the theme "Popular Culture" at the summer conference