2020 ANNUAL REPORT
THE CHARLES SIMEON TRUST
Dear Friends,

One of King David’s greatest joys in life came in laying up resources to speed along the work that Solomon would later complete in the building of the temple. That same kind of happiness would become the prized possession of a women’s group, who supplied everything necessary for Jesus’s ministry. And later still, that same gospel joy would belong to the church in Philippi (even though they needed reminding of it at times). Those saints were encouraged to recover the joy of gospel partnership for the purpose of seeing Paul’s gentle mission expand to yet other regions of the world. After an incredibly successful run, Paul himself would go on, inviting the church at Rome into the joy of propelling the gospel even further.

What might this mean for you and for me? Simply this: we can observe from the Bible that committed Christians take great joy in seeing the gospel advance. In the giving of their lives and well-earned resources these men and women gained an ever-increasing share of the happiness that comes from gospel growth.

For years now, we’ve pushed hard to bring the gospel around the globe through training people to better handle God’s Word. And you have been incredibly helpful in that effort. I hope you possess the joy of the Lord, for that is your very good portion. The One World Campaign is now officially complete. And you’re about to read all about what your giving to this point has secured. You’ve helped build our capacity to grow the work.

That said, we are convinced that many new destinations stand before us. Places for the gospel to spread beyond what we could possibly imagine—and through people who as of this day are yet unknown to us. We are eager to make that journey, and to do it with you. Humorously, you could say that while “we’ve been to the moon, we want the joy of Mars.” And we want it all for Christ.

We cherish your continued support. Thank you for speeding us towards the places God would have us go to promote the growth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are grateful. As you carry us further, know this throughout the world, the next generation of Biblical expositors is being trained. And may that knowledge increase the joy and happiness that is yours in Jesus Christ.

In Him,

David R. Helm
CHAIRMAN

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Our fiscal year runs from September 1 to August 31. Normally, that would be rather boring internal information mostly relevant to our auditor. But for fiscal year 2020, it is significant because it means that the coronavirus pandemic hit squarely in the middle of our year. In the first half of the year, registrations at 48 Workshops on Biblical Exposition across 13 nations had put us on track for a record high. There were exciting highlights. First-time Workshops in Vietnam and Russia. A French-speaking women’s small group in Toronto. Traction in the Middle East and eastern Asia. But then, COVID-19 began. Cancelling 35 Workshops was our only viable option.

We quickly pivoted to do something we’d never done: Online Workshops. While much of the world was shutting down, we were planning. Two unique benefits became clear: reach and collaboration. Six Online Workshops—three in English and three in Spanish—brought together 402 pastors and Bible teachers from 24 nations. Technology helped us reach pastors who, due to geographical location, might find it difficult to attend an in-person Workshop. Being online also helped us connect pastors around the globe. As often happens with Workshops, some of those relationships are already bearing fruit in the form of supportive friendships and collaborative ministries. For example, Jorge Vasquez, a preacher from Colombia living in Abu Dhabi, said: “The Online Workshops have been a valuable tool for my study, that can be reached from any place in the world. That is a great blessing. To God be the glory.”

**What is a Workshop?** A Workshop is a 2-3 day live training event for pastors and Bible teachers. Workshops aim to increase participants’ confidence and ability in handling God’s Word through instruction, examples, and small group practice. We want each person to leave convinced that God’s Word is powerful and eager to teach it to their people.

**FEEDBACK**

“A spanking that felt like a hug.”
Alan Dunham, Youth Pastor, Chippewa Valley Bible Church, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

“The Workshops have truly revolutionized my ministry.”
Julio Rosillo, Pastor, Iglesia Bíblica de Cristo, El Puerto de Santa María, Spain

“The tools made me realize I needed to focus on the text and overcome the temptation to highlight my feelings, my experience, my circumstances rather than the Word itself.”
Mabel Pacheco, Discipleship Group Teacher, Iglesia Gracia Sobre Gracia, El Salvador

**WORKSHOPS ON BIBLICAL EXPOSITION**
Last year, a record number of people across 62 countries devoted themselves to making progress in their Word-handling skills by taking an Online Course. English, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish speakers could choose from 18 Courses. Additionally, 1,478 free resources were available in English and Spanish. And we launched a new monthly Preacher’s Talk podcast in partnership with 9Marks. The first seven episodes were streamed or downloaded a total of 35,000 times.

Paul Butler has been the post-production work force behind our English videos for more than 10 years. “When I first started editing videos for the Charles Simeon Trust, I have to admit it was just a job,” said Paul. “But not long after I started, I became a bi-vocational pastor. Suddenly the videos took on new importance to me. I’m a Bible school graduate, taught Sunday school, led Bible studies, but it’s a different thing to prepare for a message each and every week. It’s amazing how often I would be working on a particular video and that principle was the very thing I needed for that week of ministry. And that’s the value of these videos. Many of us are too busy to make it to a Workshop, but we can interact with these concepts online in our own time. And frankly, we all can stand to improve our craft in the ministry of the king, Jesus Christ.”

What is an Online Course? The Online Courses are adaptable, self-paced classes that bring the best of our work to people around the world through videos and small group practice. The flexible format supports individuals, churches, or a variety of training groups. We want to help people make progress in studying and teaching the Bible.

Feedback

“These courses gave me something that I never got in such a helpful and clear way in seminary.”
Danny Schillero, Pastor, Parkside Church, Chagrin Falls, Ohio

“The accessibility, excellent lectures, and logical progression of materials has been invaluable to my teaching ministry.”
Megan Fera, Bible Teacher, Hope Community Church, Sacramento, California

“The entire First Principles course was a light bulb moment. I learned that the Spirit has already spoken, the preacher needs only to listen.”
Peter Nduati, Founder & CEO, Africa Turnaround, Nairobi, Kenya
"Keep making progress in your Word work. God's people are depending on it."

—Rev. Dr. Robert Kinney
instructing in Tempe, Arizona
Year one is complete! While it was not an ideal year to start, the planning paid off. Sixteen students made progress. Walter Carter, Pastor of Union Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago, took the Course full-time and has already graduated. The Course "has transformed my ability to quickly communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ," said Walter. This is, in part, due to the great leadership provided by the Course leaders, Jeremy Meeks and K. Edward Copeland.

“We set out to create something unique and we succeeded,” said Jeremy Meeks, Director of the Chicago Course on Preaching. “The Course is truly a cohort—a group of Christians bound together by a common cause: to become the best preachers we can be. Preaching is a spirit-empowered rhetorical artform. What those who desire to excel at preaching need is an environment in which to practice and get feedback from seasoned practitioners. This is what we do, day in and day out. I can’t wait to see what the future holds for us.”

“The year exceeded expectations,” said K. Edward Copeland, Associate Director. “I knew it was going to be good, but I didn’t know how good. I knew we were going to try some new things that may or may not work. Some of the out of the box things we tried worked out better than I imagined. The things we’re trying out are revolutionary and an asset to the kingdom.”

What is the Chicago Course on Preaching? The Course is a rigorous, residential, skill-based training program in biblical exposition combined with mentored practice within the local church. The Course aims to help men and women in ministry or exploring ministry deepen their skills and convictions in expositional preaching and teaching.

Feedback

“The support of the other students and the instructors has been immeasurable. They care about God’s people. When I’ve been stuck, I’ve had many helpful conversations about how to move forward with a sermon or series.”
Jeremy White, Co-Director of Youth, Christ Church, Chicago, Illinois

“It’s highlighted the weaknesses in my approach to preaching. And the very practical instruction has given me great tools to strengthen those weaknesses.”
Jamie Stuart, bi-vocational church planter, Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada
Toronto is Canada’s largest and most international city. About half of its 3 million people were born outside Canada. It is a good fit for Kesavan Balasingham. He was born in Sri Lanka and moved with his parents and brother to Canada via Germany in the 1980s. Years later, he was called to pursue theological education and pastoral ministry.

Kesavan heard about the Charles Simeon Trust’s Workshops on Biblical Exposition from a friend. He attended his first in 2013, and has been every year since. “The Workshop is great,” said Kesavan, “and a wonderful benefit is the overflow of lasting relationships among pastors.” This “fellowship of pastors” supports one another. They preach at each other’s churches. They’ve collaboratively developed internships. They’ve built discipleship programs together. They encourage each other. “Isolation is a problem among pastors. There are ups and downs. Tough seasons. It’s great to be able to pick up the phone and say, ‘I’m really struggling with this. What do you think? I’m working on that situation. What would you do?’”

This support was helpful when Kesavan was commissioned to plant and pastor Fellowship Church Rouge Park in 2014. A church plant needs people who are trained to preach and teach God’s Word and the annual Workshop quickly became part of that. One year the church brought 12 to the Workshop. Later, Kesavan learned that the Charles Simeon Trust encourages churches to limit themselves to five—and to be training in the local church.

This prompted Fellowship Church to start using Online Courses to train leaders. Each autumn, they have a group for men, and each spring they have a group for women. In addition to training elders and interns, doing this has helped create a church culture of discipleship. Kesavan explained why this is effective. “The First Principles Course helps our discipleship work because it equips people how to approach God’s Word with confidence—to look at context, structure, etc. It helps them learn how to have a Word-centered time of fellowship. There’s too much feel-good time in many churches. God’s Word is to convict us and change our character.”

Kesavan and Fellowship Church are passionate about reaching the city for Christ. With only 3% Christians, “Toronto magnifies and exalts pluralism.” It can be a hostile place for the gospel. But Kesavan has seen fruit from preaching and teaching the Word. The church is intentional about bringing believers and non-believers together over the Word. It is intentional about engaging the nearby campus of the University of Toronto. Over the summer, the church was in a sermon series on Genesis. Around that time, two Indonesian students came to know Jesus. “When I asked them how they came to faith, they said from hearing Genesis preached,” said Kesavan. “And I attribute my ability to relate Genesis to the gospel to the Charles Simeon Trust.”
THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE

It is God who works through his Word and his people around the world. We are grateful to him for raising up people in FY20 to carry on his work through the proclamation of his Word.

FINANCES

INCOME IN FY20

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EXPENSES IN FY20………………………………………………..$1,093,248

FY21 DONATION INCOME NEEDED…………………..$1,174,780

CAMPAIGN CONCLUSION

The OneWorld Campaign officially ended on August 31, 2020, after a successful three-year run. A total of $6.9M was committed. While a few commitments will continue to come in throughout 2021, these funds have already helped grow Workshops and Online Courses, launch the Chicago Course on Preaching, and secure future innovation and ministry by moving our financial model towards maturity. We are grateful to the donors who contributed! You’ve helped increase our capacity to grow the work. We look forward to many years of fruitful ministry to come, for the glory of God.

Thank you!

Board members provide vision and leadership.

Host church pastors rally volunteers to help Workshops succeed.

Instructors are fully vested in church ministry and training others for church ministry.

Donors leveraged their financial resources to make everything in this report possible.

Small group leaders volunteer their time to make the indispensable peer feedback component of Workshops work.

Thank you!

Board of Directors

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