



REFORMED
INSTITUTE *of*
METROPOLITAN
WASHINGTON

RETHINKING THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH

2010 PROGRAM FOCUS

*Reformed churches have long been known for their emphasis on education. One of the hallmarks of Reformed Christianity has been an insistence that **both** clergy and laity need to have a well-informed understanding of the faith they profess. In the celebration of the 500th anniversary of John Calvin's birth, we have been reminded of how much importance our spiritual forbears attached to Biblical literacy and other forms of religious knowledge in defining what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. But we are living in a different era than Calvin did—a time when conditions seem so different that those responsible for planning and carrying out the educational ministry of the church sometimes wonder if this historic Reformed view is obsolete. The purpose of much of what the Reformed Institute will be offering in its programs for the 2010 year is to facilitate serious reflection on this topic. Among the questions we intend to explore are these:*

- Is knowledge really important to Christian discipleship? If so, what kind—and why is it important?
- How is this knowledge best acquired?
- What exactly is the role of the church in the formation of Christians?
- Are there steps our churches can and should be taking now to improve their performance in this part of their ministry?

Saturday, January 23

CONVOCAATION

9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Stone Hall, National Presbyterian Church

“Passing on the Faith in an Unsettled Culture”

Christian Smith

(Notre Dame University)

**“Passing on the Faith in the Reformed Tradition:
Old Resources and New Strategies”**

Richard Osmer

(Princeton Theological Seminary)

2nd Saturdays, February-June

REFORMED INSTITUTE COURSE

9:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Lewinsville Presbyterian Church

“An Educated Laity—An Obsolete Idea?”

Instructor: Bruce Douglass

Saturday, April 17

PASSING ON THE FAITH: THE CHALLENGE TO YOUR CONGREGATION

9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Virginia Theological Seminary

an event specifically for lay and professional church leaders with interest in and responsibility for the educational ministry (all ages) of their congregations

“Religious Illiteracy: Is It Really a Problem?”

Stephen Prothero

(Boston University)

**“The Life of the Mind in the Service of God:
The Reformed Perspective”**

Michael Jinkins

(Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary)

September/October

organization of the

EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE

date/place TBD

a forum for ongoing discussion of the educational challenges facing Presbyterian congregations today