

Site Report: Guam

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Introduction: Guam is located approximately 3,300 miles west of Hawaii, 1,500 miles east of the Philippines and 1,500 miles south of Japan. The bases in Guam, the most western territory of the United States, are important due to location, but also because as an American territory it is not reliant on support from a foreign country. It is of growing importance as the United States strengthens bases in outlying US territories as part of our new defense strategy.

Need: By 2014 there are estimates that there will be **40,000** American service personnel stationed on Guam. Guam needs a Presbyterian and Reformed Church to serve the American military community primarily, now! However, it also presents an opportunity for outreach to the people of Guam. Guam is an American territory. There is no language barrier. The military make up on the island includes a large Air Force presence and a growing Naval and Marine presence. The island is becoming the lynchpin of the American strategy in the Pacific to guard the overall well-being of the Pacific community. The base will be there for the foreseeable future. The service members are well educated and highly motivated, trained professionals. Spiritually, the community is served by Chaplains in a highly pluralistic environment. There are a number off post churches that serve the community. Generally, the churches in military communities include Fundamental Baptists and Assembly of God fellowships, Lutheran, Episcopal, Seventh Day Adventists. The Roman church has a strong influence on the island people. A Presbyterian and Reformed Church, with our rich theological heritage, can best serve the military community and reach out to the residents of the island of Guam.

Project Description: A church planter is needed to go and establish a Presbyterian and Reformed presence on the island. This will be a pioneering effort. And with God's blessing a solid biblical church will be raised up on the island. Funding for this effort would be the primary responsibility of the presbytery that adopts the work. Large churches outside the presbytery could also be approached to support the effort. The PCA Foundation could also be made aware of the need and a generous donor might want to invest in Kingdom activity on the island of Guam. Our experience, though limited to two other such plants, give us hope that the work could be self-supporting in fairly short order. The church planter needs to be a self-starter and also understand that he will not be around reformed minded colleagues. He needs to be willing to work hard, preach and teach the whole counsel of God, be able to nurture the saints toward maturity in Christ, have a burden for the lost and one who will promote close fellowship in the covenant community. He needs to be strong in the faith and at the same time loving and tender toward the flock. It would be good to have a church planter who has some familiarity with the military culture especially in this pioneering effort. A brief training period could be provided for someone without military experience. The church planted would also need to understand that most of his members would only be there 2 or 3 years. He would need to take a long view and see his ministry as impacting many over the long haul.

Conclusion: The military community is a wonderful community that needs what the Presbyterian and reformed community has. The Church, the repository of truth, must take the message of the gospel to the whole world.. We certainly cannot leave our military service members and their families over to a pluralistic chapel community where all faith groups are considered equal.

Guam also offers some great opportunities for outdoor activity. It is one of the best dive destinations in the world. It is a Pacific island paradise with coral ringed beaches, warm crystal clear waters for snorkeling, scuba diving and clean white sand. Deep sea sport fishing is also available. It also has seven world-class golf courses. It has lush tropical jungles and a rich cultural and historical heritage.