



Calvin Presbyterian Church

# The Courier

Volume 63, Issue 12

December 2015

## Craig's Corner

## The Compassionate Heart of God

By Pastor Craig Kulonis

In Psalm 145:8-9, King David describes the character of God when he says, "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy. The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all his works." Being a people that are compassionate is essential to being kingdom minded people. A prayer I have heard over the years of being a Christian for those desiring to be in step with God's heart of compassion is: "God, break our hearts, with the things that break your heart."

When we look at the gospels, it is so evident what compelled Jesus to minister the love of God to the people: it was the compassionate heart of God. Without a heart of compassion, we very rarely extend ourselves towards the hurting. In Matthew 9:35-38 we observe the compassion of Jesus towards the multitudes. It starts with the following words, "Jesus **went about** all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues." He went about... We must be like Jesus and **go about** if people are going to be touched by the compassion of God. When Jesus went about, "he preached the gospel of the kingdom, and healed every sickness and every disease among the people." This describes Jesus' Messianic calling.

The passage continues in verse 36, "when **He saw** the multitudes, He was **moved with compassion** for them." "**He saw**" can mean the following: (1) to perceive with the eyes; perceive by any of the senses; (2) to pay attention, to observe; (3) to ascertain what must be done. To see and not act is to just look, glance at without any concern. Jesus saw and responded with compassion to the multitudes. To be moved with compassion means to have the bowels yearn, have sympathy, to pity.

There is no one as compassionate as Jesus. He is a compassionate friend to every hurting person. It was compassion that brought Him from heaven to earth, and from earth to the cross. The Father and the Son saw the misery of man and responded with extravagant, sacrificial love.

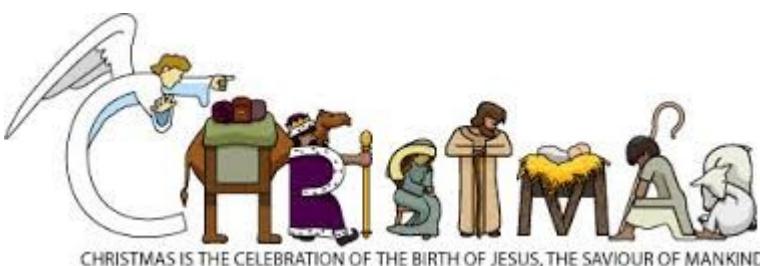
In the later part of verse 36 we see what Jesus saw: "they were weary (harassed) and scattered like sheep having no shepherd." They were harassed by the Pharisees who filled them with false traditions and burdens God did not intend for man to carry. The multitudes were destitute of faithful guides to go before them in the things of God.

Jesus next turns to His disciples in verses 37, 38: "The harvest is plentiful,

but the laborers are few. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." Jesus is speaking the same thing to His disciples today (us, His people). Are we listening to His command to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers in His harvest?

The condition of our times should excite our hearts to pray. When things look bad we should pray more, and complain and fear less. Jesus' counsel in how to pray, knowing that the multitudes are harassed and scattered is: "pray to the Father who is the Lord of the harvest..."

God is the one who sends out the laborers. I hope we hear the call of God to be His sent ones. Only when we are moved with compassion for people around us will we respond to their needs. Please take time to ask God to give you His heart of compassion for people near and far. When He does, respond and help bring the love of God to people. It may be your next door neighbor who is dealing with an illness, a co-worker whose marriage is struggling, or perhaps a homeless person in our town or a refugee who has no place to call home. Let God touch our hearts with His heart.



**Christmas Eve Service**  
**Thursday, Dec. 24, 6:30 p.m.**  
Join us for our interactive pageant, telling the real Christmas story through music and drama.

# New Sunday Evening Gatherings

By Pastor Zach Washburn

Brothers and Sisters-

I write to introduce two programs beginning in the new year at Calvin. They will take place on Sunday evenings, in the typical time slot for an evening worship service. However, they are not worship services, nor any other sort of event with 'expected' attendance. They are simply programs the elders believe will help us grow in Christ as a church and become better citizens of His kingdom. We hope you find them equally beneficial.

## Dialogue

Dialogue will meet on the second Sunday of each month (Jan 10, Feb 7, Mar 6, etc.) at 7 p.m. This is an opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussion on any spiritual, theological, or ethical topic. Questions can be brought up at the event, or asked anonymously by putting them in the offering plate. Questions from all spiritual perspectives are welcome. The elders are hoping this will be an opportunity to invite friends or acquaintances who are curious and/or skeptical about Christianity.

## Missional Support Group

MSG will meet on the first and third Sundays of the month (Jan 3 & 17, etc.), also at 7 p.m. We believe that God has sent us as missionaries to Corvallis (the grammar of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19 is not 'go somewhere else and make disciples' but 'as you are going, make disciples'). That said, we know firsthand that making disciples in Corvallis is difficult, intimidating, and even confusing. Many outside the church are disinterested in or dismissive of what we believe. MSG will be a gathering for those engaged in making disciples, or trying to be engaged, or hoping to be engaged. It is for those who are unsure of where to begin, or uncomfortable with beginning, or frustrated with a lack of results, as well as for those enjoying the work. We will share stories of how things are going (or not going). We will encourage and edify one another. We will pray for one another. Hopefully, we will become bolder and more winsome in opening our mouths to proclaim the mystery of the Gospel, for which we are ambassadors (Ephesians 6:19-20).

# Building Update: Re-Roofing

By Mel McCracken, Elder

Session is currently considering several improvements to be made to our building over the next several years. The most pressing of these is re-roofing of the flat roof portion of the building, which is a significant undertaking. However, with the recent fall rains the need for this has become more apparent and we are hoping to have the work completed next summer. We plan to share more information regarding our plans for the building at the time of our annual meeting.

Earlier this year Session used a financial gift from a long-time member to create a trust account specifically for the roof improvements; this fund currently includes ±\$18,000. Based on

an evaluation and estimate we had completed a couple of years ago, we believe that a budget amount of \$48,000 is appropriate for the work. Therefore, we need an additional \$30,000 to begin the work. A portion of the needed amount can come from our major repair budget that we began to set aside from the general fund this year. However, we will need to supplement these sources in order to complete the work this summer. If you would like to make a contribution to this fund, you may do so by noting 'roof fund' on your check or giving envelope. As usual, we ask that your giving to this fund consist of a special offering that does not impact your regular giving to the general fund or other charities. Thank you.

# Adult Sunday School Sermon on the Mount

Beginning December 20 and continuing into the new year, we will be studying the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew 5-7. We will consider this text, in which Jesus paints a picture of what it looks like for God to be king, and wrestle with how to live now as citizens and heralds of His kingdom. Please join us at 9 a.m. in Olleman Hall. (Note that there is no Sunday School on Dec. 27.)

# A Week of Prayer and Fasting Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done...

We are again calling for a week of corporate prayer and fasting from **Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> thru Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup>**. As we seek to follow Jesus in daily life, it is vital that we habitually draw near to God, in order that our own hearts and lives better imitate His. Prayer and fasting are two of the primary means God has given for this purpose. Details will be forthcoming on various ways for everyone to participate.

# Membership Class Saturday, December 12 9 a.m. @ Calvin

This is your opportunity to find out more about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and a member of the church. Call the church office if you have questions.

# Save the Date! Annual Meeting Sunday, January 31

# Thanksgiving Offering

At our annual Thanksgiving potluck on November 22, we took an offering to support Syrian refugee ministries through World Vision. Thank you to all who donated so generously. We sent \$3292. If you would like to find out more about what World Vision is doing, check out their website: [www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org).

# December 2015

<b>Sun</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>
		<b>1</b> 9 Prayer 1 Women's Bible Study	<b>2</b> 10 Prayer 4:30 Precepts Bible Study 6:30 Pioneers Youth Group	<b>3</b> 7 FOFM Community Christmas Concert @ LaSells	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 8:30 Prayer 9 Sunday School 10 Worship <i>11:30 Christmas Tea</i>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 9 Prayer 1 Women's Bible Study	<b>9</b> 10 Prayer 4:30 Precepts Bible Study 6:30 Pioneers Youth Group	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9 Membership Class
<b>13</b> 8:30 Prayer 9 Sunday School 10 Worship	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9 Prayer 1 Women's Bible Study 5:30 Session	<b>16</b> 10 Prayer 4:30 Precepts Bible Study 6:30 Pioneers Youth Group	<b>17</b> <i>Jan/Feb Courier articles due in office</i>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 8:30 Prayer 9 Sunday School 10 Worship	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 9 Prayer 6:30 Deacons	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Office Closed <i>6:30 Christmas Eve Service</i>	<b>25</b> Office Closed <i>Merry Christmas</i>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9 Prayer 10 Worship	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Office Closes at noon	<b>1</b> Office Closed <i>Happy 2016</i>	<b>2</b>

# Uganda Children Sponsored

By Shelley Eddleman,  
Judy Kraft, Kim Oxsen



All of our Asante Kids in Uganda are sponsored for another year. We even took in three more children who were waiting to be Asante Kids!

We thank God for your generosity, Calvin people. Throughout the year, we will try to keep you informed about what your children are doing. We hear there are more letters from the children on the way. It is wonderful to see how God is working in the lives of these children and you are a part of the miracle. More children are always waiting to go to school so if you have a friend who might be interested, they are welcome.

Would you like to write to your child(ren)?  
Here is the address:  
Streams of Life Church, P.O. Box 16534,  
Kampala, Uganda



## Advent

Calvin's sanctuary decorations this season include 63 poinsettias in honor/in memory of loved family and friends. Thank you to the Deacons and all who purchased plants.

## Pioneer Club, Youth Group Celebrate Thanksgiving



**Calvin Presbyterian Church  
1736 NW Dixon Street  
Corvallis, OR 97330**

### Return Service Requested

#### Church Staff

Zach Washburn  
Pastor  
Craig Kulonis  
Pastor of Community Life  
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Director of Children's Ministries  
Sarah Marshall  
Office Manager  
Phone: 541-757-8021  
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#### Sundays at Calvin

8:30 Prayer in the Prayer Room  
9 a.m. Sunday School for all ages  
10 a.m. Worship