



Calvin Presbyterian Church

The Courier

Volume 64, Issue 5

September/October 2016

Prayer Makes Us More Like Our Dad

By Pastor Zach Washburn

“Prayer is the chief exercise of faith.”
John Calvin

I went to college in my hometown, at the school where my dad works as a professor. During junior year, one of my friends, Chris, took dad’s class. After a few weeks of the class, Chris told me he was finally starting to understand me. Knowing my dad helped him know me. At the end of the semester, Chris came over to my mom’s house for dinner. At the end of the evening he pronounced “Ok Zach. Between knowing your dad and your mom, now I understand you completely.”

Chris could say that because I have been so influenced, my character has been so formed, by who my parents are. In ways great and small, I am like them.

The fundamental truth of Christianity is that, by the gracious providence of the Father, by the loving sacrifice of the Son, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, you and I have become children of God. “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God; *and so we are.*” 1 John 3:1

We are God’s children. That is our fundamental truth, and that determines our fundamental task: to bear the family name well, to be renewed in the image of God, which was perfectly shown us in His Son Jesus. “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears *we shall be like Him*, because we shall see Him as He is.” 1 John 3:2

Just as I have been shaped and molded by my human family, all the more am I to be shaped and molded by my heavenly family. We were made in God’s image, and sin wrecked that image. But God, in His grace, has brought us into His family that His image, His likeness, might be renewed in us.

How? How is this task fulfilled? How does this likeness come about?

The answer lies in the metaphor. Chris was right—my parents explain me. Their character is my character. Certainly genetics plays a part in that. But a much larger part belongs to sustained intimacy. I am like my parents because I grew up around my parents. We ate meals, went on hikes, read the same books, worked on house projects. My dad and I played a thousand games of basketball together. We went shopping together, traveled together, yelled at each other, hugged each other. We talked all the time, until we were comfortable not talking—simply being near each other. Six weeks into freshman year my mom showed up in my dorm room to chew me out for not answering calls or emails—no matter what, we were going to communicate.

All that time, all that intimacy, made me who I am. It made me like mom and dad. That’s how likeness comes about. When it comes to our heavenly Father, things are the same. The way we spend time with God, the way we laugh and cry, rejoice and rage and lament, talk about everything and nothing with our Father—it’s all prayer. Prayer is the only path to sustained intimacy with Dad.

And so, more than anything else, we must learn to pray. We will spend this year doing everything we can to build a culture of prayer, a practice of sustained intimacy with our heavenly family. We will spend this year learning to be children, children of a Perfect Father whom we desperately need to be like.

We are realists about this. It will be a struggle. Sustained intimacy of any sort is difficult. All parents know how much easier it is to feed the kids Mcnuggets than to sit down at dinner with them night in and night out. Every adult child knows it’s easier to spend the evening watching a movie than on the phone with their elderly mom.

Praying will be hard. We know this. But praying will be worth it. This is the promise to which we cling, the promise of our trustworthy Lord, that by prayer, by sustained intimacy with our Maker, we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, from one degree of glory to the next.

Adult Sunday School Prayers of the Bible

As part of our Year of Prayer, Adult Sunday School will be looking at prayers of the Bible. Instead of our usual study-oriented format, we will spend the majority of time actually praying these texts in a way that will help all of us learn to pray. Join us at 9 a.m. in Olleman Hall.

Children's & Youth Ministry this Fall

Nursery

The nursery is available during Sunday School and the worship service for babies through 3 year olds. Our nursery is growing, and we need more help so that we can have 2 adults in the nursery each Sunday morning. Please consider volunteering 2-3 Sundays per year.

Sunday School

We have 2 children's classes on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m.: Kindergarten with Laura Rung; elementary students with Donna Roth. They are using David C

Cook's Bible-in-Life curriculum.

Children's Church

Children age 4 through 3rd grade are dismissed part way through the Sunday service for their own time of worship, Bible teaching and prayer. The offering they collect will help support Asante Kids in Uganda. Sermon Notes for older students are available from the ushers.

Pioneer Club, Wednesdays @ 6:30

This group starts up again Wednesday, October 5, for kindergarten through 5th

grade children. They meet at Calvin the first 3 Wednesdays of each month for Bible stories, skill units, music, games and snack.

Youth Group, Wednesdays @ 6:30

Middle School and High School students will meet at Calvin at the same time as Pioneer Club. This will be a time for fun, fellowship and Bible study.

Talk to Rachel Eby to volunteer to help in one of these areas or if you have questions.

Sunday Evening Gatherings

By Pastor Zach Washburn

This month, we are beginning Sunday evening gatherings. These gatherings are intended to build us up as a community, helping us grow as children of God, as brothers and sisters, and as neighbors.

We will rotate through three types of gatherings: Dialogue, Dinner and Prayer, and Missionary Support Group. A brief description of each gathering and a tentative schedule for the fall are below. If you are interested in coming, but would need childcare, please let Sarah or Zach know.

Dialogue: In dialogue we will wrestle together with difficult subjects and questions related to the life of faith (see schedule below for particular topics). As children we get to ask hard questions about the things we struggle with. As brothers and sisters, we don't have to work out the answers alone. Typically, Zach will make a brief presentation on the subject, and the majority of time will be given over to questions and discussion. This is a time to ask the questions that have been bothering you. Dialogue is also a chance to invite a spiritually curious friend, who of course would be free to ask questions themselves.

Dinner and Prayer: On these evenings we will split our time between a simple meal in Olleman Hall and a time of prayer in the sanctuary. This is one of the many initiatives tied to our year of prayer. We are seeking as children to spend time with our Father, to pray for ourselves, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and our neighbors. The prayer time will be structured around either passages of Scripture or particular themes. There is no expectation that everyone will pray aloud in front of folks, so please don't let that fear keep you from participating. The church will provide a simple main course for the dinner. If you are able, bring a dish to share and dinnerware for yourselves. If not, come anyway and enjoy.

Missionary Support Group: If you know God has commanded you to love your neighbor, but struggle to live out that command, this is a gathering for you. On these evenings we gather to encourage one another as neighbors. Some of us need help figuring out what kind of love our neighbors most need. Some of us need courage to show our neighbors the love of God in Jesus Christ, and wisdom to explain that love in a bold, humble, and winsome way. Some of us need help

in praying for our neighbors. Some of us aren't sure who are neighbors are, or to whom God is asking us to be a neighbor. The point is, neighboring is best done amongst brothers and sisters. We will share stories—of successes and struggles. We will pray for one another and for our neighbors.

Our hope in Sunday evening gatherings, as in any time we gather, is to better learn to follow Jesus, our Savior and our Lord.

Sunday Schedule, 6:30– 8 p.m.

- 9/11 Dialogue: Who is God to Judge?
- 9/18 Dinner and Prayer
- 9/25 Missionary Support Group
- 10/2 Dialogue: What does God have to do with Politics?
- 10/9 Dinner and Prayer
- 10/16 Missionary Support Group
- 10/23 Dialogue: How can there be only one Way to God?
- 10/30 Dinner and Prayer
- 11/6 Missionary Support Group
- 11/13 Dialogue: Finishing Life Well (and helping parents do the same)
- 11/20 Dinner and Prayer
- 11/27 No gathering for Thanksgiving
- 12/4 Missionary Support Group
- 12/11 Dialogue: Questions about Prayer
- 12/18 Dinner and Prayer

Calvin Members Teach English Camp in Latvia



Callie Newton shares: At the end of July, Marc, Carol and Katie Andresen; Paula Hewitt; Skip and Laura Rung; and Aaron and Callie Newton once again made the trek to Madona, Latvia to teach English at a week-long camp. We worked alongside a team of Latvian high school students and interns of New Hope Latvia, the orphan ministry partnered with Bridge Builders Int. Between two sessions of English class per day, about 25 campers enjoyed food, games and worship. It was amazing to build on the relationships

we've made in the past few years and make new friends, share our love for Jesus and encourage the students!

Laura Rung reflected on the week and had this to share: Although Skip and I had not gone to Madona last year, I was very pleased to have two of the same children in my class as two years before (English skills some better, but not a lot). I carried with me a picture of the 2014 class and one of the students in the photo was so pleased that she got out her cell phone and took a picture of my photo. Another student had advanced to the most skilled group and we had quite an interesting chat when Carol and I bumped into her (a "bump" from the Lord?) on the way home from the store. We pray that these relationships will blossom into relationships with Jesus and the local

church. Thank you SO MUCH for your prayers and support.

Photos. Left: Each day an American leader (one of our team or a New Hope Latvia intern) shared a simple message with the group. Here Aaron, translated by camp director Diks Bortnikovs, talks about living within God's will. Latvian helper Kostjas looks on.

Below: While camp didn't have a formal theme, we did watch a lot of Veggie Tales, which most Latvian students hadn't seen before, and talked a lot about PERSEVERANCE!



Vacation Bible School Following Jesus, The Light of the World



Calvin was transformed into a large cave for this year's CaveQuest VBS during the week of August 8. About 45 children and many volunteers grew in their knowledge of Jesus' love through games, videos, music, crafts, Bible stories and yummy snacks. Many thanks to coordinator Mindy Aithwaite, assistants Rachel Eby and Vanessa Washburn, and everyone else who worked, donated supplies and prayed.



Uganda Mission Trip Report

By Judy Kraft



In July three women from Calvin, Judy Kraft, Linda McDowell, and Rachel Eby, travelled to Uganda. We spent a week at **Streams of Life Church** in Kampala.

We gave programs for the women of the church, for the children and teachers of Lighthouse School, and for the Asante Kids. Some of your mission funds were used to treat the children to a nutritious meal which

was prepared by the older students. Rachel led lessons and creative crafts for the children and there was lots of enthusiastic singing. Our lesson for the women, *How Christ Transforms Us*, was well received, especially when they learned how to make their own origami butterfly.



We traveled North to a place of refuge called **Child Voice**. It is a compound where girls who have been abducted

by rebels can be safe and recover. Linda had worked there in the past and was anxious to see old friends. We stayed overnight in a grass hut so had a taste of real African living. The girls learn farming and other skills to prepare them to return to independent living.

Thank you for sending us. We felt God's care in every situation. All of our travel went well and we returned home enriched and joyful.



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Return Service Requested

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Office Hours

Monday-Thursday, 8:30—1
Friday, 8:30—12

Sundays at Calvin

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