



Congregational Update

By Pastor Zach Washburn

Brothers and Sisters-

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus. The elders of the church (Dennis Schultz, Dick Carozza, Janet Magedanz, Ken Roth, Mel McCracken, Tim Eby, and myself) have a renewed commitment to lead us in a transparent manner. To that end, we will be providing an update in the newsletter after each of our meetings, which normally take place eight times a year. What follows is such an update on several subjects from our January meeting.

Janet, who serves faithfully as our treasurer, gave a glowing report on our finances from 2017. Due to your generosity, we are in an excellent position, ready for whatever God has in mind for us - from building renovations to new ministry endeavors. Thank you, and please pray for guidance! We know that God blesses us, as he has, in order to make us a blessing. We look forward to finding out how He will work out the second part of that equation.

Andy Van Arsdel, our new pastoral resident, is not an elder of the church, but attends elder meetings and participates in our discussions. One of Andy's areas of responsibilities is our various small groups and bible studies - which are a vital part of how we live out our calling to follow Jesus by being children, being brothers and sisters, and being neighbors. Andy updated us on his progress in getting to know small group leaders and his hopes for how to support and equip those leaders.

We, as elders, have a primarily spiritual responsibility. We do function as a sort of board for the church, making financial and other practical decisions. However, much more importantly than that, we serve as shepherds for the church (1 Peter 5:1-5). When we meet, we seek to spend the majority of our time praying and concerning ourselves with the spiritual health of the congregation. This year, we are adding a two day elder retreat to focus on praying for Calvin and growing together as spiritual leaders. Please

mark the days of the retreat, March 9-10, on your calendars, and pray for us during that time.

We are making some changes in the building. We have need for a larger nursery space to care for our growing population of children. So, a door has been installed between the nursery and the old library. The plan is to make the former library into the 'baby zone' and the current nursery into the 'toddler zone'. Meanwhile, the classroom at the end of the office hallway will be re-furnished so it can serve as a larger space for group prayer and contemplation. Please come and help us fill that space when we pray every Sunday morning at 8:30.

I try to tell you this often, but I never manage it often enough: I love being your pastor. Two and a half years in, you have done so much to welcome Vanessa, the kids, and myself to Corvallis - to make this our home. I thank God for your kindness, your hospitality, your humility, and most of all for your desire to follow Jesus. It is a privilege to follow him with you.

Kicking off Lent with Prayer and Fasting

Our plans are set for the opening of the season of Lent. We will hold a pancake supper and Lenten service on Tuesday, February 13th at 6 p.m. That service will begin a four day period of church-wide fasting, which will culminate in a prayer service and potluck feast on the afternoon of Saturday, February 17th, 4-7 p.m. We hope together to set this time aside and devote ourselves to seeking the gracious will of Jesus. Who knows where he will lead us?

Why We Fast

We take many opportunities for indulgence in good things. Our holidays, both religious and civic, are times of indulgence in food, rest, and time away with family. Indeed we should enjoy the good things God has given us, so these indulgences are appropriate. But how often do we make time for deprivation from good things? Almost never, at least not willingly. Fasting is rooted in the reality that the

good things God gives us can become substitutes for God himself. So, for a time, we deprive ourselves of them, so that we may return to God with all our hearts. Fasting is a tool of repentance, helping us remember what is always true: that we rely on God for all things, and we do not live on bread alone. Join us this season as we give up some good things so that we may gain the greater thing. Details on how to fast will be provided at church February 4.

Getting to Know ... Vanessa Washburn

Zach and I moved to Oregon with our 3 kids, Haley, Liam, and Lucy (now 8, 6, and 4) in July of 2015. Three months later we welcomed our Halloween baby, Claire (now 2). I loved our church family in NC and only a clear calling from God would tear us away from our friends and our family back East. When we first came to Calvin I did not want to like it; moving across the country while 5 months pregnant seemed insane. But after 3 days surrounded by Calvin families it was clear that God had a place for us in Corvallis and at Calvin.

Our kids have settled into Garfield school, and we love having our life centered in this one little neighborhood. It did not take long for Corvallis to feel like home and the people of Calvin to feel like family. God has provided in many ways for our family and we are so grateful for the people he has put around us to create our new Oregon village. Thank you to everyone at Calvin for being a part of that.

Because we have seen God provide again and again, we were able to trust him in the calling to become foster parents. After a few months providing respite (1 or 2 nights to give other foster parents a break) and short-term care, in September we were able to welcome Aidan, who is 7, as our first full-time foster placement. We hope to be able to continue to serve in this way for as long as God calls us to it.



I grew up in Atlanta, GA, in a home with my mother and older sister. We were blessed with opportunities to play music, go to the theatre (Broadway is still my favorite), play a variety of sports, and attend a Christian summer camp each year. My family started attending an Episcopal church when I was in middle school, but it was at camp that I met Jesus and saw how his followers carried a hope and joy that set them apart. I knew I wanted that, and it transformed my life on a 10 day camping and adventure trip the summer between 10th and 11th grade. In college at Ole Miss I grew in knowledge and started to teach and live out God's word. I attended RUF, a Presbyterian college ministry, and became a Young Life leader. I was also surrounded by friends who love Jesus. My first real job as a trip leader for Ole Miss Outdoors pushed me outside into God's beautiful creation to hike, camp, climb, and kayak. But the highlight of college was meeting and planning a life with Zach. We met at camp and decided to start our life together in the same small mountain town. We skipped our college

graduations to move to Black Mountain, NC, and prepare for our wedding the next weekend.

Photography is my most prevalent hobby. In my spare time I have enjoyed many things - playing frisbee, crafting, painting, watching movies, baking, playing games, and dancing around to Disney songs. I almost always want to have friends around and love when people stop by for a visit. These days most of my spare time is spent working my way through all the children's books at the library, planning girl scout meetings, or trying to turn ordinary moment into magical ones for my kids. I like creating themed birthday parties, making traditions of minor holidays, and soaking in the best each season has to offer. That said, if you come over and can't find me, I may be hiding out in the kitchen for a moment of quiet with a cup of chocolate milk and a piece of leftover Halloween candy. Other than my love of chocolate, and my tendency to get attached to too many things, my biggest weakness is that I tend to stretch myself thin, but as an extreme extrovert I love to be around people all the time. It gives me energy to have things to do each day and people to pour into. I am excited to put some of that to work at Calvin: helping drum up enthusiasm for the Asante program, leading Women's retreats, and with children and families as the Director of Children's ministry.

Congregational Meeting Report

At our annual congregational meeting on December 10 the missions team gave a brief description of the missions/people we support. Mel McCracken, Dennis Schultz, and Janet Magedanz were elected to 3 year terms as Elders. Maggie Polizzo, Audra Mote, and Ineke Loux were elected for their 2nd 3 year terms as Deacons.

Mark Edwards and Debbie Miller were elected to the nominating committee.

They will be serving with Session representatives Tim Eby and Mel McCracken, a Deacon representative to be determined, and Pastor Zach. Please keep them in prayer this year.

Janet Magedanz, treasurer, went through the budget. Thank you for your generosity! The elders will be praying and considering how to abound this year.



Calvin's Children's Christmas Pageant was enjoyed by many on December 23.