



## Congregational Update

By Pastor Zach Washburn

Brothers and Sisters-

Eight times a year the elders meet to pray for Calvin and discern how Jesus wants us to lead. Going forward, we intend to provide an update to you after each of these meetings.

Your elders are myself, Judy Kraft, Scott Leavengood, Mel McCracken, Dick Carozza, Ken Roth, and Tim Eby. Our new pastoral resident, Andy Van Arsdel, is not an elder, but attends meetings and contributes his thoughts. We met November 14<sup>th</sup>. Our discussions included budget for next year, the preaching schedule, and some other opportunities.

Our budget discussion was a happy one. Thanks to your faithful generosity, we are in a strong position going forward. We have the additional expense of a second member of the pastoral staff. Based on this year's giving, that should be more than covered. We also approved a new expense—\$3,000 for the year to be placed in our HOPE Fund, which we use to provide assistance to church members and others in need. As we read about the New Testament church, we see care for the struggling was a financial priority. This is a small step in conforming ourselves to that pattern. We've had a few opportunities this year to care for those in need, and we are

hoping God in his grace will provide us with more.

Your elders work together to decide what parts of Scripture we will preach on each Sunday. Our goal is to preach 'the whole counsel of God' by drawing from different parts of the Bible. We decided to continue the book of Exodus in the New Year, so we will be preaching through the Ten Commandments, which reveal God's good character as well as his will for us, in February and March. After Easter, our hope is to begin a series in 1 Peter, a short letter about our identity in Christ and the challenge of living that identity in a world with different priorities.

Last year we commemorated the season of Lent with an opening feast and an early Ash Wednesday service. Our theme was 'Pull a Weed, Plant a Tree': remove a weed from your routine that takes up space but is not life-giving, and plant in its place a tree that will leave you more rooted and grounded in God's love. This year the elders intend to continue that theme, while opening Lent in a different fashion. We will hold the same feast and opening service on February 13<sup>th</sup>, the evening before Ash Wednesday. That evening will open a four-day period of congregational prayer and fasting—a time to ask the Spirit to tell us what weeds we should pull and trees we should plant. We will re-gather on the evening of Saturday February 17<sup>th</sup> to end our fast

with a time of prayer, and a feast! We believe this pattern will best enable us to grow as children of God while we go through Lent together.

The last item we considered is still very much in the exploratory stages. Our denomination, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, partners with a campus ministry called Coalition for Christian Outreach. This is a group that focuses on connecting congregations and college students, so those students will be embedded in the local church. They hope to disciple students to live faithfully in their everyday lives.

Over the next several months we will consider the possibility of bringing a CCO minister on staff here at Calvin for the purpose of building a bridge between our people and those studying at Oregon State. We believe this may equip us to better love our neighbors on campus. It would be in conjunction with maintaining our commitment to Intervarsity. CCO and Intervarsity have successfully worked together, serving on campuses and in churches for the kingdom of God, and we envision that sort of a partnership at Calvin.

So, lots of good news! We look forward to what God has in store for Calvin in days to come, and we would be happy to hear your feedback or prayerful input at any time. Feel free to email, call the office, or set up a time to meet with me. It is a privilege to serve as your pastor.

## Christmas at Calvin

Saturday, December 23, 4:30 p.m.

Children's Pageant

Interactive re-telling of the Christmas story



Sunday, December 24, 10 a.m.

Morning worship service

No Sunday School

Sunday, December 24,

7 p.m.

Traditional Christmas Eve service led by choir



## Getting to Know ... Andy & Lauren Van Arsdel

Lauren and Andy met in Colorado in October 2012. They had both just moved there from out of state, Lauren from Florida/Texas (she grew up in Florida but took a travel nursing assignment in Texas right before moving to Colorado) and Andy from Arizona. We were both looking for a new church, and in addition to finding that we also found each other one Friday night at a young adult's group. We've been married since July 2014, and moved to Albany this October so that Andy could take a job as the Pastoral Resident here at Calvin.

When we came out here for the interview weekend in August, we were blown away by how easily we made friends with so many different people. We spent the weekend being shown

around the Corvallis area by a number of Calvin families, and the welcome that we received from them, along with the worship and biblical teaching, quickly confirmed for us that Calvin was a place we would love to call home.

In our spare time we bounce back and forth between being total homebodies and taking advantage of any excuse to get outside. We love staying in and reading books or playing board games, and when the weather is nice we enjoy getting outside and camping, biking, or setting up our hammock in a park and reading there. Our current favorite place to camp is at the top of the Rockies in Leadville, Colorado, but we are looking forward to seeing what Oregon has to offer. Lauren's go-to books are typically anything by Corrie

ten Boom, and Andy frequently finds himself dabbling in the works of people he particularly looks up to, from Dietrich Bonhoeffer to Tim Keller.



*The day we picked up our wedding bands!*

## Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday, Dec. 10

Plan to stay after worship for our annual meeting. Here is an update regarding nominees for officers.

Elders: Judy Kraft and Scott Leavengood are stepping down. Mel McCracken is nominated to serve a second term. Dennis Schultz and Janet Magedanz are nominated.

Deacons: Ineke Loux, Maggie Polizzo, and Audra Mote are nominated to serve a second term

Nominating Committee: Callie Newton and Marv Murray are stepping down. The congregation will need to elect two at-large members to serve alongside a deacon and two elders in nominating next year's incoming officers. Please consider nominating someone, and if you intend to nominate them, please contact them before the meeting. All nominees have the opportunity to either accept or not accept the nomination.



*(Far left) Many thanks to the Deacons for organizing poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary in honor/memory of loved ones this month. In November Calvin women enjoyed brunch and time focused on gratitude.*

## Missions Committee Update

In 2018, Callie Newton will take over leadership of Calvin's missions committee. The committee would like to thank Judy Kraft for the past several years of excellent service and leadership. Judy will remain involved with the missions committee moving forward as the team continues its work with our many missions partners.

Calvin's missions strategy is based on Acts 1:8, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* Our current partners include Friends of the Family, Love INC, Options Pregnancy Resource Centers, Acorn Outreach, InterVarsity (Rachael Johnson), Cru (Melissa Crabtree), Paula Hewitt, and Streams of Life Church in Uganda.

Missions committee meetings are open to all. Please let Callie know if you're interested in being involved or taking part in an upcoming meeting.