

THRIVE!

M A G A Z I N E

Issue #3

celebrating the stories and milestones of Calvary Church

October 2009

Calvary Welcomes New Student Ministries Pastor



Steve and Sarah Ott

We are very excited to welcome Steve Ott to our Pastoral Staff. Steve joins our team on October 5, taking over the ministries to Middle and High School Students. Pastor Scott Mauck will move into a new position working with adults at Calvary.

Steve was raised in Goshen, Indiana and earned his degree in Sociology from Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. He spent a year working with Apache Youth Ministries as a pastor/missionary on the Reservation in Whiteriver, Arizona and was most recently the Director of Youth and Family at Christ Lutheran Church in Wyoming, Michigan.

He is married to Sarah, who was raised in Cedar Rapids, and met Steve while attending Carthage. She is currently working on her Master's degree at Michigan State.

We encourage you to find Steve, welcome him to Calvary and hear more of his story!

SUMMER'S END CELEBRATION



Everyone gathered at Weed Park for the service on September 6.



Families enjoyed worship together in a casual atmosphere.



Jessie Gomez (left) answers questions from Matt Rivera (right), as he shares his story with the crowd.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CALENDAR

.....
october :: november :: december 2009

Date	Event	Description	Location	Time
OCTOBER				
4	LATTE DA	Coffee and Connecting for newcomers	Hearth	10:30 SUN
17-18	PRIME SYSTEM SCHOOL OF CHRIST	Kick-off weekend for KidZone CIA project and sponsorship of Liberian students	Calvary Auditorium	6 PM SAT 9 AM SUN
24-25	BAPTISM SERVICES	Celebration of Baptism	Calvary Auditorium	6 PM SAT 9 AM SUN
NOVEMBER				
1	LATTE DA	Coffee and Connecting for newcomers	Hearth	10:30 SUN
5	MEET AND EAT	Opportunity for Women to connect	Button Factory	6 PM
6-7	WOMEN'S RETREAT	"Every Day Matters"	Stronghold Conference Center	
21-22	CHARITY:WATER	Special Guest Speaker Scott Harrison, CEO of Charity:Water	Calvary Auditorium	6 PM SAT 9 AM SUN
DECEMBER				
3	MEET AND EAT	Opportunity for Women to connect	Pizza Ranch	6 PM
5	PARENT & CHILD COOKIE DECORATING	Fun for Mom, Dad and the kids! Space is limited! Call Suzie Norton 263-0806 to sign-up.	SMC	9 AM
12-13	CHRISTMAS PROGRAM	Preschool kids & Traveling Song and Dance Team perform in Worship services	Calvary Auditorium	6 PM SAT 9 AM SUN
24	CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES	Join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus	Calvary Auditorium	4, 6 AND 11 PM
26-27	REGULAR WORSHIP SERVICES	Join us for our regular weekend worship	Calvary Auditorium	6 PM SAT 9 AM SUN

KINGDOM HOOPS FOUNDATION



Pete Arentson

It started off with a prayer.

“Father, I pray that you would open and close doors so I may fulfill your plans and honor you. Ignore my selfish, self-serving requests and, above all, may you be glorified.”

From February through my eventual graduation from Iowa State this May, I prayed that prayer. I was about to be a fresh college graduate and had the world at my fingertips. I had a great resume, good references, and was full of ambition. I graduated with a marketing degree and was seeking a job working for a non-profit organization doing fundraising.

God has a funny way of working. When we seek and yearn to follow Him, He puts us exactly where we need to be. We just need to trust Him. With every door that I pushed on, God seemed to close it. However, I continued to trust that God would allow me to receive the right offer. Rejection was incredibly difficult to swallow, though. I graduated without a job, something I never dreamed of. Over 80 job applications and 5 interviews later, and with much frustration in my heart, I

still hadn't landed a full-time job. Then, God surprised me and opened a door that I didn't even knock on.

Jake Sullivan, a former Iowa State basketball student athlete, was searching for someone to join the Kingdom Hoops Foundation, a non-profit organization that uses the platform of basketball to provide athletic, spiritual, and character development for youth, both in Central Iowa and in Africa. I was familiar with his AAU basketball program but had not heard about his broader and more global vision in great detail. In addition to reaching out to the poorest kids in the Des Moines metro area, he was planning on building a school and basketball facility in Ghana, Africa, with the hope of giving students the opportunity to eventually study in the United States. He just needed help raising the money. Sound familiar?

Through a mutual friend, God allowed Jake and me to connect. On May 28th I met with Jake. I started with the Kingdom Hoops Foundation on June 1st. The organization's goal is to raise \$1 million over the next 18 months to complete the

project in rural Ghana which will include a dormitory, basketball facility, and eventually an orphanage. Plans for the project will be released October 9.

Throughout the project I will have opportunities to visit Ghana – something I'm thrilled about. I love to travel and see the world. More importantly, I am sharing my faith in Jesus Christ with students who desperately need to hear about God's love for them. It's an incredible blessing.

In all of this, God has opened some incredible doors. I pray that I fulfill His plans and honor Him.



Coming Home

by Angela Dieckman

A few weeks ago I boarded a plane at Mohammed V airport in Casablanca, Morocco, in a surreal haze. I was heading home. I had planned on being in Africa long term; I had planned on putting some roots down there; I had planned on becoming a vital part of an international school. And now I was veering drastically away from that plan.

The school where I was to teach is young, growing, and learning. Part of that learning curve is making mistakes and learning from them. We walked through the confusion over my position together with open, honest communication. At the end of it all, it turns out that another candidate already on staff (and already offered a position) was much more qualified for the position. She will be brilliant at writing curriculum, whereas I fully know that is not my area of giftedness, nor is it the same as being a good teacher. I can honestly say I am happy that the school is getting what it needs!

Did I need to go all the way to Africa to experience that? It depends on how you look at it. This has been a journey for me, not simply a three week stay in Northern Africa. God has shown me much about myself. I know better what my strengths are in relationships and in the work arena. I also see more clearly the areas where I fall short. There is nothing like intense team bonding in extreme heat to show you your shortcomings...it's out there on the table for you and your teammates to see. Most of all I've been reminded of my absolute need for reliance on our God who saves. Without Him, there is no hope for a better day, a better me, a better world.

“So what's your plan now?” I've heard this quite a bit and it's a fair question. But I don't know the answer. I'm listening and waiting on God. Some of what He is saying is that it's okay to put down roots here. He's reminding me that following Him, loving others, and living a righteous and honorable life are all hard things, whether I do them in Muscatine or Northern Africa.

JOANNE ARENTSON

JUST DO IT!

Don Gensing has no interest in sitting on the bench. He says the word "retirement" is not in the Bible.

At 81, he belies his age with an enthusiastic pursuit of life and love for people, as well as a willingness to embrace new adventures. He was recently licensed to preach so he could perform a wedding after the Quad Cities River Bandits' final home game of the 2009 season. (Only a little nervous, he says the ceremony went off without a hitch and he didn't forget the bride's name because he had it taped inside his Bible.) Not only is Don currently a chaplain for the River Bandits, he also acts as chaplain of the Davenport Gideon Camp, teaches Human Growth and Development at Eastern Iowa Community College (EICC), and organizes and conducts Continuing Education day trips for EICC. Don taught the High School group at Calvary for 25 years, and has now spent almost that long leading the Alpha-Omega class. He just doesn't consider the bench a fun place to sit! "God has allowed me so many wonderful opportunities in life," he marvels. "I truly have been blessed."

Don figures that over the past 50 years, adding up the miles for trips to Calvary Church from his home in Davenport, IA, would come to somewhere over 150,000, or the equivalent of driving around the Earth about six times. That doesn't factor in all of the trips he's made as a member of the Muscatine Red Sox semi-pro baseball team for which he's batted for 7 decades (He played 17 years as a catcher, and 22 years at 1st base, and as utility or coach for the remainder). The Calvary charter member, who coached at Davenport Central High School for 39 years, smiles broadly as he proclaims, "I'm the greatest promoter of Muscatine living in the Quad Cities!"

Don credits God's kindness and an irrepressible smile for getting him to Muscatine. His mother, Vida Gensing, chose him from a number of infants at a Kansas City orphanage back in 1928 because when she first looked at him, she claimed his face broke into a big smile. That's all it took for Vida to decide to take him home to 1544 Grant Street. Fred and Vida Gensing provided a loving home

where he learned about Jesus and His love and forgiveness, for which Don is eternally grateful. It was in the spring of the year 1938 that he personally accepted Jesus as his Savior. His family was part of Calvary Baptist Church as it was birthed in the 1940's. Don was a teenager at the time, and not fully aware of all the reasons for the starting of a new church – only that the truthfulness of the Bible was important then, and it still is important to him today.

It was during high school that Don decided he wanted to be a sports journalist, covering athletic competitions for the *Auroran*, the school newspaper, and away games for the Muscatine Journal from 1944-46. He even endured detention for skipping classes to report on a White Sox vs. Cubs game that was played in the Quad Cities in 1946. (Was there any question?!) He enlisted in the U.S. Army after graduation and was attached to the 970th Counter Intelligence Corps in Germany after World War II, in summer of 1947 through 1948. "We had access to many important documents about the Third Reich and that's when I became very interested in history and government," he says.

Don came home to Muscatine after his stint with the Army was completed, and started classes at Muscatine Junior College (now Muscatine Community College), where he played basketball in 1949 and 1950. Following graduation from MJC, he attended Iowa Wesleyan College in Mount Pleasant. He graduated in 1952 and began his teaching career at LeClaire High School in LeClaire, IA (now Pleasant Valley High School). Don spent 2 years there, and then took a teaching position in Wilton, IA in 1954.

1954 was a special year for Don, because he and his bride of almost 55 years, Donna (Silberhorn), were married in November of that year. They became the parents of three daughters, Vikki (Habben), Michelle (Shank) and Linda (Crum). The Gensings stayed in Wilton for 6 years before Don accepted the position of assistant coach at Davenport Central High School, where he also taught Government, History and Sociology. He was appointed head coach in 1961. Along the way he also received his Masters from the



Don Gensing, pictured above, has chosen Romans 8:28 for his life verse: "And we know that all things work together for good, to those that love GOD, and are called according to his purpose."

University of Iowa.

Don has been a much-beloved Bible teacher over the years at Calvary. He says when his family moved to Davenport, the class asked him to continue to teach until they found a replacement. Well, that was about 50 years ago, and he's still teaching! He enjoys the interconnectedness of history and government and Scripture, viewing current events through a Biblical grid, and notes, "The Bible is the only true indicator of what's going to happen to mankind." Don spends 5-6 hours a week preparing for Bible classes.

His accolades are numerous, the awards, seemingly endless. Don's basketball team won the State title in 1970; he has coached All-Stars, achieved over 400 career wins, been named to the Iowa Basketball Hall of Fame, served as Iowa School Athletic Directors Executive Board and named Coach of the Year on a number of occasions. Don is a man who has loved his vocation, given energy and encouragement to hundreds, if not thousands of students, and embraced life with passion.

When asked what motivates him to continue to take risks, continue to explore and reach out, serve, learn and lead, he flashed his warm, engaging grin and says, "You do it. You just do it!"

MEET THE BOARD: STEVE THIERING



We welcome Steve Thiering (pictured above) as one of the newest Calvary Leadership Board members.

Steve grew up in the Walcott area. He attended Davenport Central High School, and after graduation, Steve served his country for four years in the United States

Navy. He has resided in the Walcott/Durant area most of his life, except for a year he lived in Atlanta, Georgia.

Steve lives with his wife, Diane, in Durant, Iowa. Their children are Robbie, Becki, Jamie, and Koy. They have eight grandchildren; seven girls and one boy.

Steve's career has been in concrete foundation construction since 1975. His expertise in this field is evident in the beautiful country home he and Diane built. The two of them spent three years building the majority of this home themselves.

Steve had very little exposure to spiritual matters until 1975. He knew he had sins to pay for, but he did not know how to receive forgiveness nor did he know it was required. In 1975 he found a Methodist Church with a Baptist pastor and was confronted with the gospel. Here he found Christ. A pastoral change sent the family searching for a new church family in 1996, and they found Calvary. Steve has grown in his spiritual walk and has a passion for the

gospel, sharing it with people everywhere. He is excited and happy with his life but states he cannot wait to see Jesus face to face.

Steve has served Calvary with Top Gun, DivorceCare, Starting Point, and a 6 a.m. Saturday Bible Study Group. He has participated in two mission trips. The Guatemala mission trip provided the opportunity to remodel a church. He worked on the construction of a concrete foundation for a church in Nicaragua. Steve feels these mission trips developed a new world view in him.

Nate Orvis asked Steve to consider serving on the Leadership Board. He was nominated and appointed. He is excited to serve with the other board members in developing a plan to spread the gospel to the community and the world. He is honored to have the privilege to work with the pastors and the board, moving Calvary forward.

LANCE ALLGOOD DEAR CALVARY...

Greetings from Ames! My name is Lance Allgood, for those of you who don't know me. I suppose it has been six years since I lived in Muscatine year-round, but I still feel that going back to the ol' Shopko is going home. I graduated from Iowa State and now live in Ames, where I work for Cornerstone Church.

Cornerstone is home to The Salt Company, a campus ministry that reaches out to the students of Iowa State. It is a dynamic group that sees about 800 college students cram in the Cornerstone Gym every Thursday night for passionate worship and solid Bible teaching. I was a part of The Salt Company beginning when I transferred to Iowa State my junior

year, and I knew right away that God is doing something special here.

Right now many college ministries are feeling a general decline. In America, 4 out of 5 students who attended church in high school will no longer attend in college. Other ministries we have contact with mention a general decline in worship and missions. The Salt Company continues to be a sign and a wonder of something that Jesus is doing, because all of these trends of decline around us get flipped upside down here at Salt. Our kickoff event this year saw the most people ever get involved in small groups. The worship is more intense than ever, with the Salt worship band just recording



Lance Allgood

a full-length worship album of original songs that these college kids wrote. And our summer missions teams are sending more people to more countries than ever before.

It is such a privilege for me to have a front row seat for all that God is doing here.

Continued on Page 7

LOST IN MUSCATINE

I was lost in Muscatine for nearly half an hour this summer.

Paul had left to ride his bicycle across Iowa (RAGBRAI) and I've learned over the years that there are two ways for me to deal with that. I can sit and pout, muttering under my breath how dumb that is. (Can 10,000 people all be dumb enough to do that every July for over 30 years?!) Or, I can plan for this week of earned self-centered activity and look for things to do that will, at least, make the time pass more quickly if not prove useful in the long run to the whole family.

Lost down in the small print in a back section of the *Muscatine Journal* was a note about a piano concert at 2:00 on Sunday afternoon. Featuring works by 17th and 18th century composers, and performed by skilled, competitive-level pianists who do other things for a living but play the piano for the fun of it, it was also free and the public was invited. Ah, yes—just my cup of tea! If I remembered, I'd go—alone if I couldn't find a grandchild who'd humor me and go along.

Well, I did remember. I even did some research beforehand about how to find this place—out Mulberry Avenue somewhere just before the Bypass. So, OK—go out Mulberry Avenue almost to the Bypass, turn right and you're there.

Did that. All good. Drove to Diana Queen Circle—that's not it. Keep going further down this street of gorgeous new homes, all the way to the end of the houses and with no options left for turning because of large red and white barricades—and my destination clearly visible in the distance—across a large field of grass and weeds. There were other vehicles parked out in front of the building. How did they get there?

So I turned around, went back out onto Mulberry Avenue, drove just a bit further and made another right. Another beautiful neighborhood of modern, homey-looking condominiums—and a barricade just

before the street ended in a weed patch.

Next, I remembered another new street off of Mulberry that goes off in that direction. Perhaps there's a connecting road off of it? Moments later, as I pulled out onto Tipton Road and headed up toward the old Calvary Church building, (having spotted my destination building on the other side of the weed field but found no access) it occurred to me that perhaps prayer would be a good idea. Can I really be this dumb? I've lived in this town for 35 years! And I'm going to be late for the concert! I hate being late! Lord, HELP!



So I returned to the first place and tried again with identical results. This time, however, there was a man sitting in a van with a contractor's name on the door and his window open—so I inquired about how to get over to my destination. He looked puzzled for a moment and then assured me that I wanted to go to the facility on the other side of Mulberry Avenue. So I did, confident that I'd been given sound direction, and found a parking place just as one of the employees was coming in for work. I asked where the piano concert was—it's a large place and I was running out of time. She knew nothing about a piano concert, but said she'd ask. As another employee came out the door and she didn't know, neither of them thought my attempt at humor was very funny that

perhaps the only way to get to an assisted living facility is to have one's children sign them up!

Motivated now more by stubborn pride than a desire for nice piano music, I crossed Mulberry Avenue again, drove along the pretty row of houses and spotted a van ahead of me by about a block. I followed it. As it continued up the street, not turning at the cul-du-sac I'd already discovered didn't go anywhere, I began to realize my mistake. Because of the design of the roadway, I hadn't seen beyond the weed patch to where another road did turn off and wind its way over to where I wanted to be.

For the next hour and a half I thoroughly enjoyed the company of a small group, many of them sleeping, as well as the performance of two great pianists playing wonderful, majestic music and making comments about the composers that got my attention and made me think. Here's a quote from Franz Haydn: "God gave me a happy heart. He will forgive me if I serve Him cheerfully." (He was a young man learning from the work of J. S. Bach and writing his own stuff...)

Here's the point:

From the perspective of a "seeker" (someone who is seriously looking for an eternal relationship with God upon which to hang their faith), how does my life measure up? Can someone safely follow my lead through the weed patch of life, knowing that I've introduced them to Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life? I know that the folks I asked for help along the way had good intentions—and frankly, I appreciated the two who said they didn't have a clue more than the one who tried to make me think he knew what he was talking about—but I was seriously grateful for that dusty old van that unknowingly led me to where I wanted to be!

JODY LANDERS

I PRAY

The song has been in my iTunes for over 5 years. I've listened to it many times. I even wrote an article where I quoted it several years ago.

But today I heard it again. And wept. Because it has new meaning. It was a prayer I have prayed...and sincerely felt like I believed so many, many times. But faced recently with the reality, an answer perhaps...it made it hard to listen to. The song written to his children by Danny Orтели says this:

"I pray with all my heart, that you would be broken.

And in brokenness find God.

And I pray that you will fall, and in falling down,

you'll stand up to rise above it all.

I pray that God would break you as you grow.

Just thought you should know."

It's something I believe. That God is found in the hallways of suffering. That trials and pain produce great character.

And I would even say that above health, we desire Godliness for our kids.

Yet as we look at Quincy's future in particular, I kind of want to believe something different.

I kind of want to say, "just kidding."

Because darn it, the reality of those prayers/hopes for our children are painful.

And so tonight I wonder again, "Could it be that God's "no" to a healthy child prayer is perhaps a resounding "yes" to the intimacy with the Almighty prayer?"

I don't know.

We certainly pray that for Quincy and for all our kids...that in their brokenness they will find God.

That "great necessities" will birth "great virtue."

Abigail Adams, another mother, said this:

"It is not in the calm of life that great characters are formed. Great necessities call out great virtues. When a mind is raised, and animated by scenes that engage the heart, then those qualities which would otherwise lay dormant, wake



Quincy Landers

into life and form the character of a hero and the statesman."

Though I prayed it over all the kids...it's becoming harder to accept God's answer.

It's more difficult than I imagined.

Yet it is truth.

And I will keep praying it...and be there to walk with them every step of the way.

(And the immediate stomach ache the above declaration gives me is felt all through my body and heart. I am now going to throw up.)

LANCE ALLGOOD...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

I began working for Salt a year ago as an intern with the Freshmen ministry. Now I am full time as the "Global Ministries Coordinator" and the "Arts & Multimedia Coordinator." In doing Global Ministries (aka being "the missions guy") I am in charge of finding students who are interested in going, lining them up with summer trips and full-time overseas workers, and preparing them to go. This past summer we saw 35 students go to 4 different countries, including some of the most unreached places on the globe.

My other hat, the Arts & Multimedia Coordinator, means that I oversee a team of folks within Salt that wish to serve with their talents in graphic design, video, web design, photography, and anything else arts or multimedia

related. In our fast-changing world, it is fun to see how God is opening doors to do ministry in unconventional ways, whether through a blog or through video testimonies.

I am very grateful for the spiritual roots and nourishment that I have received from Calvary. I know that the leadership and care I was under for my years in Muscatine did a lot to set the course for me to now be able to serve here in a full-time ministry setting. My prayer is that the Lord would reveal even more of His love at Calvary. What a blessing it is to be partners with all of you in the gospel.

Grace and peace,
Lance Allgood

THRIVE!

... is a quarterly newsletter from Calvary Church. Our goal is to keep the Calvary family aware of the events and celebrations that happen around here. You'll also find a schedule of upcoming events for the next quarter.

As always, there are no "reporters" for this publication, so we rely on you to let us know what's happening in your world. In order to be considered for publication, news should be sent to joanne@calvaryonline.org.

Find additional information about Calvary Church at the Information Center in the Commons, and on the web at www.calvaryonline.org and unleash.calvaryonline.org.

SUMMER'S END SCRAPBOOK



Everyone enjoys the hot dogs and chips



Thumbs up on lunch!



Ready, Set, Go! The obstacle course was busy all afternoon!



The slip and slide mud pool....



Bounce!

Our thanks to Andrea Schmidt and Shana Cox for taking all these wonderful photos! You can find these pictures, and hundreds more, on the Calvary flickr site. Simply visit our webpage and follow the link on the bottom right.



Pastor Dan takes his turn on the seat...



...and in the water!!



The Climbing Wall is always a favorite attraction!