

December 1, 2024

The View

“Sirs, we wish to see Jesus.” — John 12:21

Welcome Visitors

Our goal at the Folsom church of Christ is to do everything according to God’s word, including respecting its silence. We are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church; we have no earthly “headquarters.” The five elders oversee this church and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily for the benefit of our own members, as we examine Scripture and seek to be built up in our faith in Christ. If you don’t understand something, please do not hesitate to ask the preacher or one of the elders. We welcome and appreciate your comments and questions on any issue and especially if you see or hear anything that you feel does not correspond to God’s word. We are here to serve; please help us do that.

We do not solicit donations from visitors. Please fill out a visitor’s card and put it in the collection plate when it is passed. See page 4 for more information.

Schedule

The Lord’s Day

9:30 AM Bible Classes

Auditorium: Ecclesiastes

Young Adult Class (room 12): “Acts, Sharing Our Faith”

Room 13/14: “Relationships”

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

“The Joy of Vulnerability”

Isaiah 53

Livestream at 9:30 & 10:30 <https://tinyurl.com/5f2cbm3y>

Sunday Evening Bible Classes @ the Building

1:30 PM, Genesis (see Grant Mulligan)

5 PM, Praying the Psalms (Auditorium)

Additional Classes

High School Class, 5 PM on Sundays @ David & Christie Posey’s home

Young people monthly meeting (middle school): contact David Sanderson

(david.r.sanderson@intel.com) or Seth Reagan (sethreagan@gmail.com)

There are several on-going Bible classes in the homes of members.

Check with David Posey, Len Baker or one of the elders.

2nd Saturday Men’s Bible Study: 7 to 8 AM

Bel Air Market on Bidwell in Folsom. “Iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17). Mentoring (Titus 2:1-6).

Wednesday 7 PM @ Building

Same classes as Sunday, 9:30 AM

Articles published in the View reflect only the thoughts and opinions of the author alone, not necessarily the editor, the elders or any member of the church at Folsom.

How we utilize the weekly contribution

“The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, ‘He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.” – II Corinthians 9:6-11

The church at Folsom is a generous church. This is reflected both in our weekly contribution and in those rare instances where we ask you to do more, to contribute to a cause not covered by the offering. Re: use of the contribution, we take care of maintenance issues in and around the building and, more significantly, we support the preaching of the gospel. In 2025, we will be supporting 15 men on a regular basis, along with others who ask for one-time support (we just sent \$10,000 to a preacher for his trip to India; we’ve supported this effort in the past). We are also active in supplying the physical needs of brethren wherever they may be. In one case, we send about \$3400 every month to Peter Mudenda who preaches and trains preachers in Zimbabwe. He uses the funds we send to buy food for the brethren in churches there. Below is his most recent letter discussing his work with churches there. — dp

“Beloved brethren

I hope and pray that you are all doing well. I am doing well and family is fine too. I really do appreciate your prayers and encouragement in such times of difficulties and struggles in my ministry. You have become the second source of comfort. We love you so dearly. May God bless you always in your daily endeavor. I also thank you for financial support which enhances my work of evangelism and edification of the saints.

“This month, I spent most of my time in Victoria Falls town working with brethren at Chamabondo congregation due to truck’s maintenance. I had mid-week bible studies such as Wednesdays, Thursday and Saturdays and preaching on Lord’s day. Wednesdays we studied series of lessons on eldership with Jim Allen, while Thursday and Saturdays we studied the book of Deuteronomy. It was important for the Chamabondo brethren to study on work, qualifications, selection and appointing of elders as a way to prepare men and brethren to develop those qualities. I also had opportunity to study and prepare lesson for preacher training next month.

“I managed to visit Mabale and Cross-Dete congregations on 15-16 and 22-23 respectively. At Mabale we studied on decision-making in the local church; how to restore an overtaken brother/sister?

And how to settle issues in the local church. At Cross-Dete we studied on spiritual growth (2 Pet 1:5-11), the importance of attending church service and how to settle issues in a local church. Mabale congregation is indicating signs of maturity growth in knowledge and zeal for the Lord. Every Lord’s day they have visitors and baptism every month. Last, Ndlovu is doing much teaching in building up the saints and babes in Christ. Cross-Dete still has 5 members and we will continue to evangelize and edify the saints.

Preacher training and radio programme.

“Lord willing, I want to have a preacher training class in Binga for 5 days (Monday through Friday), 9 to 13 December. Am kindly asking \$600 for preachers’ transport round trip, food and printing material for the classes.

“Binga community radio called Twasumpuka FM have granted me a one-hour slot every Friday evening to preach on their radio at a cost of \$60/week. The radio covers the whole district of Binga which has almost 160,000 population, likely over 100,000 people have access to transmission as it is the only radio in the district. Lord willing, I will start preaching on the 6th of December 2024.

Benevolence

“Brethren really appreciate your assistance; it is so helpful. We have 151 families in need. Amount needed to buy food is \$3370 including transport (this is the amount we sent this week).” – *Peter Mudenda*



“The New Calvinism”

BY DAVID VAN BIEMA, RELIGION WRITER FOR TIME MAGAZINE AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Now and then I read articles from denominational teachers because I want to see where they are coming from. Many of these men (and women) are active in community churches and denominations and embrace Calvinism as their theology. “Calvinism,” named after Protestant reformer John Calvin (1509-1564), has several features encapsulated in the acronym, “TULIP” (look it up for more information). The main, and most shocking feature, in my view, is the “U” in TULIP that refers to “Unconditional Election.” Simply put, that means we are *predestined to heaven or hell before we are born and there is nothing we can do about it*. Therefore, one who is unconditionally elected can never fall away (the “P” in TULIP, “perseverance of the Saints”). If you find those doctrines at odds with the Bible, you’re not alone. The article below is about “the new Calvinism,” a movement that began several years ago and has become the doctrinal foundation of some of the “hippest” young preachers and churches in the denominational world. Van Biema seems to be critiquing traditional Calvinism, but it’s hard to tell. In my opinion, this doctrine is as destructive as Catholicism, if not more so. The truth is that some of the most famous preachers (John MacArthur, John Piper, the late R.C. Sproul, etc.) don’t mention it very often possibly because it seems to fly in the face of logic and, more importantly, many texts in the Bible that explicitly say one can fall away from the faith (e.g., Hebrews 6:4-6; II Peter 2:20-22, etc.). If you have an interest in knowing more about Calvinism, let me know; I’ve got a lot of material on it. — DP

If you really want to follow the development of “conservative Christianity,” track its musical hits. In the early 1900s you might have heard “The Old Rugged Cross,” a celebration of the atonement. By the 1980s you could have shared the Jesus-is-my-buddy intimacy of “Shine, Jesus, Shine.” And today, more and more top songs feature a God who is very big, while we are... well, hark the David Crowder Band: “I am full of earth/ You are heaven’s worth/ I am stained with dirt/ Prone to depravity.”

Calvinism is back, and not just musically. John Calvin’s 16th century reply to medieval Catholicism’s buy-your-way-out-of-purgatory excesses is Evangelicalism’s latest success story, complete with an utterly sovereign and micromanaging deity, sinful and puny humanity, and the combination’s logical consequence, *predestination*: the belief that before time’s dawn, God decided whom he would save (or not), unaffected by any subsequent human action or decision.

Calvinism, cousin to the Reformation’s other pillar, Lutheranism, is a bit less dour than its critics claim: it offers a rock-steady deity who orchestrates absolutely everything, including illness (or home foreclosure!), by a logic we may not understand but don’t have to second-guess. Our satisfaction — and our purpose — is fulfilled simply by “glorifying” him. In the 1700s, Puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards invested Calvinism with a rapturous near mysticism. Yet it was soon overtaken in the U.S. by movements like Methodism that were more impressed with human will. Calvinist-descended liberal bodies like the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) discovered other em-

phases, while Evangelicalism’s loss of appetite for rigid doctrine — and the triumph of that “friendly, fuzzy Jesus” — seemed to relegate hard-core Reformed (“Reformed” operates as a loose synonym for Calvinist) preaching to a few crotchety Southern churches.

No more. Neo-Calvinist ministers and authors don’t operate quite on a Rick Warren scale. But, notes Ted Olsen, a managing editor at *Christianity Today*, “everyone knows where the energy and the passion are in the Evangelical world” — with the pioneering new-Calvinist John Piper of Minneapolis, Seattle’s pugacious Mark Driscoll and Albert Mohler, head of the Southern Seminary of the huge Southern Baptist Convention.

Like the Calvinists, more moderate Evangelicals are exploring cures for the movement’s doctrinal drift, but can’t offer the same blanket assurance. “A lot of young people grew up in a culture of brokenness, divorce, drugs or sexual temptation,” says Collin Hansen, author of *Young, Restless, Reformed: A Journalist’s Journey with the New Calvinists*. “They have plenty of friends: what they need is God.” Mohler says, “The moment someone begins to define God’s [being or actions] biblically, that person is drawn to conclusions that are traditionally classified as Calvinist.” Of course, that presumption of inevitability has drawn accusations of arrogance and divisiveness since Calvin’s time. Indeed, some of today’s enthusiasts imply that non-Calvinists may actually not be Christians. Skirmishes among the Southern Baptists (who have a competing non-Calvinist camp) and online “flame wars” bode badly.