

CALVIN COLLEGE



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Documentary play focuses on the plight of refugees

BY SARAH SHERMAN
On-Call Writer

Every year, West Michigan welcomes approximately 600 refugees from places such as Congo, Burma and Bhutan. These refugees are only a fraction of the 45 million displaced people in the world, forced to leave their homes due to racial, religious, nation or political persecution.

Stephanie Sandberg, professor of communication arts and sciences at Calvin College, along with a communications class last fall semester, gathered the stories of 112 local refugees. Seven of them have become "Grains of Hope," a documentary theater piece.

The goal of this documentary theatre is "to take some sort of societal issue, problem, or challenge, turn it into a piece of research, then generate a script," Sandberg said.

The refugee experience begins

with individuals fleeing their homelands. They settle in camps in bordering countries where they endure what Sandberg calls "the trauma of boredom." Not allowed to work and unable to move, refugees must wait to either return home or be permanently resettled.

Once relocated, finding jobs and learning English quickly become the biggest challenges. Many refugees start working 40 hours a week of hard labor after not working for 20 years. Once they have jobs, they are too tired to focus on learning English. "It's difficult and people get depressed," Sandberg said.

Some of the refugees' stories are dark, others are hopeful. The title of the play comes from the story of a Sudanese man who was taken by the People's Liberation Army, brainwashed and tortured. He remembers that "even though we didn't know that was possible, we still had this grain of hope."

Telling their stories has been

powerful for many of the participants. "Narratives happen in these little fractured pieces and it takes a while to build up into story. But when they can piece it together and see that there's a purpose and meaning to all of the suffering that happened, there is a huge empowerment."

Sandberg has developed a friendship with the Iraqi woman whose story is in the play. She spends each week teaching her citizenship material. Ultimately, she says this is what resettlement should be about: building relationships. They're "what sustain people more than anything," she said. "Service-learning is not just about the work, but it's also about the relationships you build in the community."

You can see the play on campus in the Lab Theater on April 11 at 7:30 p.m. and April 12 at 2:00 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.



PHOTO BY JOY-ELIZABETH LAWRENCE

The play will be performed in many locations around the city.

Senate responds to objections over picnic tables

BY KATE PARSONS
On-Call Writer

The purchase and installation of three picnic tables by Calvin's student senate has sparked online debates, a change.org petition

and a prank moving the tables to the center of commons lawn. However, student senate responded that much of the opposition was fueled by a misunderstanding of the motives behind the project.

The picnic tables were proposed in October, when a stu-

dent who worked as a summer research assistant pointed out that there were no shady places for students to eat lunch. Student senate began working closely with physical plant on the project, who suggested the library patio as the ideal place for

the tables' installation.

Contrary to original Chimes' reports, Senate had no plans to place their logos on the tables.

"We talked about adding plaques," student senator Colin Chesla said, "but it would have been about \$10 per table, certainly not the \$400-800 number that was out there. And when it came to the vote, the plaques were voted off."

But many students felt that installing picnic tables was not the best allocation of senate's funds.

"It doesn't seem like a wise idea to spend \$5,000 on a picnic area that is not necessary when our college is struggling financially," said sophomore Autumn Oostindie.

Sophomore Kelsey Veldkamp, who also worked as a research assistant last summer, felt that senate should put more funding into programs such as "Take a Prof Out," which gave students money to take their professors out to eat on campus.

When she came in for meal tickets in February, she was told that the tickets for that program were already used up.

"You can't tell me at one moment that you don't have enough money in a program that students appreciate, and then at the next that you have all this extra money to spend. I find meeting with my profs to be a really valuable thing. Picnic tables, not so much."

But student senate wanted to make clear that the money it used was exclusively designated for

funding student ideas and was separate from the rest of their budget.

Executive Vice President Josiah Sinclair also noted that the money could not contribute to Calvin's debt or general budget.

"Calvin budgets our money very carefully," he said. "If we had not used it, this money would have never gone to pay off debt. It would have either gone to fund student orgs or stayed to fund more student ideas."

But the opposition to the tables went further than just word of mouth. A petition protesting their installation picked up 183 signatures in the few days it was up.

"We think [Senate] really could have taken into account the student opinion because a lot of the people we were talking to thought that the tables weren't the best idea for the campus," said sophomore Andrew Harris, who started the petition with a group of his friends. "We didn't know that the tables had been bought at the time."

When Harris realized the purchase had already been finalized, he changed the wording on the petition to ask for a "more effective plan to improve our campus."

"Our goal was really to give the student body a forum in which they could express their views," said Harris, "And to show student senate in a respectful way that there is a lot of student opinion



PHOTO BY ABBY ZWART

The three tables are now situated in their permanent home on the library patio.

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Chimes is the official newspaper of Calvin College. The mission of Chimes is to serve the community of Calvin College in a variety of ways: we aim to reform, review, challenge and foster dialogue within the

THE OFFICIAL STUDENT
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LEGE SINCE 1907

Calvin's Got Talent expected to impress again

BY JULIA LAPLACA
Staff Writer

Get ready to be wowed once again by your fellow classmates! This year's Calvin's Got Talent promises to be a spectacular event. The show is on Sat., April 6 at 8 p.m. in the Covenant Fine Arts Center (CFAC) auditorium. Tickets are available at the box office for \$3.

The stakes are certainly high for the competitors who range from bands, a cello quartet, stand-up comedians, to a dance act. \$200 will be awarded to the "people's choice," as determined by an applause meter. The judges' choice for best act will win \$300 to be shared among the members of the act.

"In addition," promises Paula Englin, coordinator of weekend programming, "we have door prizes: an Xbox Kinect, iPods and headphones."

There will be a panel of

four judges, including Molly Bouwsma Schultz, lead singer in the local band Blue Molly. This band won West Michigan's local radio station's Jammies Awards.

Calvin will also welcome Joanne Baily-Boorsma, the editor-in-chief of the Grand Rapids Press's On the Town, an arts and entertainment magazine. Jonathon Chong, dance guild choreographer and two-time winner of Airband, will represent the student body as a judge. The fourth judge has yet to be determined.

Englin explains that because of their experience, these judges "will provide some feedback and suggestions to the performers as well as selecting the winner."

"The judges will be looking for creativity, ability to entertain and move the crowd, and, of course, talent — the basics of good entertainment," Chong adds.

The show will consist of four sections and each act will be four minutes long. Sophomore Daniel

Joo, a member of the Nite Life team, says, "there was a lot of logistical work to get everything organized and set up a schedule." Various members of the Nite Life team will act as MCs for the evening in between the different segments. In early March, teams and individuals who wanted to participate in the program had the opportunity to audition.

"We actually had an overflow of acts," says Joo. "We had 30 auditions but only accepted 20 acts." Joo explains that the various members of the Nite Life team who judged the auditions tried to select acts that would keep the show from being too redundant.

"I mean, if we had a show with seven amazing piano players I'm sure they would all do great, but we wouldn't want the show to be all about amazing piano players."

This year's show will feature many musical groups, "But," says Englin, "the diversity among them is very special."

Joo adds, "I think we did a really good job of picking a variety of unique talents, which is good because we want this to be an amazing show!"

"I was an MC for Calvin's Got Talent last year," recalls Chong. "I laughed, I cheered and I got major goosebumps when I heard some of the performers sing. Get ready, because this is one of the best events on campus."



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The show will consist of four sections, and each section will be four minutes long.

Calvin considers 'much smaller' core curriculum

BY JUSTIN VANDEN ENDE
On-call Writer

Calvin's Core Curriculum Committee is considering changes to the required core courses for the 2014-15 academic year as part of its regular re-accreditation process, possibly reducing the required core credit hours for incoming students.

Professor Carl Plantinga, chair of the committee, said that they are only discussing alternate models for core and that no formal presentation has been made.

However, there seems to be movement towards an overall reduction in core requirements.

"The model that we have decided warrants the most discussion is much smaller than the current model for credit hours," said Plantinga.

Also under review are programs for first-year students including Prelude and Developing a Christian Mind (DCM).

Calvin, which is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, is a pilot institution for a new model of accreditation. This process requires the establishment of a large-scale assessment project with Calvin deciding to evaluate its first-year student programs to fulfill this obligation.

The First-Year Committee, chaired by professor Michael Stob, was created for this purpose and has been tasked with assessing all the programs offered to first-year students.

Stob said that the current core curriculum is ten years old and that the First-Year Committee is assessing if Prelude and DCM are delivering on what they're set up

to accomplish.

"We've never really stepped back from either of those courses [DCM and Prelude] and asked what we intend them to do," said Stob.

Prelude is already going through some minor changes before next year. Director Kristy Manion is stepping down and the course is moving to the academic division rather than student life.

It is improbable that Prelude or DCM will cease to exist, but changes are likely.

"We are strongly committed to having a first year program," said Stob, while admitting that there were issues with Prelude.

"One thing we notice," said Stob, "is it's kind of one-size-fits-all, and if you look at student responses to what they're learning, there are vast differences."

Stob and Plantinga confirmed that many faculty have expressed their discontent with the current first-year programs, and Stob

confirmed that there will be a listening forum for students and faculty where they will present and receive suggestions.

Picnic tables

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

out there that they may not have tapped into."

Other objections to the picnic tables pointed to an initiative to move the community garden from the Knollcrest East apartments to the main campus. Proponents of the community garden applied to senate for funding from senate's \$10k Initiative, and many students voiced preference for the garden over the tables.

"On March 4, we voted to go ahead with the picnic tables," Chesla responded. "The community garden proposal came in the same day, and that night was the first night we had heard of it. We offered our support but the fact that they came in literally at the last minute was not helpful. They would have had much more success if they had come in earlier."

A prankster caused further confusion when he or she dragged the tables from the library patio where they were installed into the center of commons lawn, prompting rumors that that was where the permanent installation would be. As of Monday night, the tables had been returned to their intended destination.

After learning more of the information behind the picnic table installation, Harris concluded, "To be honest, I think the tables are fine. Now that they're bought, they're there, we'll make use of them. But I think this is a good lesson for future senators and future proposal that you can have this grand idea, but if you don't have student support, maybe it's not going to go over so well."

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'Calvin College Confessions' and 'Crush' go viral, college warns students

BY RYAN STRUYK
Online Editor

Calvin College Confessions existed for only 51 hours, but it accumulated almost 700 likes and more than 150 confessions before its owner shut the page down.

The Facebook page allowed Calvin students to post their "confessions" anonymously, drawing comments about everything from academics to dating to pranks to even illegal activity.

But after an explosion of popularity, its creator has decided to shut the page down shortly after midnight on Tuesday. Contrary to rumors on the page, Calvin's administration did not contact the owner to shut down the page, according to the owner.

"I never intended this to last long term," said the page's owner. "I think [Calvin shutting the page down] is inevitable if I keep the page up."

The administrator also said that pressure from his dorm leadership contributed to his decision.

Another recently created social media page, Twitter's @CalvinCrush, has also gone viral. Students anonymously submit their crushes, often using sexually explicit physical descriptions of the other students, who are mentioned by name.

Administrators of both pages agreed to an interview with Chimes under the condition of anonymity.

The idea for the confession page originally came from another school, and the page's owner wanted to know what would

happen if this page existed in a conservative Christian school setting.

"I was quite disturbed," the owner said. "There are a lot of posts that I didn't put on because I didn't believe them. I've only posted about half of [the submissions]." The owner then began wanting to use the page to draw attention to issues that students

I've read about Calvin. There should be a place where actual students can talk about their actual experiences, and being anonymous takes away that fear of shame," said the owner.

The owner hopes that the page will spark more intentional conversation about issues, especially depression, on campus.

"The number of depressed

the content of the site.

"I understand what it's like to be in college and have a rebellious spirit, but I want students to be careful and think through their actions and the long-term implications of things that could happen," he said.

Ellens said that acts that violate the student conduct code on the 'Confessions' page could

for concern.

"When tweets are sexually explicit about certain people, we cross over the line into the sexual harassment area," he said. "Someone's rash statement then has some serious consequences."

But the administrator of @CalvinCrush said that more than half the submissions are censored.

"There are posts that bully people and talk about people in very malicious or derogatory ways that I censor," the owner wrote in an email interview with Chimes.

"Moreover, if anyone ever feels that a post is too sexual or they feel uncomfortable, they can send me a message," the owner said.

The owner has removed two or three posts due to personal requests. "I respect people's personal requests and delete the tweet immediately," the owner said.

When asked whether the content of @CalvinCrush was harming Calvin's reputation, the owner of the Twitter feed said no.

But content isn't the only concern that Ellens has with the social media pages.

He also said that the pages represent a copyright violation: the @CalvinCrush page uses the Calvin seal, entry sign, Calvin Knights logo and even the Calvin College name illegally, according to Ellens.

"Those are all identity marks of Calvin College and are registered trademarks," he said. Ellens said that simply using "Calvin" in the name of the page would not breach copyright law.



The original 'Calvin College Confessions' page, pictured above, was closed on Tuesday, April 2 at midnight. 'Crush' remains active and operational.

might not feel comfortable having their names attached to.

"It occurred to me that I could change what people would hear or think about: who needs to be heard more, how can I use this for something constructive," the owner said.

Some students began writing about how their experience at Calvin has turned them off to the Christian faith, while others commented about their experience with depression.

"It's much truer than anything

people was really shocking," the owner said. "There are obviously a few people where it's very alienating and I think this page expressed this quite well. Maybe there's an opportunity for people to go to Broene [Counseling Center] anonymously."

But not all posts on the page have been innocent.

Tim Ellens, director of communications and marketing at Calvin, said that Calvin has received calls from families of current students concerned with

be investigated.

"Depending on the nature of [the violations] or whether someone comes forward, the college is obligated to follow up on those leads," he said.

And although the site uses a submission process that keeps posts anonymous, Ellens said students shouldn't be so sure.

"We can go to deeper measures using a forensic effort to see who is doing what," he said.

Ellens said that the content on @CalvinCrush is also a matter

Community garden hopes to move to a more central location

BY GRACE RUITER
Campus Co-Editor

After four years of successful gardening on a site behind the Knollcrest East (KE) apartments, Calvin senior Owen Selles hopes that the Calvin community garden will be moved to the center of campus, where it would be more accessible to the community. The move has received widespread support, though financial challenges remain.

When the garden was denied approval in 2008, it was planted in the current location as a temporary testing ground for the project.

While the garden has been successful in that area, the obscure location has kept the garden's profile low among students.

That is something Selles hopes to change by moving the garden to a strip of land south of Bolt-Heyns-Timmer Hall with higher visibility than the current location. And he's not alone.

The student Environmental Stewardship Coalition (ESC), physical plant and the faculty environmental stewardship committee teamed up to compose a proposal for the move.

The proposal is currently in the hands of the planning and prioritization committee awaiting approval.

Their efforts follow the recommendations of a report released by the college

"Our work has been in response to the campus sustainability report released this spring that encouraged moving the garden to

promote awareness and participation," Selles explained.

The ESC believes that in a higher profile location, the garden will be a "visible statement of our college's convictions about creation care, community, history and sustainability." Selles

"Students will be able to eat freshly harvested vegetables and locally-grown food could be served in the dining hall," he said

Many others agree that the move would benefit the Calvin community. Numerous organizations on campus, including the

the move, challenges do remain for the garden

"Right now, as the college is making hard decisions about the future of its budget, it is not a great time to be asking for funding for new projects," Selles acknowledged.



For the past four years, the Calvin community garden has been located behind the Knollcrest East apartments. Its organizers are hoping to move it to a more accessible location.

adds that the garden will also help make the campus healthier by providing fresh and locally grown produce

social justice club, student senate and the service-learning center have endorsed the project.

Despite popular support for

However, the financial difficulties are not enough to stop Selles and his fellow supporters from pushing for the garden's

movement to the main campus.

"We are determined to move forward and to 'strike while the iron is hot,'" Selles said

The move comes with an estimated \$9,000 price tag. Due to reports from physical plant workers of deer roaming the campus, the cost of the plan includes the installation of a large deer fence. The \$9,000 budget also factors in irrigation changes and the cost of lumber for the beds.

In order to absorb some of the cost, if the project gets the green light from cabinet, the ESC plans to launch a fundraising campaign with a goal of raising about \$4,000. Selles asks that students interested in supporting this effort contact the ESC by emailing calvin_esc@gmail.com.

"We will need lots of donations and volunteers to build and prepare the garden," Selles said.

The ESC was initially disappointed by student senate's recent decision to allot a large sum of its resources to the picnic table project. The supporters of the community garden had applied for financial support from the same \$10k initiative used to purchase the tables, but senate said the proposal came too late to fund.

However, senate may allot the \$1,500 left over from the \$10k initiative to the garden. Senate may also help the ESC raise more funds for the garden, and Selles says they look forward to working with senate going forward.

If all goes well, Selles projects that the community garden's move could begin as early as this spring.

Clique coffee bar fosters appreciation of local, hand-brewed coffee

Coffee bar features coffee brew series, coffee happy hour, extra fast Wi-Fi and local music

BY BRITTANY BEEZHOLD
Staff Writer

Through coffee beans, Hario V60 pour-overs and shots of espresso, Clique Coffee Bar (1600 East Beltline NE) is creating a brand honoring the roots and traditions of coffee within an upscale urban space on the northeast side of town.

“We [bring] amazing coffee to Grand Rapids all wrapped in an urban, upscale, technologically savvy and accessible location. That is the Clique brand,” says Kyle Ripley, co-owner of Clique.

The coffee bar is an independent, locally-owned and family-run business. Ripley partnered with his father, Steve Ripley, to open the business on April 16, 2012.

“[My brother] Chris and I grew up in Grand Rapids. This is my hometown. We were the original baristas [at Clique]. We abso-

lutely love doing this business. It’s really cool to work with my brother and my cousin Ben, who also was with us from early on,” says Ripley.

“Grand Rapids is an awesome place to be part of the small business world. It’s cool to claim it as our hometown [and] to really be a part of the community like

we are now. We definitely have a lot of pride for the Grand Rapids area and Michigan overall,” said Ripley.

As a family business, Clique incorporates more than just serving coffee to customers into their business practice.

“We are two-fold in the way we approach business — an in-front-of-the-counter goal and a behind-the-counter goal. We have customers for life and an excellence in coffee. What we wanted to do was create an experience that provided outstanding coffee prepared in a great way,” says Ripley.

Clique encourages the coffee education.

“In addition to being informed about coffee, coffee origins [and] coffee processes, we really care about providing excellent customer experience. One of the things we try to do is meet everybody where they are in their coffee experience. In America, we



PHOTO BY BRITTANY BEEZHOLD
Kyle Ripley (right) partnered with his father Steve Ripley (left) to found Clique Coffee Bar on April 16, 2012.

experience and knowledge of coffee and make informed decisions.

“After the morning crowd is done, we take off drip coffee and only do hand brewed coffee for the rest of the day. That is one of our cornerstones: the hand brewed coffee. [We want to] drive people to hand-brewed coffee just because it’s so much better. There’s no comparison. I’ve never met anyone who doesn’t notice the difference between hand-brewed and auto drip,” says Ripley.

Ripley has a personal approach and philosophy of coffee.

“My rule for coffee is not learn the best [method] and then do it all the time. It’s whatever is delicious. I think that’s the best rule to have because there are tons of methods. Everyone’s palette is different. There are so many different ways to do coffee. There’s no perfect way to do it,” says Ripley.

Unlike other coffee shops in Grand Rapids area, Clique offers a unique asset to their menu called The Ten Pound Series. Ripley says The Ten Pound Series is similar to a tap series at a bar. Clique purchases 10 pounds of a single origin bean. The beans are brewed according to their specific tasting notes.

Ripley says some have been concerned about their proximity to the three Starbucks coffee shops located near

Knapp’s Corner.

“To be honest, Starbucks customers are not our customers. We



PHOTO BY BRITTANY BEEZHOLD

Clique has a Ten Pound Series, which involves buying ten pounds of beans with a single origin and brewing them.

don’t compete. If they have the choice, [our customers] would always go a local specialty coffee shop where baristas care about the coffee,” says Ripley.

“We see a direction for this area. The northeast side is just starting to grow in popularity. There are starting to be reasons to come out here. And I think that is only going to grow,” says Ripley.

Clique seeks to become more involved within the community. “There are two things we would love people to know about us. We have the only coffee happy hour in Grand Rapids. It’s from 4-7 p.m. everyday. We offer \$2 pour overs, \$2 in house lattes, \$3 frappes, and \$3 smoothies,” says Ripley.

Also, Ripley takes pride in Clique’s Wi-Fi.

“We have the fastest Wi-Fi experience of any public Wi-Fi I’ve ever been to,” says Ripley.

Originally deciding not to put out a tip jar, the baristas at Clique decided to collectively give away all earned tips to local organizations.

“People tip us for our service, skill and care for the coffee. The Clique staff decided early on to donate all of our tips to help others. All the money that is donated is kept in West Michigan. We initially said we weren’t going to accept tips. As we processed

the creation of the company, we thought, ‘maybe we could do something cool with that money,’” says Ripley.

With the tips collected, Clique Coffee Bar is able to give back to the community.

In addition to the daily rhythm of the coffee shop, Clique Coffee Bar features local musicians from 7-10 p.m.



PHOTO BY BRITTANY BEEZHOLD

Ripley tries to push people to try hand-brewed instead of drip coffees, because “it’s just so much better.”

consume 60 percent of the world’s coffee. Coffee is important to a lot of people, even people who don’t know a lot about coffee,” says Ripley.

Ripley stresses the importance of meeting customers where they are in their coffee experience. They also encourage customers to try new methods, expand their

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Ripley stresses the importance of meeting customers where they are in their coffee experience. They also encourage customers to try new methods, expand their

Homeless students in Michigan increase by 66 percent in four years

BY JOSEPH MATHESON
Local News Editor

The number of homeless students in Michigan has increased 66 percent since the 2009-2010 school year, from 22,600 during the 2009-2010 school year to more than 37,500 homeless students in Michigan during the 2011-12 year. The Grand Rapids Public School district had 1,199 homeless students during the 2010-2011 school year, or about 7 percent of total students, according to the Michigan Department of Education.

Even this count may be lower than the actual number, as many homeless families choose not to report their position.

Homelessness often negatively affects the grades of students.

“Sleeping in a warm place, having something to eat; these are often priorities for the homeless. Is it any wonder that schoolwork and lessons might be of a lesser priority?” asks Mike Barlow, curriculum director and liaison officer for the Hazel Park school district, rhetorically.

Homeless students are defined by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as being students without “a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.” This includes students

in public places like churches.

Homeless students include people like Molly and Marissa Goudeseune, 15 and 13, who live with separate friends since their father lost his job as a financial

analyst, and whose excellent grades are slipping.

But despite the large rise in homeless students in Michigan, the amount of federal funding for assistance of the homeless, under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, has not increased, so the amount of funding available per student has dropped.

The state receives \$2.3 million from the federal government each year, but the rise of homeless students means that instead of about \$40 per student per year, Michigan only receives \$21 per student per year for 2012-13, and the amount of funding will be cut 5 percent for 2013-2014 due to the budget sequester.

Each school district has a liaison to identify and assist homeless students, but it can often be difficult to identify homeless students.

“I don’t know of any other students who are homeless, but I’m guessing that there are a few in a similar situation,” said Molly Goudeseune.

Nationally, more than a million students are homeless, and the situation for homeless students in Michigan is not likely to improve in the near future, especially with budget cuts due to sequestration.

Hatty Ligon, homeless coordinator for the Farmington Public School district, summarizes the problem: “Homeless families exist everywhere — even living next door as your neighbor.”



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1,199 students in the Grand Rapids Public School system are homeless. That constitutes about 7 percent of students total, and includes many students from higher-income neighborhoods.

who are staying in other people’s houses, couch-surfing, or staying

analyst, and whose excellent grades are slipping.

so the amount of funding available per student has dropped.

Kim Jong-un's North Korea ramps up threats

BY RACHEL HEKMAN
Staff Writer

Kim Jong-un, self-stylized “supreme leader” of North Korea since late 2011, has made it very clear that he intends to follow in his father's footsteps and establish North Korea as the enemy of the West.

In January 2013, just over a year after Kim Jong-il's death, Kim Jong-un's administration began openly testing nuclear weapons, part of an expansion of Korean military technology that the New York Times describes as “increasingly sophisticated.” While previous estimates suggested that North Korea's weapons technology was outdated and that it would be at least three years before North Korean missiles could reach beyond Hawaii, American intelligence officials now fear that North Korea's long-range rockets will soon be capable of making contact with the continental United States.

“We do not hide that a variety of satellites and long-range rockets which will be launched by [North Korea] one after another and a nuclear test of higher level will target against the United States, the sworn enemy of the Korean people,” read the North Korean government's official statement on Jan. 24.

On March 8, Kim Jong-un's government declared North Korea's 60-year armistice with South Korea to be over, officially entering both nations into a state of war and unofficially reigniting the Korean War that ended in an

American-sponsored cease-fire in 1953.

On March 29, Kim Jong-un issued an official statement on the North Korean news network KCNA, saying that “the time has come to settle accounts with the

military bases in the operational theatres in the Pacific, including Hawaii and Guam and those in South Korea.”

Later that day, KCNA broadcast footage of a rally in Pyongyang involving “tens of

Korea as well, including: ‘Let's rip the puppet traitors to death!’”

In response to the threats, the U.S. military has been conducting training exercises on the west coast and in collaboration with the South Korean military. The

Guardian reported that two nuclear-capable B-2 stealth jets flew from the U.S. to South Korea and back “in what appeared to be the first exercise of its kind, designed to show America's ability to conduct long-range, precision strikes ‘quickly and at will.’”

“(North Korea) will achieve nothing by threats or provocations, which will only further isolate North Korea and undermine international efforts to ensure peace and stability in Northeast Asia,” said the South Korea-based U.S. military in a statement released Sunday. The same day, the military deployed two F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jets from Japan to Osan Air Base in South Korea to participate in joint drills with the South Korean military.

On Monday, the North Korean parliament “unanimously ad-

opted an ordinance that provides for giving nuclear weapons greater prominence in the defence of the country,” according to KCNA. The ruling Workers' Party Central Committee stated that nuclear weapons are “the nation's life.”

The United States will enhance its defenses in the west by “deploying 14 additional Ground-Based Interceptors (GBIs) at Ft. Greely, Alaska,” Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced on March 15. “That will increase the number of deployed Ground Based Interceptors from 30 to 44, including the four GBIs at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

“These additional GBIs will provide a nearly 50 percent increase in our missile defense capability. [...] “With the support of the Japanese government, we are planning to deploy an additional radar in Japan. This second TPY-2 radar will provide improved early warning and tracking of any missile launched from North Korea at the United States or Japan. [...] “The American people expect us to take every necessary step to protect their security at home and U.S. strategic interests abroad, but they expect us to do so in the most efficient and effective manner possible,” Hagel concluded. “By taking the steps I've outlined today, we will strengthen our homeland defense, maintain our commitments to our allies and partners, and make clear to the world that the United States stands firm against aggression.”



Kim Jong-un has taken a hard stance against the United States and South Korea.

U.S. imperialists in view of the prevailing situation” by “physical means.”

KCNA went on to announce that Jong-un had ordered North Korean missiles “to be on standby for fire so that they may strike any time the U.S. mainland, its

thousands” of North Koreans, according to the Guardian. “Men and women, many of them in olive drab uniforms, stood in arrow-straight lines, fists raised as they chanted: ‘Death to the US imperialists.’ Placards in the plaza bore harsh words for South

day, the military deployed two F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jets from Japan to Osan Air Base in South Korea to participate in joint drills with the South Korean military.

On Monday, the North Korean parliament “unanimously ad-

Immigration reforms Filial duty fades in South Korea

BY KEMAL TALEN
Staff Writer

Business and labor officials negotiating on an effort to introduce a new immigration reform bill in the U.S. Senate, are very close to reaching an agreement. If consensus is reached, it will be the first major piece of immigration legislation introduced since the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2010 was overturned.

Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., is one of eight senators working alongside the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), to introduce an immigration bill that will include a guest worker program policy and path to citizenship for undocumented workers. The details of the proposed guest worker program are still being negotiated between the lawmakers involved and are the last impasse before writing of the legislation.

The main issue regarding immigration reform in the past is the implementation of a guest-worker program that will facilitate undocumented workers to work legally, and possibly gain citizenship.

“This issue has always been the deal breaker on immigration reform, but not this time,” Schumer said, who is optimistic about finalizing the negotiations.

The efforts thus far have yielded many improvements to the current onerous system; the legislation will introduce a federal bureau called the Bureau of Immigration and Labor Market Research, which will document workers and labor statistics to help facilitate efficient placement of guest workers. The legislation will also introduce a new visa program called the W Visa Program; the number of visas issued annu-

ally will start at 20,000 in the first year and incrementally increase each subsequent year, but never to exceed 200,000 annually.

The centerpiece of the prospective legislation is a thirteen-year path to citizenship program for qualified guest workers. “They will have a path to citizenship but it will be earned, it will be long, it will be hard,” said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., on CNN's “State of the Union.”

Marshall Fitz, head of immigration policy at the Center for American progress commented, “labor gets more data-driven accountability in the [proposed] system; business gets a new worker program that is more flexible than the current patchwork of temporary visas.”

Graham was very optimistic about the success the bill will have in the House of Representatives. He outlined his three goals of the proposed bill in an interview with Candy Crowley, host of CNN's “State of the Union,” saying, “we've got to write the legislation with three goals: to do the bill in such a fashion to prevent a third wave of illegal immigration from happening in this country; to make sure that the guest-worker program is available to employers who can't find an American worker, once you offer the job at a competitive wage; and turn our chain migration family-based immigration system into a merit-based immigration system with a family component.”

Another major effort of the proposed legislation is improving border security. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., and one of eight senators working on the bill, said, “we're going to have to have that before we go any further.”

A statement from the president's office said, “we look forward to seeing language once it is introduced, and expect legislation to move forward as soon as possible.”

BY JULIA GHO
Staff Writer

In South Korea, the traditional concept of filial duty has begun to fade. Many families feel less inclined to take care of their elders, especially when facing a lot of financial pressure themselves.

According to a survey done by Statistics Korea last year, only 33.2 percent of the 37,000 people over 13 answered that children should take care of their parents. The widening gap between generations affects how they perceive their role in the family: 36.6 percent of those aged 65 and older said that children should take care of their parents while only 30.3 percent of those aged 30 agreed. On the other hand, there has been a slight increase in the elderly taking care of their own living expenses.

As a result of abandonment by their families or by the government, there has been an increase in suicide among the elderly population. South Korea is the most suicide-prone country in the developed world, with an average of 43 people committing suicide on any day. This rate has continued to rise and is twice as high among the elderly.

In an attempt to prevent suicide, the Korean Suicide Prevention Center has continually placed its message, “Life is precious! WE can protect it,” on pamphlets, placards, and on its website. Although the Korean Suicide Prevention Center is trying to encourage people to seek help if they feel an urge to commit suicide, it is difficult to get the message across.

South Korean senior citizens are prone to suicide be-

cause a strong perception exists in the country's culture: less productive members of society are seen as less valuable. During the period of industrialization, South Korea had become so focused on prosperity that even now it is extremely important to be an economically productive member of the society.

“Our society has become extremely competitive in the past

short of the norm recommended by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, rendering them unable to support themselves sufficiently. South Korea's poverty rate among the elderly is the highest among developed nations.

The government has slowly begun to take some action and enacted a suicide-prevention law. Unfortunately, a limited budget curtails the effectiveness of the



By tradition, elderly parents are to be cared for by their children.

30 to 40 years of economic development, and we have turned into a society that does not care for our weakest members,” said Kim Dong-Hyun, a professor at Hallym University

The emphasis on economic productivity has changed social relations. Though it was tradition for children to live with and care for their elderly parents, many elderly Korean parents do not live with their adult children. Kim asserts that “the collapse of communities and the collective ostracization of elderly citizens are driving over the edge.”

Furthermore, when the elderly end up alone, their benefits fall

law and its influence on society. Counseling services are also provided but rather than getting to the core issue that is causing the problem and trying to eliminate it, the services are more focused on intervention.

“I wish Korean society would operate under the basic premise that elderly citizens also have a right to happiness and a right to end their lives with beauty,” said Ha Jung-Hwa, a professor of social welfare at Seoul National University

Some have suggested that If the government were to increase its budget for senior citizens, it would mean more jobs, commu-

Detroit and the X Games

2014 and 2016 Mowtown Summer Possibilities

BY MAXWELL HOWARD
Features Editor

Imagine a near-future Detroit in which we had a summer bringing in tens of thousands of festival goers to see a mixture of extreme sports, film, and music events. While this seems like a far fetched dream, in reality, this is becoming more and more of a real possibility.

A plan proposed by Detroit residents Kevin Krease, 27, and Garret Koehler, 26, and financially supported by Quicken Loans, the city is attempting to attract attention of the ESPN X Games. Projected for the summers of 2014 and 2016, the extreme sports festival, the X Games, is gathering a number of possible cities to host their cities. Among these possible locations are Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, N.C., Chicago, Detroit, Fort Worth, Texas, Long Beach, Calif., Minneapolis, Montreal, New Orleans, Pasadena, Calif., Philadelphia, and, of course, Detroit. What is so exciting about this event though is much more than a new skatepark, it is a new flow of investment of both monetary and cultural value. In

terms of monetary value, the X Games is expected to bring 50 million dollars to whichever city it decides to locate itself in. In terms of the cultural significance too, Krease and Koehler speak of their vision to turn this opportunity into a cultural event somewhat similar to South by SouthWest, an event that takes place in Austin, TX each year which includes musical acts, food, and film.

While Detroit undoubtedly would like to host a global event such as the X Games, there does need to be the thoughtful question of if the city can even compete. As Krease and Koehler promote the bid through the means of viral media, the pair attempt to sell the city to ESPN by means of online petitions and teaser trailers of what the Detroit X Games could look like. In regards to these questions too, Detroit residents point to the aspects of the city which can simultaneously both allure and repel potential investors.

Indeed while many of the other cities have enormous stadiums which are often larger and more well kept than Detroit's, this can work to the cities advantage. It is precisely because Detroit is

less populated and more in debt that that X Games would be more able to use the streets that Detroit would be more likely to shut down. In addition, the space that Detroit has is malleable and well suited to the flexible planning. Referring to this space Deane Swanson, senior director of content strategy for the Global X Games, speaks to the nature of the festival by saying "We need options, we need flexibility. The sports we're offering today, I guarantee you by the time this event comes around they're going to change. We have to adjust and the city needs to adjust."

At the same time, the attraction, and even "the hipness", of Detroit can be vividly seen in the rising popularity of "ruin porn," a style of photography that centers on the fallen and decrepit buildings of unkempt cities. In this, young crowds can often be aesthetically attracted while the investors can be deterred from spending their money in such an environment.

The selected city will be announced at the end of April by ESPN as Kreaser and Koehler collect signatures for Detroit X Games at their website <http://www.xgamesdetroit.com/>



“ With both Garrels and Mason Jar Music, there is a high attention given to craft, making each artist quite worthy to highlight during FFM. ”

Jacqueline Ristola, “Josh Garrels”

Festival of Faith and Music Preview

Andrew Bird

This past summer I found myself on a 2,000-mile road trip with a middle-aged woman whom I did not know well. Of course road trips mean listening to music, and lots of it, so, what to choose? She played her Irish jigs, and I was disinterested in the spellbinding repetition. She had never heard of Radiohead, and couldn't sit comfortably after two songs. I thought we hit a point of no agreement until I spotted Andrew Bird on my iPod. I pressed play on 2001's “The Swimming Hour,” and peace was made. She was interested in his traditional violin technique, while I was moved by his flowing arrangements. We steadily listened through each of his records and soon we were both singing along. Bird possesses the rare ability to comfortably reflect a world of traditions in a four-minute pop song.

Fresh out of college, Bird began his recording career with “Music of Hair,” showcasing his violin skills and his fascination with American and European folk traditions, as well as jazz and blues. After forming the band “Andrew Bird's Bowl of Fire,” Bird released three consecutive albums that were seemingly written by an early-twentieth century globetrotter. The songs aren't just influenced by the sounds of folk, pre-war jazz, gospel, Latin, zydeco and rock. They seem to be straight adaptations of traditional tunes. This was an emotional rebellion from Bird's academic training that stressed the intellectual side of music making. Bird embraced improvisation,

contradicting the values of his classical music education.

With concert audiences capping at 40, Bird took his first solo gig. Reluctant to perform alone, Bird experimented with a looping station, whistled on stage for the first time, and after a great response he realized that there was a new future for his career. Recording and performing solo, Bird indulged simplicity. With his next three records, Bird focused his songwriting and arrangements on an indie-folk sound and embraced studio production. In turn, “Armchair Apocrypha” managed to reach 76 on the Billboard 200 and was accompanied by rave reviews. 2009's “Noble Beast” maintained Bird's audience while displacing his influences more literally than the previous successes. 2012's “Break it Yourself” and “Hands of Glory” take that idea even further, returning to the Latin and bluegrass sounds of Bird's early work.

Bird's manager, Andrea Troolin, writes, “In his first couple of albums, you can hear a lot

of his influences. I think it was a matter of him getting that out of his system in some ways and

“Danse Carribe” from 2012's “Break it Yourself.” The song introduces a swung folk verse,

recent work is an adventure of sorts.

While some artists' lyrics are directly confessional, and others' claim no reason behind the text, Bird finds a middle-ground between the two approaches. Bird doesn't deny the personal depth of his lyrics, but has explained that he looks to keep the meanings of his songs private. He designs the lyrics intentionally, in part to protect his privacy and also for own sanity, considering the rate at which he performs. Mixing meaning into obscure and veiled lyrics, Bird manages to “forget” the original intent of the text, identifying new meaning in the lyrics, as if he did not possess the mind and heart that composed them. While this perspective makes the artist appear especially private, it is interesting that Bird admits that there actually is reason and personal thought behind his text. This compares with the many artists who deny that any statements are made through their art.

Bird's text reminds us that words and music can have meaning without being limited to only one meaning. It is in this space that reflection can flourish and questions can be nourished.

Andrew Bird will perform as part of the Festival of Faith and Music on Friday, April 12.

By Michael Bass



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

figuring out what an Andrew Bird song sounds like.” As much as Bird's early career was based on replication, he has recently managed to formulate a distinct sound. Bird has found a way of sneaking anything from the sounds of 1930's jazz to southern gospel into what may sound like a hip indie-rock track. Look at

moves to a contextually obscure Caribbean-style breakdown with complicated rhythms, and then begins a double-stop violin solo, a sound reminiscent of bluegrass. Bird has found a way to intertwine numerous cultural references ... only to produce something that sounds entirely unique. Listening to Bird's most

Josh Garrels

Josh Garrels isn't a new face to Calvin, or unpopular either. At last year's Festival of Faith and Writing, popular demand moved the Josh Garrels show from the Recital Hall to the main auditorium. Closing his set with hip-hop-folk fusion “The Resistance,” he remarked whether the song deserved to be played in such a grand room. Mostly assuredly, the song, and his work as a whole, is well worth the enthusiasm.

Garrels has grown from the relatively unknown folk artist whose has quietly put out six albums in the last ten years. His most recent full release, “Love & War & the Sea In-Between,” garnered considerably more press, with “Christianity Today” naming it the best album of 2011. And in true indie spirit, Garrels gave his album away from free for a full year, with its successor, “Love & War: B Sides & Remixes,” now free as well. Both albums illustrate everything unique about Garrels as an artist, distinguishing himself with the ability to work in different music styles and poetic lyricism. Much like Gungor, Josh Garrels is raising the bar for music with strong Christian themes.

Garrels appropriates various musical styles effectively in his work, making “Love & War” a diverse listening experience. Besides his folk roots, Garrels ventures in various musical styles from rap on “The Resistance,” to eastern European sounding

strings on “Sailor's Waltz.” It not only adds flavor to the album, but uses the music to reflect various subjects of the songs. Garrels uses the direct and socially conscious nature of rap to address broken systems:

“I was born into a system constructed for failure/It's a sinking ship manned by drunken sailors/

War” also has traceable, overlying metaphors of the flame, the anchor and the sea representing God's presence, his strength, and the chaotic world around us, respectively. Leaning away from the current trend of albums becoming merely a collection of singles, the album is instead cohesive, a meditation on seeking the divine amidst the chaos and brokenness of our world. It's these poetical traits that perhaps best distinguishes Garrels from other artists by examining the world through a Christian lens in ways seldom seen in most popular music.

Working with such rich material, Mason Jar Music has plenty to work with. A collective of audio-visual artists working to present organic performances

in unique settings and spaces, they've recently made remixes and new arrangements of his songs of his latest songs. Their most prominent collaboration has been “The Sea In Between,” a film of live performances of Garrels and Mason Jar on the beautiful outdoors of Mayne Island, British Columbia. With highly skilled musicians, Mason Jar remixed and rearranged Garrels' songs “Proclamation” and “White Owl,” adding new layers of texture and movement to each piece. With both Garrels and Mason Jar Music, there is a high attention given to craft, making each artist quite worthy to highlight during FFM.

Josh Garrels and Mason Jar Music will be performing in the CFAC on Sat., April 13. Kenyon Adams will open the show at 8 p.m.

By Jacqueline Ristola



JOSHGARRELS.COM

My rest is a weapon against the oppression/Of man's obsession to control things/Look at the long line of make believe kings/The lord of the flies wants you to kiss his ring/Follow new rules with invisible strings/And become a puppet in the diabolical scheme/How do good men become part of the regime/They don't believe in resistance.”

Garrels explores styles while using them to effectively illustrate his ideas, a process that ultimately uniquely marks his music as his own.

But Garrels is also a poet with a keen sense of rhyme and metaphor. Tracks such as “The Resistance” and “Farther Along” illustrate not only eloquence in his prose (three years in theological training likely helps), but some remarkable internal rhyme as well, songwriting you rarely see in contemporary music. “Love &

The Welcome Wagon

If you've heard anything by Sufjan Stevens, then this music from his childhood friend, Vito Aiuto and his wife Monique, will not surprise you. Using the tones and textures that Stevens has perfected, The Welcome Wagon takes on a more bluegrass and Americana sound. As a Presbyterian pastor, the music and lyrics attempt to make an escape from what is labeled “Contemporary Christian Music.”

The Welcome Wagon's first album, “Welcome to the Welcome Wagon,” was produced by Sufjan Stevens, and was released at the end of 2008. Their 2012 release, “Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices,” is a collection of original songs (and a few covers, including David Crowder's “Remedy”), taking up more obscure and difficult parts of the Bible and Christianity and singing them with an indie-folk/Americana sound.

Take the first track, “I'm Not Fine.”

“I'm not fine/And you're not fine/And we're not fine together (dear)/I told you I was sorry/Are you sure that

it's enough?”

The Christian community can often fall into this “fine” theology. That we are fine as we are, not broken people in need of a savior, and not a band-aid Jesus either.

On “My God, My God, Parts 1 & 2,” they set the last words of



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Christ to gentle, sorrowful music.

While The Welcome Wagon sing toward hope, they don't arrive there without a good hard look at the pain and suffering in the world and the lamentable human condition that the fall has brought about.

The Welcome Wagon will perform in the CFAC auditorium on Thursday, April 11. Andrew Rose Gregory will open the show at 8 p.m. They will also lead worship in chapel on Friday, April 12.

By Greg Veltman

Calvin designated a ‘Tree Campus USA’

BY GENEVA LANGELAND
Staff Writer

Calvin’s arboreal residents reached celebrity status earlier this month as Calvin College became Michigan’s third school to receive recognition as a tree-friendly campus.

The recognition comes through a program called “Tree Campus USA,” launched in 2008 as a partnership between the Arbor Day Foundation and Toyota. The initiative honors colleges and universities that commit to mindfully managing campus forests and facilitating ecological awareness and action in their campus communities.

The program landed on Calvin’s radar several years ago, after faculty members Dave Warners and Gail Gunst Heffner attended a Tree Campus USA workshop at a conference. Biology professor Warners had already been heavily involved in campus sustainability issues alongside Heffner, Calvin’s director of community engagement. Intrigued, they pitched the idea to Bob Speelman, a certified arborist and Calvin’s supervisor of landscape operations at the physical plant.

This wasn’t the first time Calvin’s trees had been in the spotlight. In 2010, Warners teamed up with geography professor Jason VanHorn to orchestrate a campus tree inventory. Using data collected by Warners’ and Van Horn’s students, then-sophomore Owen Selles spent summer 2011 generating a searchable online tree map (gis.calvin.edu/trees/). An attempt toward tree-friendly recognition seemed a logical next stage.

In spring 2012, Heffner, Speelman and Warners recruited other interested parties and launched a campus tree committee. The committee played dual roles by addressing future steps toward Calvin’s Tree Campus recognition — and by being that first step.

In addition to creating a campus tree committee, Calvin had to meet four other goals: developing a tree management plan, allocating budget funds to the tree program, organizing annual Arbor Day events and coordinating relevant service-learning projects for students and faculty.

The tree committee members lost no time in fulfilling the

third and fourth requirements. They turned to the Plaster Creek Stewards, a collection of Calvin and Grand Rapids community members dedicated to restoring the ailing local water body known as Plaster Creek.

Heffner is a member of the Plaster Creek Stewards leadership team. She recounted that, in spring 2012, “we focused [our] spring event on the importance of trees for a healthy watershed” in honor of Arbor Day — and in compliance with the Tree Campus guidelines. “Then, one option for participants to choose from during the restoration component of the spring event was tree planting,” she continued.

When the tree management plan and budget were complete, the tree committee submitted their nomination to the Tree

scholastic peers. Following the University of Michigan and Western Michigan University, Calvin is the third school in the state to receive the Tree Campus designation.

“It is public recognition that the people at Calvin are intentional about taking care of the trees on their campus,” said Warners. “In this way, it provides applied evidence that we do want to take our stewardship responsibilities seriously.”

Aside from being tied to a Christian Reformed worldview, those stewardship responsibilities translate to real-time campus benefits. Healthy trees, said Speelman, “provide oxygen, sequester carbon, intercept stormwater, and lower building and parking lot temperature.” They also buffer

wind patterns, provide excellent climbing opportunities and are much more interesting to look at than the average red-brick wall.

And they’re everywhere.

With more than 3,500 trees, “Calvin’s campus can really be seen as a park,” said Speelman. “We have the opportunity to plant large trees that often grow unimpeded for years to come. I was told once that, at best, myself and [Calvin’s ground crews] will only care for some trees for a third or less of their lifespan.”

The designation carries ideological significance, too. “I would hope it might cause students to think a little differently about the trees they pass by everyday,” commented Warners. “These are not simply left overs that someone didn’t get around to cutting down, or potential resources defined by board feet. They add beauty and texture to our place ... many of them have important historical or ecological significance.”

To honor Calvin’s Tree Campus USA designation, a celebration will be held during the Calvin Environmental Assessment Program’s spring poster session on May 8 at 4:30 p.m. At the poster session, Mayor George Heartwell will present the keynote speech on “Reaching New Levels of Sustainability for Grand Rapids.”

Campus USA program, recommending that Calvin be considered for recognition. On March 1, 2013, the committee’s work paid off, and Calvin received official recognition from Tree Campus USA.

Calvin’s Tree Campus designation should require little annual upkeep. Much of the legwork will come from Speelman’s coworkers at the physical plant. “Continuing to be a Tree Campus will not be difficult now that all the processes are in place,” said Speelman. Warners added, “It’s pretty much just making sure we have an event each year and keeping the plan updated and the committee running.”

The Tree Campus designation allows Calvin to showcase the positive tree management plans already in place at the Physical Plant. With increased awareness of the campus tree care plan, Speelman said, “The Calvin community can be assured that all tree removal decisions are made with a wealth of experience, training and input from others.”

The Tree Campus USA recognition sets Calvin apart from its



CALVIN.EDU

Calvin’s campus is officially a good place to be a tree.

Rocket engine recovered

BY ANDREW PRUIM
Staff Writer

On July 20, 1969, Apollo 11 landed the first men on the moon, one of humanity’s greatest accomplishments. While most people associate the Apollo 11 mission with the module that landed on the moon, another piece of technology was integral. Until recently it lay on the Atlantic ocean floor.

This piece of technology is the F-1 Rocket engine. Capable of one and a half million pounds of thrust, an F-1 engine burns 6,000 pounds of rocket grade kerosene and liquid oxygen every second. The use of five of these rockets allowed Apollo 11 to be launched into space.

The “F-1 Recovery Project,”

heavily supported by Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos, aimed to recover the engines that launched the Appollo missions into space. On March 20, the several-year dream became a reality.

“We’re bringing home enough major components to fashion displays of two flown F-1 engines,” said Bezos.

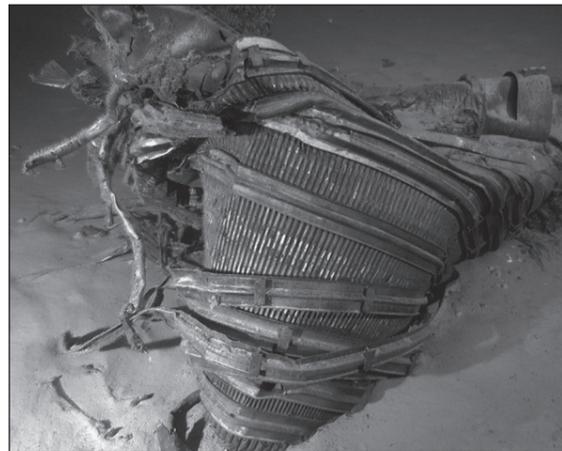
Recovery of the engine pieces was done using a number of remotely operated vehicles at times more than 14,000 feet below the surface. The vehicles were attached to the ship by fiber optic cables that transmitted data and power, power transmitted at more than 4,000 volts.

In a blog post made as the recovery project finished its ocean exploration, Bezos said, “Each piece we bring on deck conjures for me the thousands of engineers who worked together back then to do what for all time had been thought surely impossible.”

Bezos is not the only one to be thinking about the F-1 engines in

relation to historic space travel. The project’s timing is important because NASA recently began to look back at the F-1 rocket. NASA hopes to “use it [the F-1 engine] as inspiration for creating new advanced, affordable propulsion systems.” This initiative climaxed with the firing of a refurbished F-1 engine, that had been kept in storage.

NASA’s response to Bezos project seems to be overall a positive one. In a statement from Administrator Charlie Bolden, NASA said, “Jeff and his colleagues at Blue Origin are helping to usher in a new commercial era of space exploration and we are confident that our continued collaboration will soon result in private human access to space, creating jobs and driving



BEZOS EXPEDITIONS

A rocket nozzle lies on the Atlantic ocean floor.

America’s leadership in innovation and exploration.”

The 40-year-old F-1 engine parts have been sent to The Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center. More than 25,000 pounds of parts arrived on March 25, 2013. The Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center will take care of the engine’s restoration.

Bezos expressed his excitement about where the project will go next. “We’re excited to get this hardware on display where just maybe it will inspire something amazing.”

If things go according to Bezos’ plan, one of the recovered F-1 rockets will be put on display in The Museum of Flight in Seattle, and the other will be sent to the Smithsonian for public display.



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Month in review: March

BY JESS KOSTER
Sports Editor

Here are what we thought were the top six sports moments in March for the Knights:

6. The men’s basketball team made it to the Sweet 16 this year, before falling to that dreaded school known as St. Thomas. They lost 63-62. Calvin’s senior Bryan Powell led all scorers with 31 points. He was 6-10 from beyond the arch and 11-17 from the field. Powell commented, “The tournament was a great experience, St. Thomas was as we expected; very good. Playing them at their place didn’t help much either. That being said, we left it all on the floor and unfortunately came up short.” Powell finished his career with 1,009 points and 21st on the all time scoring list. Senior Tom Snickers was named Honorable-Mention All-American by D-III News and finished with 1,646 points and 8th on the all time list.

5. The women’s swim team traveled down to Texas for the D-III national championship. Seniors Kristy Kinzer, Libby Counsell, Rachel Colasurdo and freshman Michaela Rookus finished 10th in the 400 Medley Relay. They were .44 off from the school record and were named Honorable-Mention All-American. The same team finished 8th in the 200 Medley Relay giving them All-American titles. Senior Sam Klaasen finished 15th in the one-meter diving and was named Honorable-Mention All-American. Rookus finished 11th in the 100 breaststroke and was also named Honorable-Mention All-American. Coach Gelderloos commented, “We have finished higher at this meet on

several occasion, but for what we did with what we had at the meet ranks up there with the best of them, right with 2007 and our 4th place finish. We moved up a total of 46 spots over our seed times over the course of the meet, and all but one swim was a best time. Truly remarkable.” Counsell added, “Our team has had such a good attitude and sense of determination these past four days. It is amazing to see how fast we are swimming. Coach has rested us more than any other team that he has had, and it sure has come to show that it has only helped us swim faster and faster.”

4. Basketball’s Carissa Verkaik won the prestigious Josten’s Trophy which honors athletics, academics and involvement in the community. She is the second woman at Calvin to win this award, the other being Lisa Winkle. Calvin is the only school to have two recipients. Verkaik commented, “I am so humbled to have been chosen for the Josten’s award. The award embodies someone who I want to be known as. A person who is dedicated to athletics, as well as the classroom and the community.”

3. Men’s soccer Joe Broekhuizen was picked up by the Dayton Dutch Lions to play professionally. He left Calvin’s campus last week and will finish up his semester through distant correspondence. “This is a great opportunity for me, but a lot of stars had to align for me to get this opportunity,” Broekhuizen said. “Without the help from Coach Souders, my professors, my teammates and most importantly the Lord, this would never have been a possibility. I’m looking forward to completing my degree, and using all the skills I’ve learned at Calvin while I embark on a professional soccer career.”

2. Junior Nicole Michmerhuizen took second in the NCAA D-III indoor track and field national championship’s 5k. She was in the lead for the

majority of the race before getting passed in the last stretch. She was named All-American in this event. “I am really excited about becoming an All-American as this is something I have dreamed about and worked toward for a long time. I feel so blessed by the amazing support of family and friends at Calvin and elsewhere, and I am looking forward to the upcoming outdoor track season.”

1. The D-III national swim finals were nice this year to senior Libby Counsell. Counsell finished up her swimming career at Calvin finishing second in the 100 breaststroke and fifth in the 200 breaststroke. Placing that high gave her All-American honors in both events. She was also on the 400 medley relay team which took tenth naming them Honorable Mention All-American. Counsell commented, “It has been a blast finishing up my swimming career with all best times and doing it all with Rachel [Colasurdo], Kristy [Kinzer], Michaela [Rookus], and Sam [Klaasen].”

Counsell went into the meet ranked 17th in the 200 breaststroke. She shaved three seconds off her previous school record time over the course of the day. She was seeded seventh in the 100 and was able to finish in second. “We are considering ourselves the “underdogs” of the meet. We have continually moved up from our seed times and made some other teams take some double looks at our performances! We always say “last one fast one”, I sure did swim my last one as my fastest one! So did all of our relays! I couldn’t ask for a meet any better than this one. God has gifted me with reaching all of my goal times at my last meet in college. The four ladies that I am here with have helped me swim as fast as I am swimming.”

Hot Seat: Ben Kuiper

BY JESS KOSTER
Sports Editor

Jess Koster sat down with senior golfer Ben Kuiper. Ben was last year’s MIAA Most Valuable Golfer. This is Hot Seat:

Koster: How old are you?

Kuiper: 22.

Where are you from?

Grand Rapids.

How many siblings do you have?

Two siblings. One older brother who played golf here for four years, and a younger brother at Grand Rapids Christian.

What is your major?

Chemistry.

What brought you to Calvin?

My whole family kinda went to Calvin and I wanted to play golf so. It’s a good school and I’m able to play golf.

What first got you interested in golf?

I started pretty young. My dad and my grandpa got me playing at an early age, like when I was around 4 or 5 or something like that.

What is the best part about playing golf?

The best part... I think it’s just relaxing. A round takes four or five hours so you’re just kinda out there by yourself, get your mind off everything else.

What is your best golf memory?

There’s a lot of them. I think when we won the MIAA Championship in 2010 was probably the best.

What do you do in your free time?

I like to practice a lot. Fair amount of studying. Go to the beach. You know, whatever.

What are your interests besides golf?

I like basically all other sports. Go to the beach. Hang out with friends.

What’s your favorite color?

Blue.

Favorite music?

I might have to say country. Country and rap.

Favorite movies?

“Dumb and Dumber.”

Favorite sports team?

Anything Michigan. Michigan

or something like that.

How do you think you guys will do this spring in the MIAA and the NCAA?

Well I can’t say that I think we’ll do bad. I think we’re in a good spot. We have a lot of talent. We have two rounds on our home course. I don’t want to guarantee a win but I think we’ll do well.

What were some of your greatest golf accomplishments before coming Calvin?

I made top ten in state in high school my senior year of high school. I wasn’t expected to do that really.

How hard was it to adjust to college golf coming out of high school?

It was different. I think in high school, if you play number one or number two your whole career, you think you’re pretty good. But then you come out to college golf, even at the DIII level and then everybody is in the same boat as you are.

Who helped you improve your game while at Calvin?

Coach did a lot of things for me mentally and course management like what shot to putt when. I also take lessons from a guy out in Holland who helped me with my swing a lot.

What advice do you have for younger golfers?

I got advice from a guy a couple of years ago who said, “You can basically just be as good as you want to be.” So however good you want to be, you have to put in the work to get there.

If you had to pick one person, historical or living, to have lunch with, who would it be?

That’s a good question. I might say Arnold Palmer.

Dogs or cats?

Dogs.

What is the best Calvin dorm?

Well I was in Beets, so I’m just gonna say Beets.

What is one thing you cannot survive without?

I’ll say my clubs.

If you were stranded on a desert island, which of your teammates would you eat first?

Haha Dave Sarkipato.

Commons or Knollcrest.

Knollcrest.

What would I find in your refrigerator right now?

Not a lot. Probably some milk. Maybe some carrots. Bread, lunch meat.

If you could trade places with any other person for a week, real or fiction, living or dead, famous or not, who would it be?

Ben Crane.

If Hollywood made a movie about your life, who would you like to see play you?

I don’t know if they would. It would be pretty boring. I guess I’ll just leave it at that.

What is the best pizza topping?

Pepperoni.

What came first, the chicken or the egg?

The chicken.

What is your pre-round ritual?

First, I’ll hit a couple balls. Just kinda go through my bag a little bit, then I’ll hit a couple chips, and then hit a few putts and then go.



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football. Michigan basketball.

What do you hope to do when you grow up?

I’m applying to a bunch of grad schools right now so hopefully I’ll be going to grad school for biochemistry and get a PhD. Maybe work in the medical field

Hot Seat: Grant VanPutten

BY SYDNEY CHIPMAN
Staff Writer

Sydney Chipman sat down with sophomore baseball player Grant VanPutten, an outfielder who started in 33 games last season and had the highest batting average of the team with .354. This is Hot Seat.

Chipman: So how old are you?
VanPutten: 19. May 26 is my birthday.

Where are you from?
Holland, Michigan.

How many siblings do you have?

One younger sister named Laura.

What’s your major?

Business.

Why Calvin College?

I wanted to come to a smaller school so I could not only play baseball but also have some sort of a life outside of baseball. I love it here.

How long have you been playing baseball?

Forever.

What are your thoughts about this season and this year’s team?

I’m very excited about this year. We are going to win a lot of games and we are still young. It is going to be a lot of fun.

If you could play any other sport here, which would you play?

I would run track for sure. If I

could do both I would...

Favorite color?

Blue I guess.

Favorite book?

“I Spy.”

Favorite music?

Hip-hop.

Favorite song?

“Outside” by Hollywood Undead.

Favorite TV show?

“Survivor.”

Favorite sports team?

Atlanta Braves, Miami Heat and Tigers.

What do you hope your life to look like in five years?

Getting paid to play baseball.

What’s the best thing about Calvin College?

My friends and the people here, for sure.

Who’s the best professor here?

Professor Miller... Hopefully he sees this and boosts my Spanish grade. I need all the help I can get.

Ayudame.

Favorite quote?

“It’s whatever...”

What was your most embarrassing moment?

A couple years ago playing basketball against our high school girls’ team and a chick literally broke my ankles... I needed crutches for a couple weeks.

Who’s your celebrity crush?

Mila Kunis, Kate Upton ... I could go on all day...

If you could meet any famous person, dead or alive, and have a conversation with them, who

would it be?

Jesus.

If you were asked to give up your laptop or your phone, which would you choose?

My phone... I don’t have a smartphone...

Commons or Knollcrest?

Qdoba.

Best Calvin dorm?

Huiz.

Michigan or Michigan State?

Both...

Favorite animal?

My dog.

Favorite cartoon show?

Magic Schoolbus way back when...

Favorite food?

Qdoba.

Are tomatoes a fruit or vegetable?

Not sure... they are delicious....

You and your team were stranded somewhere remote and deserted but were finally found and rescued. However, there’s not enough room with the rescuers. Who would you leave behind?

I’m not sure ... not me....

Favorite “chick flick”?

“Friends with Benefits” (Or anything else with Mila Kunis).

Best date you ever went on?

Girls scare me.

Worst date you ever went on?

All my dates are awesome.

Knights schedule

Friday, April 5

Softball at home versus Alma at 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 6

Men’s lacrosse at home versus Adrian at 1 p.m.

Men’s tennis at home versus Alma at 1 p.m.

Baseball at home versus at 1 p.m.



Introduction to same-sex marriage articles

This week, *Chimes* is running two pieces about same-sex marriage and Christian ethics, prompted by the Supreme Court's current case about its constitutionality. These articles will treat the sides of the topic better than I can in this editorial, but I would like to argue that the discussions around same-sex marriage are a place where the views people hold about Christianity ought to interact with life as a whole to poke through the surface.

For those of us that are Christian, Calvin might do a good job of integrating faith and learning, but we each need to come to our own way of integrating faith and life. This will make a difference for what careers you will find worthwhile, what you will spend your money and time doing, who you will live with and whether you have a family: in general, the role in the world you will shape yourself to fill. The strategy of integrating faith and life in all these important practical ways then dictates how you approach theoretical or policy debates.

The articles this week are dealing with the policy debate around same-sex marriage. They come to different conclusions, but they share the same central premise about the relationship of faith and life: that Christians ought not to capitulate to the culture around them.

Camacho and Day's article identifies marriage as a sacrament. Because sacraments require a robust Christian theology to make sense of, they claim that Christians “cannot expect people outside of the church to understand or desire Christian marriage.” Additionally, marriage as sacrament implies that Christian marriage is not just between two people, but always situated

in a church community.

This article draws from Stanley Hauerwas' views on marriage, which he explicated in his essay “Sex in Public.” There he writes, “I believe that we cannot expect to begin to develop an adequate Christian sexual ethic without starting with the insistence that sex is a public matter for the Christian community. ... How we order and form our lives sexually cannot be separated from the necessity of the church to chart an alternative to our culture's dominant assumptions.” Insisting that marriage is always situated in the church means that the church is refusing to understand marriage on American culture's terms, since it treats sex as individual and private.

Sterchi's article argues that what Christians think about homosexual practice has bearing on what they should advocate about same-sex marriage. There is a difference between saying something is wrong for an individual and that the law should proscribe it. In this case, Sterchi claims that the same moral argument against individual homosexual practice applies as against same-sex marriage.

Even for those that have had their fill of the culture wars, this line of argument cannot be dismissed. It is not controversial to claim at Calvin that certain practices lead to a better, more flourishing life, and that Christian ethics describes how to live this flourishing life. Patience is a Christian virtue, and it would not be controversial to claim that the world would be a better place if everyone, whether Christian or not, in the church or not, was more patient. Moral claims have a universalizing aspect built into them, so is it consistent to say that homosexual practice is wrong but same-sex marriage is not? Sterchi's answer is no, which again does not sit well with American culture's tendency to-

wards a live-and-let-live moral attitude.

Therefore, both articles identify a contradiction between culture's values that bear on same-sex marriage and Christian sexual ethics, and choose the Christian in opposition to culture's. This comes out of a way of faith influencing life that takes passages that tell us to “not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds” seriously.

I believe there are other responsible ways to approach integrating faith and life that might explore different directions when grappling with same-sex marriage. Andy Crouch in “Culture Making” argues that the only way to transform culture is to make more of it. One way to follow this line of thought is to claim that what it means to make good culture, including good laws, is the same for Christians and non-Christians. This kind of approach to same-sex marriage would focus less on marriage reflecting norms of sexual ethics and more about the pragmatic effects of same-sex marriage on society.

The point that I would like to make is that the way that faith shapes your life is prior to the way faith will shape the answers to theoretical or policy questions like same-sex marriage. Therefore, discussions around same-sex marriage are opportunities to reflect on how faith influences the practical ways you live. For most people, this is more important and more urgent to figure out than a stance on any controversial topic. It is also messier and harder to talk about, and for that reason, something we need to discuss.

-jsk

FROM THE EDITORS



Things my generation likes: social justice, recycling, urban gardens, guerilla art, TED Talks, TOMS, fair but not equal, fair trade, kiva.org, human rights, animal rights, gay rights, black rights, white rights, poor rights, rich rights, college student rights, your mom's rights.

My generation likes causes. We like to try our hand at “changing the world.” We pour our passion and energy and thought into these things and it's great — there's no denying that. I can't sit here and write that I wish people would stop caring so much. Because there really are a lot of people and places that need our attention.

But I have a problem, see. I don't know which cause to choose. Maybe you've felt this tension, this pressure to latch on to a cause with all of your teeth and growl at anyone who opposes you. “You're young!” they say. “Use that energy to change the world! Sure, it'll be hard, but at least you tried. Change your world!”

Real talk: the next person who tells me to change the world is going to be cleaning vomit off of his vegan shoes.

Honestly, how am I supposed to know which cause to support? Everyone says his or her cause is the most important. Like, everyone will hate you if you don't support this or that or the other thing. If you don't support this charity we created to help three-legged dogs, the world will probably end.

Well sure, I really like dogs. But in what world is that more important than ending violence in Syria?

You tell me that ethical treatment of animals is the most important thing. But your cousin says equality for gay couples is the most important thing. I guess I should support the human cause, right? Okay. But then my professor tells me that if we don't protect the environment, in fifty years there won't even be a decent world for anybody — animal or gay or straight. So I guess that's more important. But then the news tells me that Iran and North Korea are developing nuclear weapons, so I guess that's really the most important because if they decide to use those we're all up that foul-smelling creek.

I can write a letter to Kim-Jong and Mahmoud, but is that really going to help? What am I supposed to do? Part of me just wants to curl up and wait for the mushroom cloud.

Tell me it's all about scale and scope. Tell me to choose what's important to me. Tell me it's okay to choose something small, something I can actually accomplish. But if you're telling me all of that, quit telling me to change “the world.”

It's overwhelming, all of this

activism. I need somebody to blame, and I'm taking it out on social media. It certainly has its purposes. It's a great communication tool, and it's successfully changed things in the past. But it also gives us this false sense of helpfulness. We bandwagon onto causes because if 40 friends and 20,000 other random people support this, it must be important, right?

But really, what difference are you making? Oh, you changed your Facebook profile picture to a red equal sign? Good job, you! Good job, everyone and their mothers!

“I'm just showing my support!” you counter. Yes, Facebook is the best place for that. Shouldn't the people you care about (aka, your friends) already know your stance on gay marriage? If it's really a cause you care about, I hope you talk about it offline.

Or maybe you post that red equal sign because you do talk about it offline, and you're making an effort to match your on and offline personas. Tip: most of the time, it seems like bragging or posturing.

“Awareness” is the other big word these days. “I'm really passionate about raising awareness for human trafficking,” someone said to me last week. I held my tongue, but a flurry of cynical responses came to mind. Maybe that's my problem — I'm too skeptical — but I really don't understand the point of awareness. What difference does it make if I'm aware that girls in Islamic countries aren't allowed to go to school? That's really just knowledge for my filing cabinet brain.

Awareness has two possible results: self-righteousness or guilt. It can be a self-righteous competition about who can be aware of the most things, who can change her profile picture the most times, who can sign the most change.org petitions. Or, it can be a source of guilty feelings because once we're aware of something, aren't we called to do something about it?

It's hard to talk about activism and causes and awareness because we're afraid of being hypocrites. I haven't got a way to end this piece because I want to tell you to get off your Facebook page and your butt and go do something. But I really shouldn't, because I haven't figured out how to do that myself. I don't know which cause is the most important, and I don't know what action I'm supposed to take.

I'm open for suggestions.

-ajz

Letters to the editor

Balance between grace and law needed

Dear Editor,

Professor Crump is to be commended for articulating clearly the concerns and questions that have been circling in the minds of many of us.

My reaction to the news of the financial difficulty as it oozed incrementally to the public was: Why on earth was it necessary that our new president had to discover this problem? Wasn't there anyone mature enough to make him aware of the problem earlier? I was embarrassed that such a thing could happen in our beloved Calvin.

Recently I have had some contact with my financial consultant and Calvin's financial problem surfaced in the conversation. He made comments concerning the importance of administrative structure. When I mentioned that some believe the former president was a principal in the decisions made by the finance committee. He was a bit startled by that. He indicated that of all the colleges and universities he serves the president is never on the finance committee.

When I mentioned that the college was now served by Goldman Sachs, he found that even more disturbing. Not so much because of that firm's recent unflattering history, but more because it is a brokerage. Brokerages will try

to assure clients that they have the client's interest at heart, and no doubt the do to an extent, but the truth of the matter is that brokerages must also have their own interests in mind. (Goldman Sachs' history is adequate proof of that.) He was puzzled that other, more objective organizations such as those affiliated with an Accredited Investment Fiduciary Analyst had not been utilized.

I said I was disappointed that the principals had not been more straightforward to inform the college community how this all developed. His response was that in all probability they had been given legal counsel to say nothing. After all, we do live in a litigious society. I think I must agree.

Now, what is the next step? A crisis usually offers an opportunity. What is the opportunity this crisis offers? If we missed the opportunity to demonstrate in what manner we as a Christian college should have avoided the problem, let us not miss the opportunity to show that as a college we seek earnestly to be true to our mission and resolve the problem in a Christian manner.

I wish I could offer a concise and foolproof formula. I do think the supporting community has the right to expect that the college will use all the resources available to it (the various faculty disciplines, the alumni, the owner — i.e., the CRC) to resolve this matter in a manner that is

in harmony with the college's mission.

This problem may give us an opportunity for theological discussion. As mentioned above, there are obvious legal aspects. We as Christians may not ignore the legal dimensions of life. If I have read my Bible correctly, “the law is good” (Romans 7:16), but if I have understood the teaching of Jesus and Paul, we need more than the law. How does this apply in this case? How must this be applied to the resolution of the problem? Using Crump's example of the “battered wife,” what should the pastor who is ministering to the family have as his goal? Ten years in prison? Well, the wife would be safe. But I think most of us would hope that he would to have the husband submit to therapy, with the hope that there would yet be a happy family. Precisely, how does grace transcend law?

In any event let us pray that we may avoid indiscretions that are a discredit to the college!

Clarence Vos, '47

Leaders need to be called to account

Dear Editor,

It's appropriate that the spiritual leaders on campus remind us about Jesus' command to forgive, but each person hurt by the financial troubles is on his or her own

spiritual journey, and some may take a long time to forgive and others not so long. It doesn't seem right to say to vulnerable employees, “Now it's time for you to forgive.” The person who feels secure in his or her job may have an easier time forgiving than those who feel their jobs are far less secure. And just to show that I admit I have a long way to go when it comes to forgiving in these current circumstances, and that I want to be a more forgiving person, I've signed up for the reading group that will spend April reading Lewis Smedes' book on forgiveness.

It's also appropriate that our spiri-

tual leaders speak truth to power, just as the prophet Nathan did when he confronted King David. Are those entrusted with guiding the spiritual life of this institution calling our former leaders (and current leaders, in the case of board and cabinet members) to account for risking the livelihoods of their employees and putting the college we love in financial jeopardy? I think we can and should expect that to happen as workers at a Christian institution.

Kathy De Mey,
Reference Librarian

Christians should support legalization of gay marriage

BY DANIEL CAMACHO
AND KELLAN DAY
Guest Writers

As Christians who love the church and are concerned about its well-being, we would like to address the topic of the legalization of gay marriage within our country. While we cannot do justice to all of the specific points and debates present in this topic, we still hope that what we raise here can contribute to the overall discussion.

It is our opinion that Christians should support the legalization of gay marriage within our country. Even if Christians were to believe that homosexuality was a distortion of what God intended human sexuality to be, we cannot expect everyone in a pluralistic society to have the same view of sexuality and marriage. Nor should we expect the legal law to encompass all of the Christian moral law. This does not commit us to a laissez-faire anything-goes relativism concerning all ethical issues. Yes, there are times when Christians have to take a stand against societal ills even where consensus cannot be found — but gay people are not such

societal ills.

Even if Christians understand the ideal marriage to be between a man and a woman, they cannot expect people outside of the church to understand or desire Christian marriage. For too long, some Christians have tried to hold a monopoly on sexual morality within our entire society. It is our opinion that this is a waste of time. The church already has enough problems of its own without trying to simultaneously impose its view of marriage on everyone else. “The early church grew and witnessed powerfully to the Gospel by being a majority in the Roman senate and upholding the traditional view of sexuality in its culture” — reads no church history book ever. Instead of using most of its energy to stop gay people from getting married, the church today could use its energy more productively by trying to stop things like drone strikes and violence against women.

But what about gay marriage within the church? It is our conviction that there is a significant difference between marriage as it is conceived in broader society and Christian marriage as it is rooted within the church. And it is also our conviction that

many Christian arguments that are “pro-marriage” and “pro-marriage equality” lose sight of this. That is because marriage within the body of Christ is — first and foremost — not a “right,” nor is it an institution of stability for Western society, but a sacrament. However, many arguments from natural law and biology assume that Christians can understand what marriage is apart from knowing who Christ is. Additionally, biblical literalism — a fixation on what one particular verse says or does not say — is insufficient to provide an account of marriage and sexuality. What we need is a theological imagination that draws from the entire biblical narrative and the tradition in creative ways that overcome our current impasses on gender and sexuality.

Christian marriage is a sacrament. It points beyond itself to Christ. It is not primarily a “right,” or something that is due to us. It is a gift and a means of grace for the church and the world. Therefore, Christian marriage cannot merely be “romantic” or “contractual.” It is not grounded solely in the feelings or interests of the two individuals

involved. God’s faithfulness to his people models and creates a covenant rather than a utilitarian “contract” in marriage. When two people come together, it is meant to be good news for all of us. Within the church, marriage and sexuality are not “private” affairs, as if consent and the absence of harm are all that we need to worry about. Rather, marriage is a gift that is given to reflect Christ and for the edification of his bride as she witnesses to creation.

Neither is marriage primarily a 2,000+ year institution that provides stability to Western society through the nuclear family. Jesus radically expanded and redefined the disciples’ notion of family beyond the nuclear family and bloodlines. In deciding to follow Jesus, we are united to a new set of fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters ... indeed, a very strange and “non-traditional” family. Marriage was never mostly about self-enclosed families being productive and stable forces for the nation and market. And, for most of the Christian tradition, marriage was not seen as necessary. Individuals can flourish and be whole outside of marriage (certain parts of scripture suggest

that singleness is to be preferred). But individuals are not meant to feel alone. In the body of Christ, individuals and couples are always situated within the new and larger family that they’ve been adopted into.

We think that the burden of proof might not lie with the LGBT community but actually with many heterosexual Christians and their marriages. Given their divorce rates, and how often their marriages seem more worldly than sacramental, heterosexual Christians need to reevaluate how “godly” their marriages are.

Even though we firmly believe that Christians should support the legalization of gay marriage within our country, we still think that the church needs to cooperatively wrestle with broader questions about the purpose of marriage and sexuality within communion with Christ. Perhaps in wrestling with these questions, we will no longer see our gay and transgender brothers and sisters as threats. Instead, we will see them as providing an opportunity for all of us to reimagine our marriages, our sexuality and our bodies more faithfully in light of our discipleship to Jesus Christ.

Support for same-sex marriage contrary to God’s will

BY CONNOR STERCHI
Staff Writer

When it comes to same-sex marriage and homosexuality, some Christians tend toward two extremes, both of which are wrong and unchristian.

The first extreme error is to act or speak hatefully toward homosexuals, singling out and condemning homosexual activity as the ultimate sin. This is certainly not a Christ-like approach. Christians who fall under this error may cite Romans 1:26-27 as a passage which condemns homosexual practice, but forget that a few verses later, Paul reproaches those who are filled with “maliciousness” (1:29) and judge others hypocritically and self-righteously (2:1-3). As the church, I believe we should be striving to be more gracious and empathetic toward homosexuals; too many Christians have spiteful attitudes toward homosexuality, which is at odds with the grace, mercy and love that should characterize us. God loves all sinners, including homosexuals, so much so that he sent his only begotten son to die for our sins! Because of the Father’s rich mercy and love, “even when we were dead in our transgressions, [he] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (Eph. 2:5, NASB), and “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). What a glorious truth! And God does offer amazing grace and unfathomable love to anyone who will trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and repent of their sin.

But somewhere along the way, many Christians have adopted a skewed view of love and grace. Yes, we are all sinners saved by God’s grace through faith, but that does not legitimize or excuse our sin in any way (Rom. 6:1-2; Jude 1:4). Loving others does not necessarily mean agreeing with everything they believe and affirming everything they do. Rick Warren put it this way: “Our culture has accepted two huge lies. The first is that if you disagree with someone’s lifestyle, you must fear or hate them. The second is that to love someone means you agree with everything they believe and do. Both are nonsense. You don’t have to compromise convictions

to be compassionate.”

The second extreme error is to approve of same-sex marriage or homosexual behavior as acceptable, despite the indisputable and overwhelming testimony of Scripture which attests to the sinfulness of homosexual practice (Gen. 19:1-11; Judg. 19:22-23; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Pet 2:6-7; Jude 1:7). Only those who “distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (2 Pet. 3:16) the Word of God could be deluded to the contrary.

While affirmation might appear loving, conciliatory, and tolerant, it is actually unbiblical and hateful. Although it may seem like this is a loving approach toward practicing homosexuals, it is actually just as hateful as the first extreme. It is hateful because we are called to “[speak] the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15), and on the contrary, those who condone homosexual practice are preaching a message of deceit and damnation, incompatible with the word of God.

Supporting same-sex marriage, even on only a secular level, is wrong because it is advocating what is contrary to God’s will. Joe Carter, an editor for The Gospel Coalition, said it like this: “In endorsing laws based solely on the secular liberal-libertarian conception of freedom (at least those that produce no obvious self-harm), they are doing the very opposite of what Jesus called them to do: They are hating their neighbors, including their gay and lesbian neighbors. You do not love your neighbor by encouraging them to engage in actions that invoke God’s wrath (Psa. 5:4-5; Rom. 1:18). As Christians we may be required to tolerate ungodly behavior, but the moment we begin to endorse the same then we too have become suppressors of the truth. You cannot love your neighbor and want to see them excluded from the kingdom of Christ (Eph. 5:5).”

For example, if you have a close friend who is addicted to drugs, would it not be a loving and compassionate response for you to urge your friend to quit what he is doing? Would it not be rightly seen by others as a hateful and loathsome reaction if you were to let your friend be, indifferent to his plight, and

say “you can live however you wish”? Similarly, how unloving would it be for us Christians to condone homosexual practice by supporting same-sex marriage! How contrary to the way Jesus would respond! How unloving is it to not want what is best for the eternal welfare of our neighbors! As Christians, just as it would be unloving to be apathetic or supportive of a drug-addicted friend living in sin, so it is unloving and unchristian if we are indifferent or supportive of same-sex marriage. Homosexual practice, in any form, is destructive, degrading and unnatural (Rom. 1:26), and contrary to God’s will. And God’s word states that no unrepentant homosexual (or any other impenitent sinner) will enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9). But through Christ we can be justified, washed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit from our sins (6:11), and redeemed “from every lawless deed” (Titus 2:14b).

Rather than affirm immoral people in their sinful lifestyles, I believe we should respond to practicing homosexuals like Jesus did to the adulterous woman, with compassion, a hand of grace, and an exhortation to “go, and sin no more” (John 8:11). Being compassionate and loving does not mean affirming and supporting people in their sin; rather, compassion and love is to want what is best for our neighbors, and God’s will is what’s best for us. And his will is that we abstain from all sexual immorality (1 Thess. 4:3).

If we support same-sex marriage as Christians, then we are supporting something which is evil and expressly forbidden by God. Our Lord has already defined marriage (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:4-5; Eph. 5:22-33). The prophet Isaiah has a strong message for people who make righteousness look strange and sin look normal and acceptable: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (Isa. 5:20). Paul warns us about people who, despite knowing God’s clear commands in the Bible, support and approve of those who practice lawlessness: “Although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only

do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them” (Rom. 1:32).

As Christians, let’s not support same-sex marriage (or any other sinful lifestyle) because true love “does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth” (1 Cor. 13:6). Rather, may we call out sin for what it is, and not pretend that those who practice wickedness are blameless. As the prophet Malachi declared to a stiff-necked Israel: “You have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet you say, ‘How have we wearied him?’ In that you say, ‘Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delights in them’ (Mal. 2:17a).

The world will continue to tell Christians that it’s hateful and discriminatory to not support same-sex marriage because “they [homosexuals] were born that way.” In part, that is true: we were all born that way, with sinful natures! We were all born with original sin (Rom. 5:12), a propensity toward evil (Gen. 6:5), and hearts that are deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). And yet, we are all responsible for our actions, and will one day give an account to God for what we have done (Rom. 14:12). We all have sinful inclinations — whether it is toward envy, anger, hatred, impatience, or heterosexual or homosexual lust. But having a tendency toward certain sinful desires is in no way an excuse to engage in those sins. Rather, we know that “those who

belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:24). And no matter what our sinful struggle, we have a sinless savior who was tempted in all things and can sympathize with our weaknesses (Heb. 4:15), and he is able to help us when we are tempted (2:18)! Our sweet Lord Jesus Christ is worth forsaking everything for — human relationships, worldly comfort and wealth, and every sinful desire and practice.

So, I believe that as Christians, we should respond like Jesus would — biblically and lovingly — to unbelievers who are practicing homosexuality, and to those in the church struggling with same-sex attraction. We know that those who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, will bear the eternal fierceness of God’s wrath and indignation (Rom. 2:8). May we not promote, endorse or give hearty approval to sin, but rather, speak the truth in love and gentleness. May we not compromise like the church in Pergamum, which tolerated sexual immorality; Christ warned them to repent or else he would fight against them with the sword of his mouth (Rev. 2:16). May we hold fast to sound doctrine and not negotiate with the society or culture; we might suffer persecution, scorn, and contempt from the culture — but Christ himself forewarned us: “And you will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved” (Matt. 10:22, NKJV).

“We are talking about images of God. And, especially, we are talking about people whose sexual life is often a journey into anxiety and loneliness. ... Thousands of homosexual people live highly moral and often deeply religious existences. They must group their way painfully into a creative and useful life amid a community of people who — try as they will — cannot fully sympathize with their struggle.”

-Low Smedes, “Sex for Christians”

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