

Pastor's Ramblings -October 2013

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." -- Matthew 28:19

The question is not a new one: "Why send missionaries overseas when there is such a need right here in our own land?" This or some variation of it is heard in most churches from time to time. We struggle with meeting our own budgets, our land seems to be in as much need as the rest of the world (we are here, what are we doing about it!). My simple answer is: Jesus told us to go to the *whole* world. Jesus' vision was not restricted to Jerusalem or Israel but to the whole world. It was for the whole world he came, died and rose again! And, it was to the whole world the church was mandated to go.

We are living in a Global community. The world is smaller now than it ever has been and is getting smaller and smaller. Travel times that used to take months now take only hours. Imagine the Judson's being able to get to Burma in 18 to 24 hours rather than the six to eight months it took them! Emails travel from distant lands in seconds rather than months, days or even minutes. We can talk instantly with people any where in the world with Skype and other computer programs. A local skirmish in the Middle East affects gas prices around the world. More than ever before we are connected to one another whether we want to be or not.

We are benefitting from past global missions here in Evergreen. We have four new Burmese congregations beginning in our area. One is now a member of Evergreen (The Washington Chin Baptist Church), a second will be welcomed at this annual meeting (Seattle Falam Baptist Church), the Karen Community Church is still in process and there is now a fourth meeting at Panther Lake Community Church. All of these can be traced back to the ministry begun 200 years ago by the Judsons.

This summer I was privileged to play a part in the worship service as one of our Burmese congregations, the Washington Chin Baptist Church, ordained it's pastor, Kawl Tha. Or, we can consider one of our "older" congregations, Japanese Baptist - a congregation with a long history of ministering in the greater Seattle area. How much richer are we because of their long and faithful ministry in Seattle and Evergreen. And, if you don't want to go that far, look at the make-up of FBC/MLT - Filipino, Ethiopian, Ivory Coast and Wales to name a few. We are also benefitting because someone took Christ's mandate seriously and went out into the whole world with the Good News of the Gospel.

October will see us take two special offerings: One is the traditional **World Mission Offering**, supporting the work of International Ministries around the world. The other is for our **Evergreen Region**: the offerings received as we join with Good Shepherd Baptist on October 13 for a joint worship experience will be designated to Evergreen. Our work in Evergreen includes reaching out to these new Burmese congregations and a new Spanish speaking congregation in Burien. And, do you know that we have an Evergreen congregation in Venezuela?

The mandate Christ gave the Church was and is to go *into all the world*. As I noted earlier, we are here and it is here we minister. If mission is to be done here then we are the ones who have been called to do it. If it is not getting done we have no one to blame but ourselves. But, our call is also to the whole world. One of us, Peggy Martin, is now serving in our name in Cambodia. Not all of us can go to distant lands but we can support through prayer and financial support of those on whom the call of God has fallen. Give as God has given - serve as God has called us serve and love as Christ loved--the whole world.