

The Gathering – Our History (His Story!)

In the spring of 2009 six couples began contemplating the idea of starting a “new work” in the Corvallis/Adair Village area. All had come from denominational backgrounds that included Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist and Nazarene. While affirming that denominational connections were beneficial, they also determined that there was an anticipated “freedom” in having no ties to a specific group or mainline denomination. Hence, the concept of starting an independent, non-denominational group was birthed. It was their intent to “gather” as many people who felt led to join them as possible for a “grand opening” to be held later in the summer. And from there, “*The Gathering*” was born.

These six couples began meeting for prayer and Bible Study while inviting others to join them for a “Grand Opening” on **July 19, 2009**. While anticipating the “grand opening,” a space had not yet been secured for meetings. Several members of the original six couples offered their homes for launch of this new church, but there was a positive concern that a home wouldn’t be large enough to contain the first worship service. And, they were right!

Through divine direction from the Holy Spirit connections were made with another independent congregation worshipping in Adair Village, The Prince of Peace Community Church. The pastor and Board of Elders offered space in their facility, allowing *The Gathering* to meet at a time that would not conflict with their worship service. *The Gathering* began meeting, holding “an early service” that began at 8:30 a.m. every Sunday. Mid-week Bible Studies and special meetings were held in the homes of members.

Special events were scheduled and held at Thanksgiving and Christmas of 2009, while inviting The Prince of Peace Community Church or, POP Church, to join them. Both events were tremendously successful.

By January, 2010, attendance was growing and the sanctuary at POP Church was presenting a problem due to size and resources. The first Easter Sunrise service was held at the ODFW (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) parking lot. Over 75 attended this first outdoor event and the majority of them stayed for breakfast at the Firehouse Café located directly across the street from the parking lot. Another 25 or so joined us as we continued our Easter Resurrection Celebration in the sanctuary of POP Church.

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The summer of 2010 began a first in the area of traditions, Worship at the Pond! For the months of June, July and August the congregation met in the open air “down by the pond” located on Rifle Range Road. These worship services included fellowship, singing and preaching of the Word. Once a month the congregation enjoyed “Goodies from the Grill” cooked by several members of the congregation but enjoyed by all.

Christmas 2010 brought another “tradition” for *The Gathering* – Christmas Eve in the barn! This tradition has allowed the congregation to experience the sights, sounds and smells of the original Christmas. One Christmas Eve service even provided the joy of a new born lamb that truly provided the “sounds of Christmas”!

As the congregation continued to grow, a larger venue was needed for growth as well as a later start time. The Leadership Team began communicating with Santiam Christian Schools requesting use of the gym for a worship service that would run from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and in May of 2011, *The Gathering* moved to Santiam.

In February of 2012 *The Gathering* experienced another “divine interruption.” While both the Santiam and POP Church experience provided opportunity for growth and worship, a permanent space was desperately needed to provide for other ministries *The Gathering* felt called to accomplish. A phone call from an Elder of another local congregation began a chain of events that would lead to *The Gathering* acquiring five acres and a fully furnished building that was suitable (with modest renovation) for future ministry. The property, located at 5050 NE Elliott Circle in Corvallis, was the former home of the Northside Community Church. Acquisition of the property was completed in March of 2012 and renovations began.

After providing a new roof, all new paint inside and out, insulation throughout, a new sign and a complete gutting of the sanctuary and foyer, all new chairs for comfortable seating, the new North Corvallis Ministry Center was almost ready for service. All new sound equipment, a new screen and rear projector, along with four new flat screens for viewing of the words for worship songs and sermon notes were installed for the official “first service” on Easter Sunday, 2013! Beginning with a catered breakfast, Easter Sunday proved to be a “divinely inspired experience”! With standing room only, the congregation lifted their voices in praise and thanked God for, not

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only the resurrected Son, but a resurrected building that would provide ministry for years to come!

Within a few short months following the first Sunday of ministry for *The Gathering* in their new home, the vision of a Food Pantry began to take shape in the form of a new 30x30 building located directly behind the Sanctuary for easy access and ministry to those in need. By the fall of 2013 the building was under roof awaiting electricity and insulation, but ministry began any way. To date, the building is completely wired for electricity and insulated against the weather, and over 50 families have been served!

The vision for future ministry is large and exciting. The congregation continues to seek God’s leading in all they do, remembering the words to Joshua as he took the reins from Moses: *1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ aide: 2 “Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. 3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. 4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. 5 No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. Joshua 1:1-6*

The future of *The Gathering* is bright indeed! With the leading of the Holy Spirit and God’s blessing, we believe “we can change the world from here, one person at a time!”