

Christian Veterinarian

The Journal of Christian Veterinary Mission



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SHOWING GOD'S COMPASSION THROUGH GOODBYES



Christian
Veterinary
Mission

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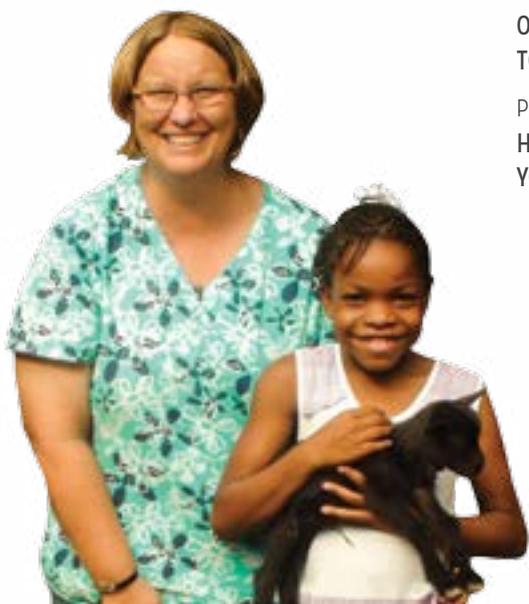
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Spring 2014

In this issue we focus on what it means to live out your faith through your skills in veterinary medicine.

CVM's annual theme is "Called," focusing on the verse Ephesians 4:1. "I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received."



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Serve through Veterinary Medicine

By Dr. Kit Flowers, CVM President



"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? Are not his sisters here with us? And they took offense at Him." (Mark 6:3)

In this section of scripture, Jesus was not identified by name, but by His profession: "the carpenter." The people in the synagogue were astonished by His wisdom and by the miracles that He performed. After all, how could a carpenter have such gifts?

Just as Jesus was identified by his profession, the same is often true for us. Often when we introduce ourselves to someone we've never met, we quickly then tell them about our vocation. *Your name is ... and what do you do?*

Here at CVM, we challenge, empower and facilitate veterinarians to serve others living out their Christian faith. But like Jesus, our profession is only part of our identity. Our deepest call is to serve Christ, and we are able to

show His love through veterinary medicine. When we serve others through our profession, we can serve as a witness of His gospel. His wisdom and power should be at work through our prayers and testimonies.

In this Journal, we focus on veterinary professionals. Because of our unique skills and compassion, we have an opportunity to serve in ways few people can. Our annual theme, "Called," is intended to help us reflect on what we do and how we live a life worthy of that calling (Eph. 4:1).

I pray that others will see Him through each of us and that they would encounter His wisdom and power through our testimony. Who knows, maybe they'll even ask: *"Is not this my veterinarian?"* Hopefully their response will not be one of "offense" but rather one of hope and encouragement as Christ works through our witness to share His love for those whom we serve.

I ask you to prayerfully consider faithful financial support, committed prayer, and service through His work through CVM in the months to come.

Dr. Kit Flowers
CVM President

Pray

Pray for each CVM member to be emboldened in their witness to His glory.

Pray for divine ministry appointments in veterinary clinics across the US and around the world.

Pray for ministry to staff and coworkers in the veterinary workplace.

Work With all Your Heart

By Amanda Emery, Purdue CVF VP

Colossians 3:23 says, "...whatever you do, work at it with all your heart." Here at Purdue, this statement probably holds true for the majority in the veterinary school. However, the second part of that verse reads, "as working for the Lord, not for human masters;" this difference is what sets members of Christian Veterinary Fellowship, and other Christ-followers, apart.

As a CVF group, we are continually striving to deepen our walks of faith alongside each other in and outside of the classroom. We do this through weekly student-led Bible studies and occasional weekend retreats with our faculty advisors. Other activities, such as frozen yogurt runs and a game night, enable us to learn each other's stories so that we may encourage and build accountability.

Last spring, several students attended Real Life/Real Impact and enjoyed a dynamic weekend of fellowship, worship and networking. This year, Purdue has the pleasure of hosting the regional conference!

Every spring, the Purdue CVF holds a carnation sale for Valentine's Day. This is a great opportunity that allows people to encourage others through a flower and for us to share about CVF. Last year, we raised almost \$500, which was the most our club has ever raised from the sale. We were pleased to put it all towards CVM's Animal Impact program.

As a CVF group, we are continually striving to deepen our walks of faith alongside each other in and outside of the classroom.

We also participate in Open House, which is a part of the larger Purdue Spring Fest. As a club, we manage a booth in the veterinary school alongside other school organizations. The public is welcome and we engage kids and adults with conversation, CVM materials and coloring sheets.

Outside of veterinary school life, we helped bake cookies for a prison ministry called Kairos Prison Ministry of Indiana. With the conclusion of that project, we had a great opportunity to have a speaker from the ministry share his testimony about Kairos.

Purdue CVF students also continue to pursue the world through short-term missions. One student spent time in Haiti this past summer and another small group will be traveling to South Africa in May.

God's plan has placed individual callings on each of our lives, which has brought us together in veterinary school.

We strive to be an intentional community of veterinary Christ-followers at Purdue University. We hope to continue to build relationships in order to transform lives, love God, and then love others. It is our prayer that we are indeed touching lives at our school and in our profession.



Workplace Ministry Tools

Share your passion with your clients! We have put together a kit of tools to help spark conversations with your clients that result in opportunities to share your faith and involvement with CVM.



cvmusa.org/WMT



Theology of Work

By Dr. Wendell Cantrell, CVM Volunteer

This year the CVM family has been meditating on the challenge to walk worthy of our calling (Eph. 4:1). The whole idea of calling entails the mining of our gifts, talents, and passions and using them for His glory.

Our early church fathers had a two-tiered view of calling: those who were truly called were committed to full-time ministry, and the rest of the folks just worked at ordinary secular jobs. The Reformation movement began to challenge this dualism and started pointing out that God calls most of us into the ordinary work world to accomplish His purposes.

I recently heard a colleague announce his calling from that point of view. He feels that he is called as a missionary in the “9 to 5 window” instead of the “10/40 window.” He is basically claiming that his mission field is his workplace instead of the unreached people groups across Africa and Asia. So,

for most of you, welcome to the “9 to 5 window!” As we explore this calling to a secular job, I’d like us to examine some basic principles for understanding our current calling:

He is basically claiming that his mission field is his workplace instead of the unreached people groups across Africa and Asia.

Life Before an Audience of One | We all have our audiences. These days we are more conscious of audiences and keeping them pleased. Part of our calling is living based on our convictions rather than current opinion. Our Puritan forefathers were amazingly conviction-driven in their lifestyles. It was as if they had swallowed gyroscopes, being driven by their belief that

all of life was to be lived “By faith, to the glory of God.” We live our lives to please the Father and no one else, regardless of the cost. We must learn to courageously say no to other people’s agendas.

Move from Greed to Generosity, and from Concern to Contentment | Our wonderful free market economy brings with it an unhealthy insatiability. As we begin to see ourselves as merely stewards of the grace of God, the desire to have and to hold loses its grip on us. We start doing things because they are right, not because they are profitable. Paul gives us some great advice on contentment in 1 Timothy 6:6, “Godliness with contentment is great gain.” Contentment comes from learning to view life through an eternal prism. One day Jesus will split the Eastern sky and come for His own. The size of our homes or retirement accounts will be meaningless. Only what is done for the cause of Christ will matter.

Gear Up | As we seek our calling, there is not room for spiritual slothfulness. Some of us have settled into a spiritual dejection, giving up on the Lord, and settling for second best. We need to be reminded that we are all a work in progress. We need to make peace with the past. Paul said in Phil. 3:13-14, “Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” For many of us, we need to regain the joy of growing again, through our devotion time and regular worship. Let’s not let our passions lay dormant under the load of life’s responsibilities.

Each of us, in our particular field, is called to distribute His love through the work of our hands. In exercising this responsibility, our communities stand to gain in a variety of ways— healthy pets, public health, and sustainable agriculture. This commitment certainly makes us valuable to friends and neighbors in a “common grace” sense of helping all and sustaining the economy. A Christian practitioner, however, should want to go further in wholeheartedly following Christ. This means a daily commitment to His precepts at work. Let’s look at some essential precepts we need to take daily to the workplace:

Prayer and Care | Our coworkers and clients are living a painful existence, as you well know. Consider adding one or both of the following to your office routine: Offer to pray with grieving or concerned clients and keep a current list of staff prayer needs. Along with that comes the invariable opportunity to help in small ways emotionally or financially.

Evangelism | As people see the Word of God put into practice, they will respond. Your harvest is made up of coworkers, clients, vendors, and others. Your only limit is your creativity. Two creative ideas that I like are the “pets in heaven?” topic (CVM has a brochure), and “true unconditional love” (it isn’t our pets that have it). Evangelism is often merely planting seeds and trusting Him for subsequent water suppliers and harvesters needed to finish the gospel story.

Let’s pray that the rich truths of the gospel will press more deeply into who we are and the work He has called us to do.



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great and small,
the Lord God made
them all*

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*Proverbs 17:22
A merry heart doeth good like a medicine...*

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Shortcourse 2014 August 20-23



Preceding the CVC Central, enjoy 2 ½ days of fellowship and learning together with veterinary professionals like yourself! Come to be refreshed, inspired, and seek God's leading in your life. Have fun while learning from God's word!

Vets, vet students, vet technicians and spouses who want to share God's love through veterinary medicine are invited to join the CVM US staff and field staff in fellowship. Shortcourse is held at the beautiful camp setting of Heartland Presbyterian Conference Center, just outside Kansas City, MO.

August 20 Wednesday	August 21 Thursday	August 22 Friday
Introductory Session Starts @ 1pm	Choice of All-Day Seminars: Workplace, Short-term or Long-term (2 days each)	
CE Session @ 3-5pm: S.A. Respiratory Surgery Worship & Keynote	CE Session @ 3-5pm: S.A. Urogenital Surgery Worship & Speakers	CE Session @ 3-5pm: S.A. G.I. Surgery Worship & Speakers

Registration opens May 1st!

cvmusa.org/Shortcourse

God's Compassion Through Goodbyes

By Dr. Christina Lehner

Miss Blackfoot broke my heart. She was a checkered giant rabbit we bought at a garage sale when I was 12 years old. She had a beautiful, shiny black coat and a lively personality. She thought she was far bigger than she really was.

You can understand how crushed I was when Miss Blackfoot grew increasingly ill, as advanced breast cancer invaded her body. My mom wanted to do everything she could to keep Miss Blackfoot alive. Our rabbit underwent 3 surgeries to remove masses. But the cancer could not be contained.

I returned home on a break from college and was heartbroken by the changes that I saw. The once vibrant, overweight, boisterous rabbit had deteriorated into an emaciated version of herself. She was too weak to hold her own head and unable to control her urine, resulting in urine scalding to her skin.

Ultimately Miss Blackfoot died at home. She probably knew she was loved, but she

was a shadow of the animal that she once was. My mom's resistance to pet euthanasia is a common struggle, as people grapple with end-of-life issues.

“Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” - 2 Cor. 5:5

Years after Miss Blackfoot passed away, I found myself caring for God's creatures as a veterinarian. Working at a clinic early in my career, a client requested that a vet come to their home. Their sheepdog had lived a long life, and was in poor health. “Grace” was sweet and gentle. The sheepdog could hardly move and could not stand. Her family knew it would be very difficult and painful to transport her to the clinic.

The family was so thankful to have me come to them. Grace also seemed calm and relaxed, laying on her dog bed, surrounded by her family. She was at home as I was her visitor.

Her family shared their favorite memories and we celebrated her life with tears, stories and even a bit of laughter. Then, they said goodbye.

I was touched by this in so many ways, and I'll never forget it. I remember the peaceful goodbye of a friend. It was a service done at home, instead of the anxiety-provoking euthanasias that I had seen in the clinics.

I found the best blessings however, in a growing confidence to trust the “Giver of Life” in all circumstances. I was able to show compassion during difficult times.

I had such a strong sense of feeling God's presence in those moments—unlike what I had ever experienced before as a veterinarian. I felt that God was using my experiences, my skills—and my heart—to serve families in new and important ways by helping with end-of-life experiences.

Once I realized this, it was a whole new start to my career! It was a way that I could care for both the animals and give a bit of peace to their families. It was also a way that I could share my faith by allowing the Lord to work through me and touch families during a difficult time.

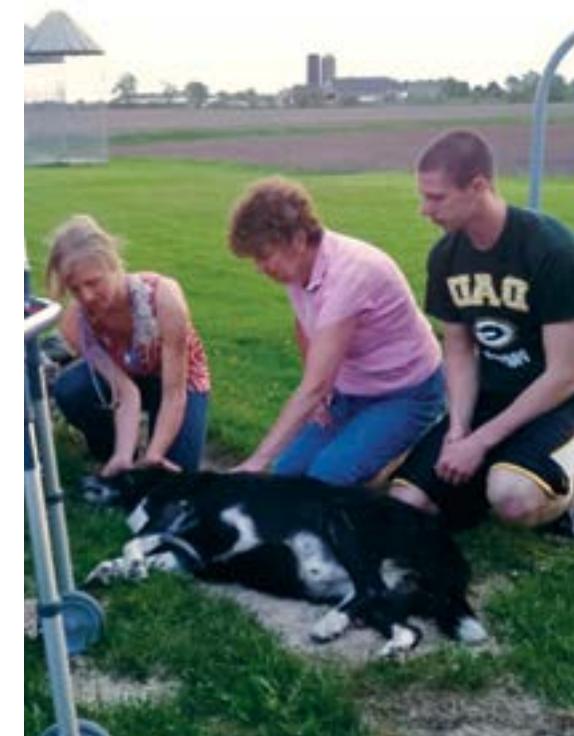
Through this experience, I decided to start an

in-home end-of-life veterinary care service, eventually developing my side-project into my primary job. It also helped me pay off student loans within three years. I found the blessings however, in a growing confidence to trust the “Giver of Life” in all circumstances. I was able to show compassion during difficult times.

As veterinarians we have all been blessed with the training, knowledge and technical skills necessary to care for animals. But how can we incorporate our faith into our daily lives and use our careers to spread the word of God?

On a daily basis, this may mean simply being more Christ-like in our words and actions. On a more experiential basis, it may mean serving on a mission trip to a foreign country that would benefit from the teaching of a vet, or serving the needy domestically.

When I was working with Grace and her family, it felt like I was tapping into the role



It is more about listening to the Lord and being obedient to His calling.

God had created me for and I knew that the Lord was working through me. I would have never dreamed that my career would be based on putting animals to sleep. But, really, it's not. It is more about listening to the Lord and being obedient to His calling.

As you may know, CVM's theme verse for the year is about living "a life worthy of the calling you have received." (Eph. 4:1) The emphasis in this verse is how we live our life. Is it according to what God has called us to do?

For me, I see that in some of the most sensitive moments of life—when families are saying goodbye to their pets, and in turn reflecting on their own mortality—minds open to the amazing love that God has shown all of us. I am humbled by the Lord's compassion on me and I'm thankful that He has unveiled this purpose in my life.

I pray that God works through you, allowing you to grow in both knowledge and depth of insight. (Phil. 1:9) We are called, the question is: are we listening?

Dr. Lehner will be speaking on adding "end of life" care in the Workplace Ministry track at CVM's Shortcourse, August 20-23.

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Find out more about Nutramax Laboratories, Inc., at nutramaxlabs.com and be sure to visit their Facebook page at [facebook.com/NutramaxLabs](https://www.facebook.com/NutramaxLabs).



Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...

Matthew 28:19

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Opening Doors & Hearts to Christ

By Tracy Stone, CVM Short-term Missions Coordinator

Veterinary Medicine creates opportunities to build trusting relationships with people who have previously been closed to the message of Christ's love. Lena and Patrick Wensel witnessed this first-hand on a CVM short-term mission trip to Costa Rica this past summer. God used their veterinary skills to reach an "unreachable" heart – and encouraged their hearts in the process.

This angry man who had previously only been willing to throw rocks and yell at his neighbors, now welcomed the Wensels into his home.

There was a man in the jungle town of Llano Verde nicknamed "Repugnant" who had a reputation for being hateful towards

his neighbors – throwing rocks and yelling as people walked by. Pastor Clint had often tried to reach out to him but was never able to break through his hard exterior.

All that changed when the Wensels and their teammates noticed "Repugnant's" declining horse and dog out in his yard. They offered to care for them at the clinic they were holding later that day. By deworming the colt and removing warbles from the dog's coat, this short-term mission's team showed this man that they cared for him. He was so grateful for their help, the next day he invited the Wensels into his home, along with their friend Pastor Clint.

This angry man who had previously only been willing to throw rocks and yell at his neighbors, now welcomed the Wensels into his home. In doing so, he let down his guard and opened his heart to relationship

with Pastor Clint and his community. Veterinary medicine had served as a bridge to open his closed door...and closed heart! Your skills in veterinary medicine and your faith in Christ are also needed to help open closed doors and hearts.

CVM has trip openings for veterinarians, veterinary students and veterinary technicians on teams serving around the world. New teams are forming daily! Some teams are able to accommodate non-vet family members as well.

If you'd like to experience the difference that veterinary medicine can make in building bridges and changing lives, why not consider joining one of CVM's short-term mission teams?

Take a look at CVM's Current Opportunities in Short-Term Missions and see where you can impact hearts and lives for Christ!

Costa Rica Trip CRI14-07a

Location: Heredia, Costa Rica

Dates: July 12-19, 2014

Local Partner: Mission Challenge and Dr. Bob Wilmarth

Vet Work: Large and small animal, particularly goats through the "Goats for God" program

Ministry Work: Building community relations and supporting the work of the local ministries along with some work with children

Cost: \$675 from San Jose, Costa Rica plus a \$29 exit visa purchased in Santamaria Airport

Number of Vets: 3-5

Number of Vet Techs / Vet Students: 7-17

Maximum Group Size: 20 max, will be divided if they participate in remote trip(s)

Minimum Group Size: 10

Status: Currently open for 5 vets, vet students, vet techs and family members

cvmusa.org/shortterm





How You Can See God's Call in Your Life for Missions

By Dr. Monty, CVM Missions Mobilization Coordinator

Called. You probably hear it all the time—and may have even reflected on it a great deal. As you have probably realized, “Called” is CVM’s theme for the year, and this theme has allowed us to focus on God’s call in our lives.

I challenge you to “go deep” with the idea of “called,” reflecting on what that call looks like in our lives, considering the possibility that we should be following God’s call into new areas.

That being said, I believe “our calling” can be misunderstood. That’s because God’s call to us is both static and dynamic. What does that mean? Let’s talk about the “static” aspect of God’s call.

The command is clear: we are called to have Christ at the center of our being. Essentially, our love for Him overshadows

our love for anything else, including and especially a self focused love. It’s a “heart, soul, mind and strength” kind of love, and it makes us want to know Him more. As the apostle Paul said in Phil. 3:8, “I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Jesus Christ.”

The command is clear: we are called to have Christ at the center of our being.

And with that, there’s the command to “love our neighbors as ourselves,” as illustrated by Jesus through the story of the Good Samaritan. Jesus declared that all the Law and the Prophets (the whole Bible) is based upon this calling: to love God and to love others. Ultimately this calling be-

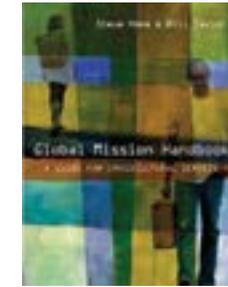
Our dynamic calling is the place to dream dreams on how God can use “me” in His kingdom work, beyond how we are being used today.

comes the theme of our hearts, transforming us into a new creation.

But then there is the dynamic, ever-changing aspect of God’s calling to us. Consider how we apply it, with this quote: “We are disciples of Christ, skillfully, wonderfully, and miraculously disguised as _____”! For most of us reading this journal, that “_____” has something to do with Veterinary Medicine though the answer to the “_____” is as numerous as the passions Christ puts on our hearts and the roles we serve in.

Our dynamic calling is the place to dream dreams on how God can use each of us in His kingdom work, beyond how we are being used today. What do we see God calling us to do? In this dynamic calling is the an-

swer to the question: “Is God calling you to a greater involvement in missions?”



Intrigued? Here’s a way to go deeper. Dr. Brad Frye, Program and Latin America Regional Director, recommends the book, [Global Mission Handbook — A](#)

[Guide for Cross Cultural Services](#), by Steve Hoke & Bill Taylor. It’s a great resource for exploring what it means to be called into international missions. If you are praying about missions, this book will serve you well.

We here at the CVM office, as well as your regional and state reps, want to help you see the bigger portrait of what God aims to do with your life. And I’m here for you too. I want you to know that I want to walk with you through this journey. If you have any questions, or just want to talk, I am happy to hear from you about anything. You will bring me joy by exploring your calling with me.



CVM is pleased to welcome Dr. Monty to the Seattle team as the Missions Mobilization Coordinator. Monty and his wife, Dr. Shelley, served for 16 years in various locations in Asia. Monty has a passion for the Lord and for walking alongside people as they determine if missions is something they should do. If you are dreaming about missions please contact Monty to explore your call and find out how to get started. Contact: 206-546-7387 longterm@cvmusa.org



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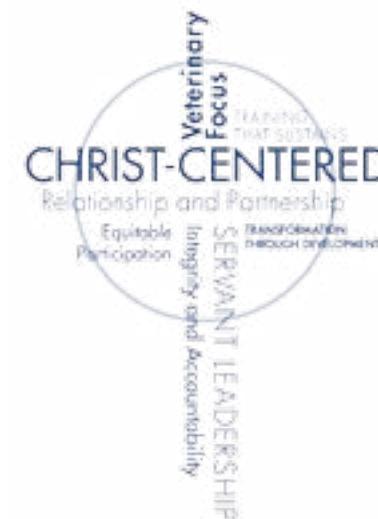


CVM's mission is to challenge, empower and facilitate veterinary professionals to serve others by living out their Christian faith.

What We Do

Our purpose as an organization is to walk alongside Christians in the veterinary community whose desire is to bring glory to God through the use of their professional skills. It is our honor and privilege to pray with, talk with, encourage, equip, mentor and provide resources and opportunities for men and women to follow God's call in their life, whether serving in their own community or cross-culturally.

Animals are a bridge to relationship. Whether at a clinic in urban America or, the countryside of Mongolia, a veterinary school in Bolivia or the Cherokee Nation, relationships are formed over the care of an animal. Trust is built, hearts are shared, and a seed is planted for the Kingdom of Christ.



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