**The Shepherd of Occupy Seattle**

Amidst the hordes of chanting young protestors in Seattle’s Westgate park stands 45-year-old Delmar Bryant. But Bryant isn’t the garden variety protestor. And if you couldn’t figure that out on your own, the words written on two pieces of tape attached to the front of his jacket may give you a better idea. Scrawled in black ink, they read: Ministerial Staff.

As a Christian minister, Bryant felt an obligation to participate in the Occupy Seattle protests, praying over not just the demonstrators, but the police officers who are there to make sure that all remains safe and peaceful. And just like the other participants, Bryant has been camped out in the rain for four days. He’s also carrying his own cardboard sign which reads: “If you need a prayer, just ask.”

“I’ve never been in a protest about anything in my life,” he says. “And I wanted to be here in a nonviolent way. Any violence and I’m out of here.”

Originally from Guthrie, Oklahoma, Bryant has lived in Seattle for three years. In addition to counseling friends and family, he also sings in the choir at Seattle’s University Presbyterian Church. And while he is a minister without a specific congregation, he feels a need to look after people, even when it may bring him into potentially volatile situations like that of the Occupy Seattle protests.

“I understand that we don’t want the police to police us,” repeats a growing crowd of protestors behind Bryant, taking the cue from several people standing high atop a wall. “We also need to be accountable for accurate information,” they say.

While the protestors maintain a peaceful disposition about them, none ever really shouting, the air is thick with tension as Seattle Police watch from under the awnings adjacent to the park, an area they have set as off limits to the protestors.

“Two days ago, a bunch of these people went and sat down right there on Fourth Avenue blocking traffic,” says Bryant, pointing to the street next to the park. “The police came and told them to move, and they got up and moved.”

On the other side of Bryant, another large group of protestors mill around the edges of the park, many carrying homemade signs that read things like, “You are the 99 percent! Wake up! No more corporate control of congress!”

What looks to be a chaotic scene is actually a very choreographed and organized demonstration. There is an information booth set up, and a primitive display of the leadership is detailed on a board, explaining the different colored armbands made of tape. Different colors represent those who, for example, have medical and legal training. Nearby is a large tent containing food and water for the protestors, all of which have been donated by both individuals and businesses.

According to Bryant, the water and food supply have reached critical stages several times. But after administering prayers for them to be replenished, someone always appeared with donations. Bryant sees those situations as nothing short of miracles.

Bryant plans to stick out the protests in Westgate Park, and sees his role as an important one, making sure that everyone is safe.

“There are a lot of bright young people here,” he says with a smile. “They are going to be potential future leaders.”