



# Mount Calvary Connected

July 22, 2021

*Mount Calvary Connected is a weekly newsletter that will be sent out each Wednesday while the church is pressing "pause" on in-person gatherings. Our goal is to keep you connected to your faith and your church with messages from our pastors, health information, and ways to share Christ's love during our current national crisis.*

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### **LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION**

Mt. Calvary hosts live broadcasts of the liturgy at 8:45 AM Sunday mornings. The broadcast can be heard by tuning your radio to 88.3 FM if you are near the church. We can also stream the service live over the internet.

By clicking the following link, you can gain access to the live stream audio. <https://streams.radiomast.io/96172026-6cba-407b-9090-e150b471ae0e>

Weekly worship bulletins can be found at: [www.rebrand.ly/MtCalvaryWorship](http://www.rebrand.ly/MtCalvaryWorship)

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### **Weekly Wednesday, Drive in Services**

Wednesday evening drive-in services are at 6:30 pm. Download a bulletin from: <https://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/bulletins/>, bring your own bread for communion, and tune your radio to 88.3FM and you are set! See you there!

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### **Baptism**

On July 17, 2021, we welcomed Davanee Lynn Anderson into Christ's Church through Holy Baptism. Davanee was born on August 12, 2020. Davanee is the daughter of Garrett and Madison Anderson. Her sponsors are Cody Kendera and Ashley Anderson.

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### **Worship Help Needed**

There are sign-up sheets, in the Narthex, for Greeters/Ushers, and Communion Assistants, for the months of July and August. Please sign up for the dates that would suit you best. We appreciate you volunteering. If you have questions about these roles, please contact Christine Koshute at 814-421-4921 or Chris Oleska at 814-244-9851.

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### **Mount Calvary's Summer VBS is "God's Secret Agents of Change!"**



Join us on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> for a special program for kids entering Pre-K through 5th grade. The program will run each night from 4-5pm with a picnic meal served at 5pm and an invitation to join us for evening worship afterwards. For more information, contact Pastor Jono at [RevJonoAdams@gmail.com](mailto:RevJonoAdams@gmail.com) or 412-817-6704.

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### **ALSM's 24th Annual Golf Outing**

Monday, July 26, 2021

Scotch Valley Country Club in Hollidaysburg

**Volunteers Needed**

If you are available to volunteer, please indicate your shift preference, if any.

**Volunteer Shifts**

Morning - 11:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

(lunch included – Sheetz bagged lunch)

Afternoon – 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

(dinner included – ALSM’s traditional low-country boil returns this year!)

All-day volunteers (lunch and dinner included)

If interested, please call Andrea Schurr at 814-696-4516.

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**Tuesday Noon Recitals**

First Lutheran Church, 415 Vine Street, Johnstown

**July 27** – Pazzynski Family and Ukulele Eddie

Fun with Music

Invite family and friends to this weekday gift of music.

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**Backyard Cookie Collection, Thursday, August 5, 2021.**

Cookies can be placed in the bin outside the church, or the labeled one inside. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Kozak at 244-6880. Thank you for your continued support!

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**Farewell Liturgy for Bishop Rhyne**

We will have a service of Farewell and Godspeed at

**Evangelical Lutheran in Duncansville starting at 2 PM on August 28th.**

Clergy are invited to vest and process. August 28 is the Commemoration of St. Augustine of Hippo so the color of the day is white. The people of Duncansville have graciously offered to host a reception after the service.

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**Installation of Allegheny Synod Bishop Paula Schmitt**

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will join us to install our new Bishop on

**Sunday, September 19 at 3 PM.**

The service is being held at First Lutheran Church in Altoona. The color for the day is red. We will be livestreaming the service and there will be a reception following hosted by our partners at Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries.

**Birthdays and Anniversaries for the Week: July 25 – July 31, 2021.**

**July 25** – Jessica Carter, Matthew Cominsky, Richard Gallus, Allen Stayrook

**July 26** – Brad Drennen, Meleiah Dusack, Shari McQuaide, Roger Newman

**July 27** – Kadiya Lingenfelter, Patricia Molnar, Kevin Oleksa, Mark Williams

**July 28** – Kadence George

**July 29** – Jon Dusack, Linda Pritts

**July 30** - Alley Dusack, Carol Illig, Abby Miller, Mary Pullin

**July 31** - Raymond Leverknight, Alex Way

**July 21** – John & Paula Daily (20 years)

**July 31** – Jay & Karen Zimmer (39 years)

## **About Our Members:**

Eva Eschrich passed away on July 16, 2021  
Gladys Haupt was in the hospital.

## **Remember those that prayer has been requested:**

Linda & Dick, Dolly & Chis Palm, Claudia Plows, Tom, Lorraine, Pastor Brandon Cian, Linda McMullen, Dick, Beverly, Jerry, Jose & Family, Harold, Rick, Midge, Shirley, Jennifer, John, Debbie Finnegan, Jill McEntee, Bob & Janet, David, Karen, Lauren, Billy, Barb, Sliko Family, McQuaide Family, Dorothy, Bob, Corey, Eva Eschrich, and Michelle.

## **JULY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Presently in the black, Mount Calvary came through the first six months of the year well. Giving is thus far almost exactly where our mission and ministry plan for 2021 expected it to be, with increased giving to the current fund largely offsetting decreased giving to the building fund. Until Christ comes again, it shall be important for each of us to continue to do our part when possible; maintaining our prior year's giving and increasing our giving when it's doable. Unfortunately, people continue to move, die, and grow ill and every enterprise, including the Church, continues to feel the lingering effects of the pandemic. This makes consistent giving, and increased giving, when possible, of ongoing importance both this year and next year and every year after.

On the expense side, increased property expenditures have been offset by decreased expenditures in other areas. Six months into the year, it may be that we underestimated our electricity, gas, and ground maintenance expenses. Together, just these three expense lines account for two-thirds of our property-related expenses, with the yearly expense in these areas presently on pace for somewhere between \$35,000-\$40,000. Even when summer schedules or continuing reservations related to the pandemic keep us away from the church, the basic costs of operation continue to accumulate, and they are significant.

## **CONDENSED WORSHIP FOR THE WEEKEND OF SUNDAY, JULY 18, 2021.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people, that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**A: Amen.**

### **FIRST READING: 2 SAMUEL 7:1-14A**

*Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, God's anointed.*

<sup>1</sup>Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." <sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

<sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.

<sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal

leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”<sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>12</sup>When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14a</sup>I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.

### **PSALM 89:20-37**

P: “I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.

**A: My hand will hold him fast and my arm will make him strong.**

P: No enemy shall deceive him, nor shall the wicked bring him down.

**A: I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.**

P: My faithfulness and steadfast love are with him, and he shall be victorious through my name.

**A: I will set his hand on the sea, and his right hand on the rivers.**

P: He will say to me, ‘You are my <sup>father</sup>, my God, and the rock of my salvation.’

**A: I will make him my firstborn and higher than the kings of the earth.**

P: I will keep my love for him forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him.

**A: I will establish his line forever and his throne as the days of heaven.”**

P: If his children forsake my teaching and do not walk according to my judgments;

**A: if they break my statutes and do not keep my commandments;**

P: I will punish their transgressions with a rod and their iniquities with the lash;

**A: but I will not take my love from him, nor let my faithfulness prove false.**

P: I will not break my covenant, nor change what has gone out of my lips.

**A: Once for all I have sworn by my holiness: I will not lie to David.**

P: His line shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before me;

**A: it shall stand fast forevermore like the moon, the abiding witness in the sky.”**

### **SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 2:11-22**

*The author of this letter reminds his audience that originally they were not part of God’s chosen people. Through Jesus’ death, however, they are included in God’s household of faith, whose cornerstone is Jesus Christ.*

<sup>11</sup>Remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision”—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands—<sup>12</sup>remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise,

having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup>But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup>For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. <sup>15</sup>He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup>and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. <sup>17</sup>So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; <sup>18</sup>for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. <sup>19</sup>So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup>built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. <sup>21</sup>In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; <sup>22</sup>in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

### **GOSPEL: MARK 6:30-34, 53-56**

*When Jesus sends his disciples out to teach and heal, they minister among large numbers of people. Their work is motivated by Christ's desire to be among those in need.*

<sup>30</sup>The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup>He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. <sup>32</sup>And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. <sup>33</sup>Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. <sup>34</sup>As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

<sup>53</sup>When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. <sup>54</sup>When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, <sup>55</sup>and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. <sup>56</sup>And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

### **SERMON BY PASTOR SCOTT**

This past week I overheard my wife Julia speaking with her father Fred. Fred was exhorting Julia to set aside some time for a trip that would take the two of them to a particular historical authority. Living on a farm his family has owned and operated since 1742, Fred has a document he thinks may be of interest to historians and which he hopes can be restored to better condition. Fred is quite proud of the house, the name, the legacy that he and other Sprenkles have been building for close to three centuries now. When you strive to build a house, to make a name for yourself, to secure a future for yourself and those you care about most, it's extremely gratifying when things come together in the way that you had hoped.

Today's reading from Ephesians is a case in point. With his opening words today, the writer of the letter addresses those who are all Gentile by birth. This is quite a positive development. Ever since his resurrection from the dead, Christ and his Church have been trying to build a house with enough rooms in it to accommodate not just those of Jewish origin, but also those of non-Jewish origin; those the letter writer calls "Gentiles." Quite clearly, this inclusive effort has met with some success. How gratifying! But of course, Christ's effort to make disciples of all nations is an ongoing effort. If it is to succeed, it will require our effort and cooperation as well. Will such effort and cooperation be forthcoming? The answer will likely have much to do with our approach to housebuilding. Will we buy into Christ's point of view on housebuilding; that a house can never enough people or rooms in it? Or will we buy into the world's competing take on housebuilding; that a house needs a fence around it; that a house has to limit the people for which it cares and the concerns

to which it attends? To be sure, the pull to build houses and names and futures the world's way shall be strong.

In today's reading from Mark, Jesus gets off a boat and is surrounded by people the evangelist compares to sheep without a shepherd. Here are people who have fallen through the cracks. Here are people who have been fenced out of the good life. Here are people for whom no room has been made. It's a prime example of how things go in our broken and sinful world. In contrast to God's inclusive housebuilding, we often take an exclusive approach to housebuilding. The thinking goes: Limit the number of rooms in your house. Keep the number of mouths you have to feed small. Take care of me and mine to the point where your cupboards and your freezers are overfilled. Put up the no trespassing signs. Dig a moat around your good fortune and keep the riff-raff on the other side of it.

This exclusive approach to housebuilding explains much of the language used in our reading from Ephesians. Using the word four times, the writer evidently feels peace might be a desirable commodity for the people to whom he writes. With peace in scarcity, it would seem a lot of people think the best way to build a house, the best way to secure a future, the best way to make a name for yourself is to beat down or wear down those who might get in the way of you and your plans. Don't invite these people into your house. Don't keep a meatloaf frozen for them. Don't keep a bed made for them. Beat them down. Wear them down. Show them who's boss. Break their back before they can be of any risk to you. Might this be why our reading from Ephesians pairs its talk of peace with a good deal of talk about strangers and aliens and hostilities and dividing walls? It sure seems likely. In direct opposition to God's desire to build a house and future that has room in it for all people, we all too often play King or Queen of the Mountain; scratching and clawing our way to the top where the objective becomes keeping as many as possible down below. It's an approach as old as Europe's many castles.

About seven years ago now my father-in-law Fred took his two children and me over to parts of Europe. The year after his beloved wife Joy had died, he wanted to show her children and his son-in-law where the two of them had gotten married in 1955 while Fred was finishing out a military commitment. At the time, my father-in-law's knees were already quite bad. It's what forty or more years of dairy farming will do to you. All the walking around on the concrete floors of a barn, all the up and down as you connect and disconnect milkers and as you get on and off machinery, will eventually catch up to you. But while over in Europe, Fred would hear nothing of taking it easy on his knees. With the castles and the shepherds who lived in them often high above all the commoners and everyday concerns down below, as well as all the foes who might come calling, Fred gutted it out.

You would think the pain he felt as he made the upward climb into castle after castle would have left him focused on himself and oblivious to the needs of those around him. But this isn't what happened. While traversing a particularly jagged incline into a place called Marksburg Castle, I'll never forget that Fred was looking out for others with physical limitations; helping them from jagged stone to jagged stone, pointing out this or that hazard, and often taking up the rear. A farmer all his life, Fred is a good shepherd. Good shepherds care for all the sheep. Every healthy ram or ewe, every lamb raised to maturity, increases the success of your operation; in the process building a house capable of tending not just to your needs, but also to the needs of others. And what's true of livestock is also true of people. It's why Jesus takes care of all the neglected and forgotten people in today's reading from Mark. But again, the world will always be there to steer us away from this inclusive approach to housebuilding. It's why readings like today's reading from 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel are there to encourage us to get back to the Church's job of building a house with enough rooms in it to accommodate all people.

In this reading, King David is living the high life. He doesn't seem to be bothered that his house of cedar seems to be several notches above the houses lived in by the flock he is to tend, but he is bothered that God is still living in a tent. Like we might ourselves, David wrongly assumes God is after the high life himself. Like we do when we go to a chiropractor, David needs an adjustment and he gets one through the prophet Nathan.

God, Nathan says, isn't the least bit concerned about the acquisition of better digs. As will later become clear, give God a smelly manger and God will sleep in it; give God a cross and God will forgive from it; give God a tomb and God will lay in it for three days. God's concern isn't unduly personal. Like a good shepherd, God's concern is the flock. Perfectly satisfied with a tent, God's concern has been getting God's people out of Egypt and into the Promised Land, where there will hopefully be plenty of milk and honey for them. For God, and hopefully for David and us too, this is how you build a house. This how you make a name for yourself. This is how you secure a legacy and a future. Once you've got some form of cover over your head and all the other basics that go along with it, you look away from yourself and towards the needs of others; in the process decreasing the number of your foes and increasing the number of your friends. Giving thanks for your good pleasure and those who already share in it, you constantly say to yourself, "Who isn't here yet? Who has still to make it?" And then, you go get whoever's missing and bring them back to the meatloaf that's been kept in the freezer for them and the bed that's been turned down for them.

Hopefully, this is where our hearts and our minds are set today. But there's also no guarantee that this is so. It's what happens when you're under construction like we all have been since the day of our baptism. The world pulls one way and God another. May God's blueprint for the Church and for each of us be followed more with each passing day through the ongoing ministrations of the Holy Spirit. We're not here for ourselves. We're here for others, both those already present and those yet to come. And when this happens by the grace of God, the irony is that we'll find ourselves living in a house built not on sinking sand, but on a rock. Remember! We're as strong as our relationships, with more friends good and more foes bad. Amen!

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

P: Tend your church, O God. Encourage bishops, pastors, and deacons in their proclamation of the gospel. Raise up new leaders and encourage those pursuing a call to ministry. Embolden all the baptized to embody your love and justice. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: Restore your creation, O God. Sustain croplands and pastures and safeguard all farm animals and livestock. Preserve lakes, rivers, and streams that offer refreshment. Revive lands recovering from natural disasters and protect coastlands threatened by rising oceans. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: Reconcile the nations, O God. Break down the dividing walls that make us strangers to one another and unite us as one human family. Equip leaders to deal wisely with conflict and guide diplomats who seek peaceful solutions. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: Heal your people, O God. Look with compassion on immigrants, exiles, and all who are afraid or feel lost. Give rest to those who are weary, comfort to those who are grieving, and recovery to those who are ill (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: Nourish this congregation, O God. Prepare a table where we receive food for our hungry spirits. Renew our commitment to provide for one another and revitalize our ministries of feeding and nurturing hungry neighbors. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: You lead us home, O God. We give thanks for all who have died, now citizens with the saints (*especially*). As you have received them into your heavenly home, so welcome all of us to dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A: Amen.**